

The Nameless 911

Chapter 911: Weaker

In truth, it was only a requirement to become a core disciple of a branch sect if you weren't a resident of this planet. Planet Cathedral allowed all of its residents three opportunities to join Soul Rending Peak. So, while there were only 26 branch sect participants, there were well over 5000 total participants.

There were three levels of acceptance into Soul Rending Peak. The first was to become an outer disciple. The second was to become an inner disciple. And the last was to become a core disciple.

To become an outer disciple, only must finish in the top 100. To become an inner disciple, it was necessary to finish in the top 10. While only the top 1 placement could earn the right to become a core disciple.

As a result of these rules, many of the participants who were from well established families in Cathedral City, who could have directly earned a letter of recommendation from an elder to enter Soul Rending Peak, chose not to. This was because, to them, this was by far the easiest way to become an Inner Disciple.

Just like that, a judge wearing golden robes descended from the skies and onto the center arena, taking out three crystal spheres and allowing them to float before him before he began to speak in a clearly bored voice.

"There's been a change to the rules this year."

The moment these words were said, the crowd began to clamour. Such a thing hadn't happened in thousands of years, what was going on?

"The first three rounds will remain nearly identical. However, the second round will include a test of your title. In addition, after the fourth round is completed and the rankings have been decided, whether you are accepted or not will depend on a fifth round where you spar with a disciple matching to the status you are trying to gain.

"If you are ranked 100th to 91st you will spar with an outer disciple. If you are ranked 90th to 2nd you will spar with an inner disciple. As for ranking first, you will spar with a core disciple."

When the elder said this, the ramblings of the crowd erupted even further. In fact, it wasn't just the crowd anymore, even the participants couldn't hold back any longer.

"Elder!" A brave soul called out. "Will we have to win this spar in order to be admitted?"

The elder only continued with his same bland voice. "Winning is not necessary. You only have to gain the acknowledgement of the judge overseeing your match. If you are up to our standards, then you can join. If not, then you can forget it.

"However, the top ten participants also have a right, should they fail, to then challenge an outer, or inner disciple, depending on their ranking, to join my Soul Rending Peak at a lower tier."

Hearing this, the participants sighed a breath of relief. If they had to win, it would be far too unfair.

At a minimum, these disciples had already spent a year within Soul Rending Peak, likely even more. Whether it be their techniques, guidance, or resources, they were all at ridiculous levels compared to the outside world. It wasn't as though they all were like the Caedes family and could rival the sect with their personal wealth.

With that, the selections began.

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Dyon watched these proceedings without much reaction. But, just how intelligent was he? Did he really need someone to tell him it wasn't a coincidence that his appearance and this rule change coincided with each other? Rules that hadn't changed in millennia changed for him? How flattering.

The test of title was obviously to verify whether Dyon was lying or not about being a Duke, while the spar was clearly meant to kill him.

Obviously, to these people, if Dyon couldn't make it into the top 100, they could deal with him however they wanted. Plus, with all of these battles, they thought they would get an accurate gauge of his combat abilities and would then be able to send someone capable of dealing with him easily.

It was too bad for them that Dyon knew he wouldn't have to use his full capabilities to place first here.

"253 years old, disqualified." The elders bland voice called out for the 11th time.

"No! Please! I was in my trials, I had no idea how much time I spent inside. Please, I managed to become a Viscount, I'm worthy!"

However, the pleading young man was still forcibly taken away. Of course, many sympathized with him, but there was nothing they could do.

Many entered their trials before coming back to earn an outer disciple spot. The problem was that it was impossible to guess how much time you'd need to finish, so some people often lost count or overshot the age requirements.

Unfortunately, many didn't feel like they would have the strength to pass selections unless they first earned trial rewards. To miss out by a mere 3 years, it was truly heart breaking.

This same scene occurred many times, but to Dyon's surprise, even among those who passed, no one was younger than 200 years old so far. If Dyon had the choice, he would make himself older. Unfortunately, life force was among the most difficult things in the cosmos to fake...

He could use his mask to impersonate his cultivation, and he could purposely lower his Presence to impersonate a Duke, but changing his age was something his mask had no ability to do.

Usually, this would be fine because the mask could hide Dyon's life force, but obviously, in a test like this, it wasn't useful. Dyon had no choice in the end...

"177 years old, passed." The elder's bland voice was slightly livelier after he said this. Clearly, those powerful enough to participate, while being under 200 years old was rare.

"Look, that's the young master of the Acor family. They're a young family, but it seems they're coming up in the world to produce such a young genius."

"172 years old, passed."

The clamour of the crowd increased. It seemed they were all too familiar with the young and powerful family of Planet Cathedral. At some point, they seemed more like popular sports stars than they did martial warriors.

"124 years old, passed."

At this point, Donari's elder brother completely shattered the record with an arrogant and smug look on his face.

To Dyon, the entirety of these proceedings was far too funny.

"87 years old, passed."

Donari himself went directly after his brother, as though to prove a point. However, although there was shock, it only took a moment to notice the fact that although he was far younger, Donari was also far weaker.

The problem was that only Donari knew how powerful he was. He had been hiding his true strength all this time... The fact Dyon beat him so easily was a testament to Dyon's strength, not a dampening of his own. However, others didn't know this, and Donari wasn't one to make excuses for himself. All he did was sneer and wait for Dyon's age test, almost as if to say, "You only beat me because you had more time to cultivate."

Dyon didn't bother with Donari's gloating appearance. Instead, he was thinking about something else.

According to his knowledge, his home universe had about the same expectations for age and cultivation. It was only those with outstanding constitutions who broke through that mold and entered the essence

gathering stage around the age of 20 or 30. In all likelihood, Soul Rending Peak might have a couple individuals like that, but greatly dampened. After all, according to Dyon's understanding, this universe didn't have anyone with God level constitutions.

After Donari went, many other young geniuses stepped up, not to be out done. Many of them were between 150 and 180 years old, this seemed like a sweet spot for young geniuses and was also a good mixture of power, experience, in addition to youth.

However, seeing this, Dyon also understood why this quadrant had such poor rankings. The trials' difficulties were chosen based on age, not cultivation. The fact they didn't reach the high levels of essence gathering until they were well past a century old explained why the Duke stages were pretty much their cap.

"118 years old, passed." At this point, the elder actually smiled lightly. The string of talent was clearly better than he expected.

No one even noticed that it was finally Dyon's turn. They were all clamouring about the 118-year-old who was also at the 10th essence gathering stage. Clearly he was even more talented Donari's elder brother! Even better, he was from an unknown family. Imagine that, a commoner making it so far alone!

Chapter 912: Pissed

Suddenly, the stuttering of the elder cut through all the noise. "Tw.... 32 years old!"

Donari felt as though his world had shattered as he stared at the sphere Dyon's hand rested on, as though he was hoping the number would change.

When Dyon had fallen into his coma, he was only just barely a step away from 19 years old. After he awoke, only a year and a few months had passed. Then, he entered his trial where he spent 12 years and an extra few months. After his four-month break with his wives, he was still only 32 years old!

By this point, all eyes were on Dyon. Before, they had looked down on him for being a mere 1st stage essence gatherer. But, if a 32 year old capable of stepping into such a stage wasn't worthy of being a core disciple of a branch sect, then who was?!

Even Elder Nova began to look at Dyon oddly. Of all the people here, he likely had the best idea of Dyon's true strength. That was because when he quickly destroyed the soul contract, he had seen Dyon's eyes easily tracking his movements. He was already prepared for Dyon's age to cause him to be disqualified... Who would know that he was the most qualified person here!?

After seeing this, many people started coming up with excuses. Maybe Dyon had ruined his foundation by stepping into the essence gathering stage too early? Many of the greater geniuses, like Donari and his elder brother, and even the commoner genius, waited until they reached the 10th meridian formation stage, some even waited until the 11th, before progressing. If Dyon stepped forward earlier, that could be an explanation!

However, those from Unseen Peak didn't dare to think this... This was because they had witnessed Dyon beat Donari as easily as flipped his hand... Whether it was because of his body cultivation or not, the fact of the matter was that he had the power to do so at such a young age! Even if he stepped forward early, what did it matter?! Body cultivation increased your life span too!

With Dyon's results, many couldn't wait for the talent assessment. They needed to see if Dyon had the meridian grade talent to back up his age, or if he really did step forward early. That test would explain everything!

By the end, the over 5000 participants had been shaved down to about 3500. It was now time for the second round to begin.

After those not of proper age was weeded out, in order to organize groups, a talent measurement took place. However, the added twist this year was that there would also be a measure of one's "Title".

Under normal circumstances, one would need a special formation unique to the Epistemic Tower in order to verify someone's "title". However, there was another more crude way to do so outside of the tower and that was to test someone's Presence. Or, more accurately, the potential of one's Presence.

By releasing your Presence in full, a special martial art branch crystal is able to gauge its potential for growth into the future. Obviously, someone who completes the Viscount trials and has no chance of completing the Earl trials, would have the upper limit potential of fostering a Viscount level Presence. So on, and so forth.

Obviously, the flaw here was that if someone chose to release only a portion of their Presence, the crystal would then only be capable of measuring the potential of that percentage of your Presence, and thus underestimate you. However, this wasn't something people worried about. After all, who, during an assessment, would purposefully lower their own results?

That aside, the portion of this second round that truly scared people was the test of the soul. Someone's future could be completely ruined simply by having soul cultivation abilities a bit above average. Sometimes, those of the commoner class chose to not participate in these assessments at all just to avoid the possibility.

What many knew, but didn't dare to voice, was the fact that there were often members of outstanding families who had great soul talent. However, they had the capital to buy talent testing crystals for themselves. So, when they gave birth to a child with such capabilities, they would purposefully injure their child's soul, thereby ruining their soul talent, but also saving their lives...

Many had already forgotten why this taboo on soul talent existed, and even fewer understood why even children weren't spared by such cruelty... However, this was the reality of their quadrant...

This assessment was far quicker. The vast majority of those who went up had 8th grade meridians and no title at all. However, this was to be expected. Usually, only the best of the best would survive the trials of the tower anyway, which was why it was so sad that that 253-year-old lost the right to participate.

At this moment, a lanky young woman stepped up. Her eyes continuously darted around as she went through her first two tests. However, no one thought much of it. After all, all commoners who made it to this point were nervous beyond belief. Unlike their noble counter-parts, they had no idea what their soul talent was!

Everyone had a soft spot for commoners who had such courage... To know that you were very likely risking your life, but doing so anyway to fight for a better future for yourself... Who wouldn't sympathize with a story like that?

So, every time a nervous commoner stepped up, the arena would fall into silence, as though everyone was secretly rooting for him or her.

The young lady went through her first two tests.

"5th grade meridians!" The eyes of the elder lit up. Such talent was simply amazing. No wonder she made it so far despite not having any resources. "Marquis potential!"

The family of the young lady was ecstatic when they heard this, but they forced themselves to keep calm, nervously holding onto each other's hands as their young family member nervously walked to the final crystal.

Her hand shook violently, unable to bring herself to touch it. Her breathing was ragged, but she clenched her teeth in the end. She didn't want to spend the rest of her life in poverty. With her talent, she could slowly work her way up, maybe even become a core disciple one day!

"I can do this..." She mumbled to herself. She lost count of how many meals she had missed in her lifetime, scrounging up all of her own resources for cultivation, not wanting to burden her family. 220 years she spent, struggling to the point where she finally stepped into the 7th essence gathering stage. This was her time, she'd be able to fight for a better future, not only for herself, but also her family... Her mother... Her father... her little brother...

Finally, she clamped her hand downward, steeling her resolve.

The elder calmly looked downward, staring into the depths of the crystal. However... His calm expression slowly turned cold in the next moments even as the candidate's face paled...

"Mid second stage innate soul. Take her away." A cold voice rang out.

"NO!" A family in the stands cried outward, unable to accept this news. It had to be a dream, they must have heard wrong.

Tears streamed down the candidate's face, however, unlike those taken away for being too old, she didn't struggle... It seemed that she didn't even notice the metal cuffs strapped to her wrists and legs... Like she didn't even realize this would be the last time she saw the light of day...

At this moment, anyone within several hundred meters of Dyon felt an uncontrollable fear overwhelm them.

Dyon's eyes reddened even as veins pulsing with golden blood charged through his body. He was pissed.

Dyon began to walk. He didn't speak at all, but even the golden robed elder couldn't find the courage to stop him.

Elder Nova wanted to reach out, but he too was feeling a deep rooted fear... As though Dyon's entire body was exuding an aura that would kill anyone who tried to stop him.

He had personally witnessed the struggle between The Cathedral and the Jafari family. Not many understood or even knew such an event happened, but with his strength, he knew the secrets of this quadrant long ago...

Chapter 913: What Else?

The Jafari family, themselves, were a family of soul talented individuals. Although they couldn't match up to Dyon, who in the cosmos could?

It was because of this talent that they mastered such difficult wills such as darkness and time, it was to their benefit.

But, for too long, they were forced to cripple their children at birth, hindering their growth into the future all for the sake of not angering The Cathedral...

The cruelty of ripping away a part of your child's soul was more than you could imagine, yet it was something they were forced to do in order to survive. There was no choice about it...

Dyon leaped into the air and landed before the grieving family. When many saw his killing intent and his destination, they thought that he was going to kill this family. After all, it wasn't a rare occurrence. Often times the family members of those with soul talent would be ostracized, bullied, and eventually found

dead. Sometimes, The Cathedral would even come to personally check the soul talent of siblings of the offender, just to see if this talent was passed on.

However, Dyon did nothing of the sort. He looked from the grieving mother and the crying little boy before his eyes rested on a lanky father with bags of purple and red under his eyes. Their constitutions were all weak, and it was clear that it was only a stroke of heaven's luck that their daughter was so talented. But, Dyon knew that others wouldn't see it this way.

Dyon lowered his head. "I'm sorry."

He knew he had the power to save their daughter. In fact, it would be easy beyond compare for him. It was eating him up on the inside that he knew, for the greater good, he could not do so. If he saved their one daughter now, what about the other millions of sons and daughters that were already taken away? Were they already dead? And even if they were, how could Dyon get true justice for them unless he got to the bottom of this?

The father, who was protecting his family behind his back was stunned by Dyon's words. He had never expected such a thing. In fact, he was racking his mind, trying to find a way to get what remained of his family out of here safely.

"I can't save her now. But, I will." Dyon didn't hide his voice. Instead, he took a spatial ring out of his and discreetly filled it with something things before leading the family down to the 5 teleportation stations.

Dyon looked coldly at the members of Unseen Peak that still stood there. "Move."

No one dared to disobey Dyon's words, and even less understood where he got the bravery to so blatantly say that he would save someone seen as a criminal by The Cathedral. But, his aura right now was so murderous, no one dared to refute him.

Dyon stood at the edge of the teleportation platform while the family looked down at him. "Don't worry. They may think they know where the destination of this formation sends them, but they don't. Live well and live quietly. I'll let you see your daughter soon."

With a flash, the family disappeared just as muffled thank yous reached Dyon's ears.

Dyon turned back as though nothing had happened. His murderous aura was now much more restrained, but anyone could see that he was still pissed.

At this point, the golden robed elder realized his prestige was being challenged. Now that Dyon had restrained himself, the pressure on the elder's chest had suddenly been lifted. He felt his face redden... He had really been afraid of an essence stage brat? Even if he was only 32 years old, that only meant he had future potential, it had nothing to do with his current strength.

"Do you know what you've just done?" The elder sent a piercing gaze toward Dyon.

"Listen." Dyon's voice cut through the elder's. "It's best for everyone that we continue along with this assessment. I'm sure Soul Rending Peak and The Cathedral don't want to be seen policing the words of its people, now do they? If you want to vent your anger, do it the way anyone else of your stature would and use underhanded means to undermine my position."

The elder's frown deepened. He had never been spoken to by a member of the younger generation in this way.

"Esteemed elder." Elder Nova stepped forward. "This child is a member of the Jafari family and has only just come back. Although he is young and hot blooded, he actually hasn't broken any rules. At most he's guilty of having a glib tongue and giving false promises. I believe we can continue without any issues, no? A single commoner family is of no consequence."

The golden robed elder almost sighed in relief now that Elder Nova had given him a way out. But, when he and the crowd realized that the name Jafari was thrown out, a shocked stupor overwhelmed them all. However... the golden robed elder knew that he had no choice but to give Elder Nova face. Although many might not know, he did... Elder Nova wasn't to be taken lightly.

So, the elder harrumphed before continuing on. "Next."

"What do you think, RoIRoI?" Asyna spoke softly. Both her and RoIRoI had entered the crowd of the coliseum, hoping to find a hiding spot before the big league of the Soul Rending Peak and The Cathedral arrived. If they were spotted by Lilith, there would be trouble.

"That isn't a killing intent that should be in this quadrant... Even Lilith's Presence can't match up to his. Although he hasn't released it, and Lilith has yet to train her Presence with the tower, I'm certain! In fact, I'm even more certain that he will fake his results soon."

"You're talking about boring things." Asyna snorted. "Isn't he also ridiculously handsome? I haven't seen a man like this even in my Elvin clan."

RoIRol blushed. After all, she was still only 17 years old and they were talking about a man twice her age. She wasn't at the point where she could ignore age differences yet, nor was she well versed in the world of men and women.

"Stop joking around. Is he really the one you sensed?"

Asyna nodded. "I had expected him to be a woman because that was what I sensed. Who would have known that I only sensed that because he had actually taken a little princess's Primordial Yin! What a womanizer!" Although Asyna said these words, her eyes were brimming over with lust.

"Why would you want such a weak man? He's already 29 and is only of the Essence Gathering stage."

"Haha," Asyna laughed, "This is how I know he's spellbound you. With how intelligent you are, how could you say something so stupid."

"You should know that the younger generation of the tower quadrants can't be measured like we are. Some of their most talented individuals spend decades if not centuries within their trial worlds, so of course their cultivation is slower than us in the beginning."

"I suspect that he's already entered his trial world, which is why his cultivation is so slow. However, that's not the most interesting part about him."

If Dyon was listening to this conversation now, he would be stunned. Asyna's Perception was spot on, but it wasn't only that. Her sensory abilities were off the charts. It was clear that her Elvin clan heavily specialized in the soul much like the Elvin Kingdom did. In fact, Asyna was among the rare breed that included Dyon and Clara, who actually had higher soul cultivation than energy cultivation!

"What else?" RolRol asked.

"I can't sense a soul inside him at all... Yet, just now, when he used the teleportation array, I'm 60% certain that he altered the location symbols of the array to send the family to a different location. But, I have no idea how he did it! That array is too high level for even me to manipulate so easily..."

"What?!" RolRol couldn't help but cover her little mouth in shock. One had to know that Asyna was already a 10th stage grandmaster formation expert. For a young man only 13 years older than her to be so much better... It was mind boggling!

Chapter 914: Grade

"Wait, but you said you can't sense his soul? What does that mean?"

"It means that either his soul is blocked or sealed by some sort of odd technique or treasure, or... His soul is too much more powerful than mine for me to sense it." Asyna explained slowly. "Also, his body..." Asyna inadvertently wiped her nose, double and triple checked to make sure no blood was running down it.

RolRol didn't seem to notice this oddity. Or, more accurately, she didn't understand the double meaning behind that action. "What about his body?"

"It's very..." Asyna gulped. "Powerful..."

Seeing that Asyna had turned into some love crazed teenage girl, RolRol lightly pulled her long brunette hair to get her to snap out of it.

Asyna cleared her throat, "I mean, I can't accurately sense how powerful his body is. As you know, that's an advantage of body cultivators."

"But, your senses should be high enough to see through it... Unless..."

"Unless his body is stronger than my senses are, which seems to be the case."

RolRol breathed out. "This is a big matter. He's a variable we shouldn't have to deal with according to reports, yet he's here."

"Not only is he here, he's noticed us long ago." Asyna fixed her hair as though she was getting ready for a date. "Didn't you see how his eyes lingered on my body for so long? Do you think he likes me?"

RolRol rolled her eyes. "The only reason no man dares to look at you is because of all that murder lingering around you. Since he dares to look, it's only because he has the Presence to counteract it. If you stopped going around like this, there wouldn't be a single man without his eyes on you. Plus, we're behind a concealment array, he can't see you, genius."

Asyna snorted. "If you can't deal with a little killing intent, are you even a man?"

"You're a virgin yet you're still such a pervert, does anything in this world make sense?"

"Hey, hey. Don't go spreading that around." Asyna covered the little girl's mouth as though she was saying something blasphemous.

"Either way, this is good. Now we can justify ourselves to Lilith when we're found out."

Asyna grinned. "I just thought of a really good idea."

"What?"

"I'm going to be his sparring partner!"

...

Dyon had felt that there was a pair of eyes on him for a long while, but every time he looked, he saw nothing. With his Presence, he knew there must be someone in that space, but without his soul, he couldn't figure out exactly what...

Although it made him feel uncomfortable, he didn't sense that the gaze had any ill intentions despite raking his body over so often. He felt like he was a woman being cat-called on the street for some odd reason.

In any case, he wasn't in the mood to care about being watched. Since someone wanted to monitor him, they could fully witness just how pissed off he was.

That said, if Dyon knew just what Asyna had figured out just by observing him for a bit, he would be surprised beyond belief. Not many were considered to be talented in soul cultivation, and even among those that were, senses as sharp as Asyna's, and at such a young age at that, were even rarer.

From Dyon's previous knowledge, the only person he knew capable of seeing through the Primordial Yins he had within him was his grand teacher! The same was true for the number of people who realized that his soul was sealed. Such senses was completely inexplicable...

The truth of the matter was that although Asyna was only a 10th stage grandmaster, her soul had recently broken into the celestial stage, allowing her to cultivate her divine sense. As such, the sharpness of her perception far exceeded what Dyon was used to dealing with. If it wasn't for the fact that Dyon's own Perception was so sharp and he could feel himself being observed, without his soul, it would have been completely impossible for him to notice Asyna at all...

Unfortunately, this was what Asyna noticed as well. If Dyon's soul was really so much more powerful than her own, then that should mean that Dyon would have seen through their concealment array long ago. Yet, Dyon clearly hadn't. This left only one explanation: Dyon's soul was sealed!

With just a few minutes of observation, Asyna had broken through one of Dyon's most tightly held secrets and Dyon had not a single clue...

"4th grade meridians!" The golden robed elders excited voice seemed to make him forget Dyon's previous slander.

It might seem as though Soul Rending Peak was unmatched in the 98th quadrant, but it seemed that even they had something to worry about, or else this elder wouldn't be so happy about finding such good talents.

By all logic, an elder forced to oversee such a mundane event would be disgruntled. However, this elder seemed to take pleasure in finding diamonds in the rough. It was truly odd.

Following this, a string of 5th and 4th grade geniuses were called up, many of which were the core disciples of the various branch peaks. When the supervising judges thought about what it would mean if these 4th grade geniuses had a drop of Dyon's honey, they almost trembled with excitement.

"It seems we won't have another 3rd grade genius this year." The crowd sighed.

"Hold on, that Jafari boy hasn't gone yet. He's only 29 years old! He must have a 3rd grade set of meridians."

The crowd clamoured as Dyon walked up to take his test. Clearly, they were excited to see a legendary 3rd grade talent.

Everyone knew that although there was only a single number difference between the 4th and 3rd grades, the power and talent difference was like the difference between heaven and earth.

The 3rd grade onward was the threshold where meridians would be robust enough to handle tempering with Gama energy. Before that threshold, geniuses had no choice but to temper their meridians with wills, one by one.

Back in Focus Academy, Dyon could remember how proud geniuses who tempered their meridians with two or more wills were. Obviously, the more wills you were capable of withstanding, the better your future would be.

Usually, 9th grade talents would barely be able to handle one will, while 4th grade talents could handle ten or more. However, while this gave 4th grade talents a massive talent and future prospects advantage as compared to lower grade talent, in the face of a 3rd grade talent, they wouldn't be able to hold a candle to them...

Just think about the difference between being tempered with a mere 10 wills, versus being tempered with all of the wills in existence! The gap between them was so astronomical that it wasn't even worth mentioning.

Of course, 3rd grade talents had their limits as compared to 2nd, 1st and True Deity level talents. However, if the scope was purely limited to the meridian formation stage, those difference would be negligible. Meaning, when it came to tempering meridians at the meridian formation stage, 3rd grade talents were just as impressive as their more talented counterparts!

With all of this said, it was clear what significance a 3rd grade talent had. However, in the entire 98th quadrant, they didn't have a single one in the younger generation!

Dyon stepped to the golden robed elder casually, not showing the same nervousness as the other candidates. It was as though this assessment had little or nothing to do with him... As though he didn't notice the piercing gaze of the elder.

To the golden robed elder, the only reason Dyon would be so sympathetic to the fallen soul cultivation genius was because he too was one. 'If you think you can hide behind your Jafari name to escape punishment for being a soul cultivation deviant, I have some bad news for you.' The elder sneered inwardly.

Dyon raised his hand to the talent crystal, placing his hand down.

The crowd was on the tips of its toes, all vying for a better position and projecting out their ears as though they might miss the result.

When the elder saw the result, he was stunned for a bit before his disdain deepened. "7th grade meridians."

Chapter 915

The crowd was stunned for a bit, as though they must have heard incorrectly. This didn't make any sense!

At that point, everyone remembered Dyon's Jade Queen Bee honey... If he was only at the 7th grade now, didn't that mean he was only at the 8th grade before? Maybe even worse, maybe he was only born as a 9th grade talent?!

"To think he would waste heaven's treasures on such poor talent..." Someone in the crowd lamented.

"Even if he had only taken a single drop of that honey, that could have been used to create another 3rd grade warrior!"

"Ridiculously selfish." Someone else agreed. "If he wasn't so greedy, our quadrant could have finally risen up from the dregs of the rankings. Even a single extra drop could have created another heaven defying genius!"

The crowd inadvertently began to boo. To them, it was as though the things Dyon worked for, the things he earned, should be owned by them as a collective. Since his last name was Jafari, this was his home quadrant, how could he not have more thoughtfulness?

Truthfully speaking, Dyon didn't hide anything. His meridians were still a step away from entering the 6th grade, but he was currently still at the 7th grade. Faking this was just as hard as faking his age. Even if his energy cultivation was sealed, meridians weren't like the soul. They were a tangible part of the body. Although they were being used as the foundation for his inner world, they were, fundamentally, still a part of his body.

Dyon didn't mind the words and only casually stepped toward the title test.

"To think that you'd make such a bet with me while only being a mere 7th grade talent." Donari's elder brother laughed as though he was seeing the funniest thing in the world. "Truly a waste of heaven's treasures. Aren't you scared of being struck down for your overblown arrogance?"

As a member of the Caedes family, he had been tested to have 5th grade meridians, while Donari himself had 4th grade meridians. It was no wonder he was so arrogant.

If he won this bet, he would finally be at the same stage as his younger brother, and if he monopolized all 100 drops, there was even a chance he could step into the legendary 3rd grade stage and lead their quadrant to untold glory.

"Is there a need for this?" The golden robed elder spoke blandly. "No title. Move on to the soul talent test and show some thought for those around you for once and stop wasting our time."

Dyon's hand paused over the Presence test before he looked up at the elder standing before him.

Wasting time? The tests took a split second at most. He wasted more time stalling Dyon than Dyon would have taking the test. There should probably be a limit to bias, shouldn't there?

However, the elder didn't see it this way. As he saw it, before this, he had to be careful in case Dyon was an outstanding talent. He was a mere outer sect elder, if he offended a future inner or core elder, he wouldn't be able to raise his head ever again. But, now that he saw Dyon's talent was only of the 7th grade, what did he have to fear? Such a talent wouldn't even be able to become an elder at all, at most they would be become a pavilion caretaker. He could treat people like that however he wanted.

Even better, considering Dyon age and cultivation, he might not even make it into the sect at all. What did he had to worry about?

The 'boos' of the crowd grew, as though the words of the elder only fueled them further.

The only ones who said nothing were those of the Unseen Peak. After seeing Dyon so easily destroy Donari, and seeing the fact he was only 32, they understood something clearly. Even if Dyon had poor talent in energy cultivation, his body cultivation talent was so outstanding that he could already stand near the top of the younger generation at the tender age of 32. They weren't so stupid as to ride the wave the golden robed elder and the crowd was on.

In the cultivation world, as long as one had talent in one path, it could easily make up for the others. For example, if Dyon had body cultivation far exceeding those of his age, then he entered the tower, the rewards he received would be able to boost his energy cultivation to the level he was at now. The same would be true if he was talented in energy cultivation, but not body cultivation.

Dyon's eyes met the golden robed elder's. "I'm far too bored to deal with you. I just hope you can justify yourself to your superiors."

"My superiors? Why would they care for such a talentless youth with eyes placed on top of his head?" The elder sneered. "As your elder, it is my duty to inform you that one must know when to lower themselves and show respect. Even if you were talented, that would be necessary, let alone the fact that you aren't."

Dyon smiled. "And when I need the advice of a mere outer sect elder, I'll be sure to let you know."

The golden robed elder's features twisted and contorted, his muscles bulging as he weighed the pros and cons of slapping this youth to death right now.

However, in the time he was thinking, Dyon's hand landed on the crystal and a radiant light erupted and covered the coliseum in such a strong Presence that many felt their knees go weak...

In the moment, the 98th quadrant had witnessed something for the first time... The Presence of a King!

The Presence measuring crystal cracked, allowing spiderwebs of damage to race along its surface before it burst into a cloud of dust.

The golden robed elder trembled where he stood.

Although the crowd might not know, he knew what the meaning was behind the crystal shattering.

Since the methods for testing titles was imperfect outside of the Epistemic Tower, it was obviously much harder to test those with higher potential. For a mere 98th quadrant, their best materials could only test to the marquis level, even those who were on the borderline between marquis and duke would cause the crystal to shatter. For example, their current Legatees would cause the crystal to shatter.

However, this was a massive problem. Even for those Legatees, the time it would take for the crystal to shatter was at least double if not triple the time it took for Dyon to cause it to do the same action. By all rights, this meant that Dyon's title potential far exceeded that of their Legatees!

No one even noticed when Dyon walked over the soul crystal and placed his hand down. It was only after he stood there for more than ten seconds without it showing a reaction that the golden robed elder finally reacted.

"N- no innate soul... Passed..."

It was only now that those of the Unseen Peak sucked in a breath. It seemed Dyon didn't lie about being a Duke, or else he would have never achieved these test results.

"Ah, ah." Dyon's voice interrupted. "Does that mean your first assessment of my title potential was correct? After all, you did say no title out loud. Could it be that crystals shatter for those with no title?"

The golden robed elder ground his teeth. "Duke Potential. Passed."

Donari's elder brother couldn't understand. How could someone with 7th grade talent have better potential than he did? It didn't make any sense!

In the crowd, behind the concealment array, Asyna and RolRol were just as surprised. After being highly disappointed by Dyon's meridian grade, Asyna had even thought of leaving. Although it was true that other talents could make up for it, there was a reason energy cultivation was seen as the main path. It simply had the best returns of any of the other paths, so of course it was.

"By all rights, a 32-year-old who had entered the trials shouldn't be able to make it to the essence gathering stage with mere 7th grade meridians." RolRol muttered.

"Also, assuming the honey he has was a reward for his trials, it makes even less sense..." Asyna added.

Before, Asyna thought that Dyon had entered the tower around 10 years old. This would give him about 20 years in his trials, and would also mean that he had already reached the first essence gathering stage at 10.

Chapter 916: Shall?

However, such a thing was impossible for a person with 7th grade meridians, let alone the fact Dyon's original set of meridians should have been far worse than that.

This crumbled Asyna's whole theory and made her look down on Dyon slightly. If it wasn't for the fact he was a formation expert and had a powerful body, Asyna would have already lost all interest. As one could see, her standards were quite high.

"Lilith should be coming with the core disciples of Soul Rending Peak soon since the preliminary rounds are almost finished. We should decide whether it's worth it to stay or not now..." RoIRoI reminded.

Asyna frowned, unsure of what to do. Before, they were sure that Dyon was a major variable and they could use that as justification to stay. However, now Dyon's poor talent had thrown a wrench in that.

In the end, the only way Asyna could make certain that Dyon was as much of a threat as she thought was by fighting him, but in order to fight him, she would have to wait for Lilith to arrive. It was truly a problem.

"Fuck it." Asyna snorted. "What's the worst she can do to us? Look." Asyna pointed. "They're here already anyway. Let's go meet up with them."

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The first two rounds came to an end and the groups for the third were being quickly arranged.

For now, all 2500 hundred or so eligible participants stood in an organized formation with core disciples of the branch sects standing at the front and the miscellaneous participants standing behind them. Of course, Unseen Peak and Slaughter Peak took front stage as the two most powerful Peaks with Dyon and Donari's elder brother at the very front.

This surprised many people because it only meant one thing: Unseen Peak had already conceded that Dyon was the most powerful among them. At this moment, Donari's elder brother finally felt some pressure. He didn't even remotely have the right to bet his family's heaven stage technique... What if he lost?!

As for Dyon, he hardly cared. To him, there was exactly a 0% chance of him losing, he hadn't even bothered to learn the name of his opponent, constantly calling him Donari's elder brother this entire time.

However, before Donari's elder brother could sweat it out any more, a blinding flash of light appeared in the sky near an empty platform that stood high in the sky.

"The elders have arrived!" The crowd started to get excited, this was always a rare event for them. It truly wasn't often they saw such entities.

"They should have brought the challenging disciples too! Do you think we'll see the Legatees?"

In that moment, the lights faded and the observing crowd was stunned into complete silence as 4 mind numbing beauties appeared, standing before a crowd of 100 or so Soul Rending Peak disciples.

...

There wasn't a single drop of noise left in the crowd. When had they ever seen beauties of this caliber? It was no wonder they had practically lost their minds.

The first was an adorable little girl, and although no one had the heart to sexualize her, it was clear that once she grew up, her own beauty would easily rival that of the other three. Everything from her bob cut hair, to her bangs, to her red dress screamed pure and stainless. She was truly someone anyone would be willing to protect with their lives.

The second was a fiery woman no one dared to look at for too long. She had delicate chocolate skin, and oddly long and sharp ears with mini skulls hanging from them. Despite exposing so much skin, her killing intent was so strong that no one dared to sexualize her either.

However, the final two women were the two that truly took the breath of the crowd away.

One wore a long white gown, with skin so delicate and pale that it seemed carved out of the purest ice. Her long white hair gently graced the long hem of her gown, easily reaching down past her ankles. She dressed very conservatively, leaving only the tips of her fingers and her neck up as the only skin she exposed. The rest was completely covered, but could hardly hide the exquisiteness of her figure.

The final beauty had a mature air none of the previous three had. It was clear that she was much older than them and had the experience and sensual awareness to captivate a crowd.

She wore a flowing golden dress that was reminiscent of a mage's robe. Her hair was golden and just as long as the white gowned beauty's, losing out in no way. Her eyes had opal stone quality to them, swirling with natural greens, blues and violets. She was truly enrapturing.

The first three beauties, were, of course, RolRol, Asyna and Lilith. However, the fourth held a position in much esteem to Planet Cathedral's residents... She was the Vice Head of Soul Rending Peak, Evangeline Moon!

While no one else dared to look, each one of them lowering their heads as a show of respect, Dyon's eyes brightened as he scanned the four beauties. He had always been one to appreciate beauties, but his standards had been raised almost too high by his wives, it resulted in him usually ignoring beauties who he might have used to drool over. But, even in comparison to his wives, the white and golden haired beauties lost out in no way, while the dark elf and little girl only had to mature a bit more before they reached such a stage. This was a rare bounty indeed!

What interested Dyon even more was how powerful these women were! Even more so, he was shocked to sense an Elvin bloodline in the scantily dressed girl with the massive spear strapped to her back.

The little girl was actually already a saint, but she couldn't have been more than 16 or 17. The dark elf was only a step away from stepping into the ranks of a high-level saint. The white-haired beauty was actually a peak level saint despite only being about 20 or 21 years old! As for the golden-haired beauty... Dyon actually couldn't see through her!

The reason Dyon was so certain of the ages of the first three without his soul to sense their life essence was because they still had room to mature. Although cultivation could stop aging, that would only be when a person reached the age of about 22 to 25 years old, that's when maturing would stop. However, these girls looked even younger than that, which meant they hadn't reached that threshold yet. This meant only one of two things: Either they practiced an odd technique that made them look younger

than they were or were part of a race that aged slower than other, and the other explanation was that they were actually only that old.

As for the golden-haired beauty, she looked somewhere between 22 and 25, which meant without his soul, it was impossible to tell how old she was.

Because Dyon was the only one with his head looking up into the sky, and the fact he was standing at the front of the candidates for acceptance into Soul Rending Peak, his actions were very obvious to those standing in the sky.

The Evangeline smiled lightly when she saw Dyon's lit up gaze, trying to hide the shock she felt as she scanned him. She was well liked by the general public because of her philanthropic work, so no one expected her to get angry by Dyon disrespect. As a result, one of the disciples standing behind her seemed to want to step forward to protect their sect's beauty from the scoundrel below them.

However, before he could say anything, the gentle voice of Evangeline spoke out.

"Little brother, what's your name?"

Seeing their goddess speak to a mere mortal so easily, the core, inner and outer disciples behind the four beauties felt their insides turn green, but they didn't dare to say anything.

Dyon was also a bit stunned, he wasn't expecting such a thing to occur. But, he smiled and answered simply.

"My name is Dyon." Dyon chose to purposefully leave his fake last name out, something in his heart was imploring him not to lie to this woman, as though she deserved his truth.

The golden-haired beauty faintly trembled at Dyon's response. Although this action wasn't caught by anyone, it still caused confusion in Dyon. How could he miss something like that with his level of Perception? Just what had this woman figured out from such a simple answer?

However, Evangeline recovered quite easily. As for what she realized from Dyon's response, no one but her knew.

"I see. I hope you'll perform well then," She responded gently, before smiling a smile that lit up the whole arena. "Let's begin then, shall we?"

Chapter 917: Underway

Since Dyon couldn't figure out what it was about him that cause the Soul Rending Peak elder to be so surprised, he let it be. He wasn't a fan of making conjectures when he didn't have enough evidence to do so, doing something like that would be akin to putting on blinders that might cause you to miss the truth when you truly came across it.

Instead, Dyon casually studied the white-haired beauty along with the dark elf. He was the most interested in Asyna because he could feel something inside himself throbbing with recognition.

Considering Dyon's wife was an Elvin Princess, it wasn't hard to guess what it was, but there was another possibility. The Ancient Elvin manifestation techniques were actually a method of altering your bloodline into an Elvin one... Could it be that this elf was from one of the three ancient Elvin clans?

Obviously, she wasn't from the Acacia family. But, that still left two other possibilities...

Either way, Dyon knew something else: this was definitely the woman who was observing him earlier, and since he could sense her, she could definitely sense him.

'This just got a little more complicated... Who are these girls and why are they here... Their talent would be enough to stand at the peak of even the top 3 quadrants, let alone this poor 98th ranked one...'

In the skies, Lilith pretended to not notice Dyon at all. When RoIRol and Asyna came to find her, she had assumed they were speaking nonsense just to defy her orders. However, seeing what they were talking about first hand let Lilith know that there was more to this young man than what met the eye.

In her life, there were very few men who dared to leer at her, and in her experience, they were all the best of best geniuses. In the martial world, powerful women weren't so easily pursued. Without the proper power to do so, one would simply be running into their deaths. So, to Lilith, the fact that Dyon's head was the only one looking up meant one of two things: either he was incredibly stupid, or incredibly strong.

Now, if Asyna's analysis was correct, Lilith might tend toward believing the latter. However, the question was 'strong in relation to what?'. Dyon might have an overblown ego, enough to foster a Presence that allowed him to believe he stood on equal footing with the four of them, but whether or not that was actually true was another matter entirely. After all, the competition in the 98th quadrant, or the supposed 74th quadrant he originated from, wasn't exactly fierce.

In the end, this meant little to Lilith. Although Asyna and RolRol's speculations were enough to cause her to raise an eyebrow, from what Lilith could tell, this young man didn't have enough power to defeat Asyna even while she was suppressed, let alone enough to disrupt their plans.

That said, Lilith still decided to take this a bit seriously. She had been given a very important task by her Nightmare Palace and her royal father. In these circumstances, she couldn't allow underestimation to be the reason why their plans failed. So, when Asyna came begging and pleading to be allowed to fight Dyon, she directly agreed.

If Dyon didn't place first, he would hardly be worth their time. If he did place first but couldn't defeat Asyna, he still wouldn't be worth their time. It was as simple as that.

As for Evangeline's interest in the young man, Lilith didn't think twice about it. After spending that past couple weeks with the woman, Lilith had come to understand her personality. She was simply kind to everyone. In all likelihood, she probably naively spoke to Dyon in order to stop those rowdy disciples behind them from attacking him directly.

This made Lilith slightly disdain Evangeline. She simply didn't believe that a woman should be so soft and kind hearted, nor so devoted to the strictly written stereotypes of their gender. Lilith had always been cold and ruthless, just like her father before her. Being soft was just asking to get taken advantage of.

As Lilith was thinking to herself, their seats were arranged.

Seeing that the organization had concluded below, Evangeline took this moment to speak a few words.

"I'm happy to see so many willing participants this year." She smiled lightly. "On behalf of the Soul Rending Peak master, I want to take this opportunity to apologize to you all."

The crowd was shocked by her words and began to murmur amongst themselves. Apologize? For what?

"Without prior deliberation, we unilaterally changed the rules of this assessment. This isn't usually how my Soul Rending Peak would do things, but I believe you all deserve some compensation for the trouble we've put you through.

"With the power given me as the Vice Master of Soul Rending Peak, I would like to formally double the size of disciples that will be accepted this year."

When the participants heard this, they were overwhelmed with joy. Evangeline was truly the goddess of their 98th quadrant!

"We'll be taking 180 outer disciples instead of 90. 18 inner disciples instead of 9. And 2 core disciples instead of 1.

"I would also like to extend those who will unfortunately be unable to take part in this provision an extra attempt at joining my Soul Rending Peak. Usually one would only be allowed 3, but I've decided to strike this from your attempt total, thus effectively giving you four.

"I wish you all the best of luck."

After the jubilation of Vice Master Evangeline's words died down, Dyon found himself standing at the edge of a platform, standing in line with nine other individuals.

They had been split into 256 groups of about 9 or 10 each. The goal was to end with a single winner while the only rule was that any victor had to have been, in whole or in part, responsible for the disqualification of at least three other participants.

The reasoning was fairly obvious. They wanted an easily usable elimination pool. After the first elimination of the fourth round, the round following this one, those 128 eliminated participants would fight it out for the 72 remaining outer disciple spots.

Because of Evangeline's rule change, it was no longer possible to have all groups occurring at once. So, for the sake of entertainment, the happened in groups of ten. Whether by coincidence or design, Dyon's group wouldn't be going until the final 6 remained.

At some time, Violet had made her way to the group of core disciples behind Evangeline and the three beauties. Much to the added anger of those disciples, her eyes, along with Asyna's, seemed to never leave Dyon, as though they were determined to examine his every movement.

What made things worse was that Evangeline would often look over as well. If it wasn't for RolRol's shyness and Lilith's aloofness, they would probably be looking too. Neither the participants, nor the crowd, nor the disciples understood just what was so great about Dyon character.

Of course, that was only the men. The women could very clearly understand. Although many of them were disappointed after Dyon's 7th grade talent reveal "since a weak handsome man meant nothing in the martial world" after seeing his title potential, the matter had changed entirely. Suddenly, Dyon's appearance and his future prospects perfectly aligned with one another.

That said, this had nothing to do with why Lilith and Evangeline were interested in Dyon. Lilith was only concerned about the threat Dyon posed, and although he was among the most handsome men she had ever seen, that had no effect on her heart at all. As for Evangeline, although her thoughts were unknown, it was certain that an elder of her stature, especially after living so long, would never see a junior in such a light.

The only exceptions were Asyna and Violet, who very clearly had something that made Dyon's lust light on fire in their eyes. However, he tried his best to temper it down. He didn't like the idea of his body ruling his mind... But, without his soul, it was becoming more and more difficult to rein himself in.

When Dyon thought back to the pain he put Ri in just to satisfy his own lust, he became pissed off with himself again. Coupled with how angry he was about that girl who got taken away for her soul talent, and no one was too eager to stand within his vicinity.

As the crowd and Dyon thought about these various things, the battles had already gotten underway.

Chapter 918: Nine Heads

Group battles, without needing to say much, were quite chaotic. Often times, there would be a single most powerful participant that would either be avoided, or attacked all at once. It wasn't too rare for participants to either lament their luck or bask in their good fortune.

As for Dyon's group, most of them were 7th stage essence gatherers with two of the 8th stage and one of the 9th. His group wasn't overly powerful, or overly weak. It seemed the golden robed elder no longer dared to make things too difficult for him.

In the distance, the Legatees of the Branch Peaks gathered, leisurely talking and commenting while mingling with the disciples of the Unseen Peak. As Legatees, they, of course, had enough status to warrant the respect of those disciples. After all, even the Legatees of branch sects had high status – all of them were Marquis.

"Nikolaos, what's the deal with this Dyon character? Is he truly from your Unseen Peak?" The Legatee of Gliding Peak casually asked.

Furrowing his eyebrows, Nikolaos sent a quick glance toward Dyon before turning back. "I'm not sure. He shouldn't be underestimated, but I have no idea how powerful he is. I would have never guessed his talent was so poor."

"You mean that you've seen evidence that should say otherwise?"

At this point, many of the disciples around perked their ears up to listen in, Lilith the three beauties were no exception.

Nikolaos truly didn't know how to answer. Many here were already eager to cut Dyon down a peg because of the attention their goddess gave him, but Nikolaos knew that dealing with Dyon wasn't a simple matter. However, he was struggling with his own pride as well.

If he lied, he would keep his prestige as a Legatee for the time being. But, once Dyon proved him wrong, wouldn't he be slapping his own face?

Seeing Nikolaos' struggle, many were confused. What was so complicated about the questions they were asking?

In the end, Nikolaos sighed. "He's a member of the Jafari family. Their younger generation was never weak. Judging him based on what you see is a mistake. There's a reason why even the little devil of the Caedes family, the very same boy who doesn't even care to anger his family head, is so docile before him."

They were stunned by Nikolaos' words, but when they saw the seriousness of his features, they had to accept it.

At this point, many began to ponder. Everyone knew how unruly Donari was, he was so talented that his own father didn't dare to reprimand him. In the end, Donari ended up leaving his home to forge his own path forward and the Caedes family could only accept it.

Yet, everyone could see that Donari allowed Dyon to stand in front of him when they all arrived... What did this mean? Was Donari not as powerful as they assumed?

Almost as if to answer the question from above, Donari's group stepped onto the platform to begin their bout.

Much like Dyon, Donari had the weakest cultivation of his group, only being at the 4th essence gathering stage. However, unlike Dyon, no one looked down on him for this. They were far too familiar with Donari's exploits, not to mention the fact that Donari had one of the highest-ranking Earth constitutions in existence!

Donari casually glided downward, looking at his opponents with disdain. They all had stronger cultivation than him, yet he wasn't worried in the least.

"Just step off now and stop wasting my time. If in the end you all die, it's best you don't blame me. Consider this your one warning."

Hearing Donari's words, it was no surprise that his opponents were absolutely livid. They had fought so hard to get this point, not having nearly the same benefits and resources that Donari had, yet he wanted them to give up without even trying, going as far as to threaten their lives? Even worse, he was younger and weaker than they were!

Maybe the most insulting part was that Donari didn't care about offending them all. Wasn't he scared of them ganging up on him? No matter how talented a person was, they still needed adequate time to grow. Donari was only 87 years old!

"You should be careful about who you insult." One of the participants said with a darkened expression.

"Within a hundred thousand years, everyone in this quadrant will be beneath my feet! Why would I care about insulting you?!" Donari's voice boomed, causing a dark and red aura to emanate from him.

Everyone was stunned by Donari's boldness. In their entire history, as far as they were aware, there had only been a single Dao Formation expert. In fact, that person's life or death was completely unknown. By all rights, he might not even be in their 98th quadrant anymore. Yet, a boy of only 87 years old was basically stating that he would be the next!

Everyone knew that the upper limit of life for a celestial was only ten thousand years, and even they were abnormally rare here, only to be found within the elders of Soul Rending Peak and the Priests of The Cathedral, yet Donari was speaking in terms of ten times that! His meaning was clear!

"Arrogant!" The participants had had enough, there should be a limit to a person's words and a sense of propriety in what they chose to say. Yet, this boy clearly had no such thing within him.

"Let's get rid of him first!" An 8th stage essence gatherer spoke. "Then we can deal with the rest after!"

Without another word, the nine of them surged forward as though they had a tacit agreement. In fact, that was exactly the case. They didn't dare to underestimate a genius of the Caedes family.

Donari's face darkened, glowing with a faint red as his long maroon hair began to violently whip in the air.

Taking a step forward, blades forged with red fog appeared in his hand, seeming to be in the form of two short sabers.

Seeing this, those disciples of the Soul Rending Peak opened their eyes wide to observe. This was an ability unique to Donari and those who shared his constitution. He was able to give his killing intent a tangible form, allowing it to directly attack the soul of his opponents.

This constitution was known as A Killer's Symphony. It allowed those who were born with it to use their bodies as Life Stealing treasures, resulting in an increase in strength for every life taken. At the same time, it was one of the very few constitutions that allowed one to attack with their soul directly.

Unfortunately, Donari's ability to use his constitution was reduced by more than 80% at birth. This wasn't his fault, but rather the fault of his parents for crippling his soul.

As a person who held such a constitution, it was no question that Donari's soul talent far outweighed that of many who came before him. At first, Donari had no idea about this. It was kept as a secret from him because having such soul talent was a massive taboo. However, as Donari grew, he began to want to know more about his constitution so that he could grow more powerful, and that's exactly what he did.

He came to learn that his constitution came in three levels. The Earth level, known as A Killer's Symphony. The Heaven level, known as Assassin King's Symphony. And the God level, known as Assassin Emperor's Symphony. Each was more powerful than its predecessor, but also more heavily relied on the soul with each step to condense more and more powerful killing intent.

The reason Donari hated his family with all his might was because there was that A Killer's Symphony had a provision that other constitutions did not have: the ability to evolve! However, Donari would never have the opportunity because his soul was crippled!

Every time Donari thought about it, every time he realized how the bullshit Cathedral cut the path of his future off, and how his bullshit parents didn't have enough backbone to fight for their son, he became more and more angered... Angered to the point where he could kill any and everything in sight...

"DIE!"

Donari's blades swept forward, overwhelming the nine martial warriors with a killing intent that rose to the heavens.

In an instant, nine heads accompanied by vile fountains of blood shot into the air stunning the crowd into silence.

Chapter 919: Good Feelings

Those questioning Donari's combat prowess immediately shut up. There was simply nothing to be said, even his own elder brother had a solemn expression on his face. He had thought that he had been rid of this annoying younger brother of his after he stormed away from the family, only to realize that he had become even more of a problem.

As for Dyon, his eyes shone as he looked at Donari's use of his constitution.

Although Dyon hadn't studied constitutions as deeply as Clara because he was waiting for his wills to unlike before choosing his own, for obvious reasons, that didn't mean he was completely ignorant about them. He had the base knowledge necessary to, at the very least, recognize them.

Donari's 'A Killer's Symphony' was very easy to spot, but understanding how it was used was a completely different matter.

Before hand, Dyon had thought A Killer's Symphony allowed a person to condense their soul energy into an attack, however, this was very clearly not the sake.

Even with this constitution, it wasn't possible to directly attack with a soul. Rather, it was possible to directly attack the soul of someone else which made this constitution scary beyond belief. It was no wonder why its peak form was among the top 3 of male God constitutions.

'Is this the secret to increasing the battle efficiency of the soul?' Dyon began to ponder seriously.

The problem with the soul, and why it was looked down on, was because it was difficult to attack directly without harming yourself. Although you could ignore this and attack anyway, that attack wouldn't have form and would be much weaker compared to someone who could couple their energy with a technique, as an example. Not to mention the fact that if you did this, even if someone's soul was much weaker than yours, you could still end up seriously hurt, or even die!

Dyon was well aware of this. In fact, much of his own combat prowess issues stemmed from the fact he didn't have any techniques to supplement his power. He had a lot of power enhancement techniques, but no efficient way of using them. He had never learned any spear or sword techniques, or any long or short ranged techniques, nor had he had even any simple fist or kicking techniques. He was wholly lacking in that area.

Maybe the only technique he had that could count as an attacking one was [Devour], but it was heavily restrained in its use as well.

Truth be told, it wasn't entirely Dyon's fault for this. He had spent too little time in the martial world, most of which was spent either in a trial world, or in a coma. Outside of that, he also spent much of his time embroiled in battles or seriously studying array alchemy. This was why his array alchemy never lagged behind his soul cultivation, and, in fact, actually surpassed it. Unfortunately, with that, came some trade offs.

Following this logic, without a proper method of attack, the soul was doubly doomed.

However, Donari's constitution seemed to innately allow him to cultivate a method of attack without causing any damage to his own soul... By using his soul to condense killing intent and then using said killing intent to attack, he was able to bypass the burden and harm to his soul...

Of course, array alchemy worked in this exact same way. But, the reason it wasn't seen as efficient was because of the lack of efficiency as well as the lack of power attacking techniques. Weapon's arrays like Dyon's [Judgement] arrays were incredibly rare and incredibly difficult to use. Not to mention, they were a massive drain and couldn't be used in an extended battle. All of this accumulated to the detriment of soul cultivators...

As Dyon was lost in thought, Donari stared at the corpses with disdain, almost breathing in the murder in the air. Although many weren't sharp enough to notice, the more powerful elders and judges in attendance immediately noticed that twin blades in his hands increase in power, albeit very slightly.

They all sucked in a cold breath seeing this. There was no rule against killing during these assessments, and even if there were, at most they could disqualify Donari. Although he had run from the Caedes family, no one was stupid enough to believe the head of their family would sit idly by and allow such a talent to be slighted in anyway.

That aside, they were truly intrigued by this fashion of cultivation. There were many taboo cultivation methods that allowed those who used them to increase their strength through killing, but those sinister methods often had major drawbacks that made those wanting to use them think twice. However, clearly, Donari didn't have to worry about any drawbacks at all... Truly heaven defying.

Everyone could only watch, stunned, as Donari walked slowly and stopped before Dyon.

At that point, Dyon was still lost in thought, his mind racing on overdrive. By the time he snapped out of it, Donari was already within a meter of him, raising a blade aimed at his head.

"I swear there'll be a day I kill you. That second core disciple spot is mine." He said resolutely.

Although his words were vague, it told everyone one thing: Dyon was stronger than him! Even with his arrogance, he didn't dare to say that he would place first!

Dyon smiled. Despite seeing Donari as a whiny cry-baby, he had to admit that his resolve and adaptive abilities were quite impressive. Either way, wasn't he also quite the cry-baby?

However, his smile disappeared in the next moment. "If you want to surpass me, this shitty quadrant won't do you any favors, nor will it allow you to reach your full potential."

Hearing the interaction between Dyon and Donari, the crowd felt a headache coming in.

One of them wantonly killed and often publicly spoke out against the quadrant and the Cathedral, while the other publicly defied the Cathedral by saying he'd save someone they'd arrested all while calling their quadrant a pile of shit. Anyone who had to deal with these maniacs would certainly lose more than a few brain cells.

Donari suddenly burst into laughter hearing Dyon's words, lowering his blade he shook his head. "I didn't know there was a kid crazier than me in this world. But, you can't legitimately believe that your 74th quadrant is so much more different than ours, do you? Truly the pot calling the kettle black."

The crowd was stunned by this realization. 74th quadrant? Is that where this Dyon was from? But, wasn't his last name Jafari?

Suddenly, those smarter individuals in the crowd came to understand. After the major war between the Jafari and allies of The Cathedral, the Jafari must have left to the 74th quadrant, where Dyon was born. The fact that Dyon was 32 years old perfectly fit with this narrative because this war was just about that long ago.

During the war, The Cathedral actually didn't make any movements at all. To the general public, it was a war between the Caedes family and the Jafari. However, those more astute individuals read the tea leaves.

Although the relationship between the Caedes and Jafari family was like fire and water, it was only in so far as healthy competition went. Usually, the youngsters of the two families grew up and competed together. While some of their relationships were worse than other, overall, their relationship was solid.

It was because of this that a war between the two families made little to no sense. No one with half a brain cell, while also knowing the political inner workings of Planet Cathedral, really believed that the Caedes family would turn on the Jafari family.

In the end, what really happened was obvious. The Cathedral didn't like the growing power of the Jafari family and used the Caedes family to get rid of the threat. As for what reason they had to decide on this, no one knew. However, what those clever enough did know was that it was impossible for the Caedes family to make the Jafari run away alone. Rumor had it that Soul Rending Peak secretly sent experts to help the Caedes family!

That aside, the 98th quadrant didn't have very good feelings toward the 74th quadrant...

Chapter 920: Start

As neighboring quadrants, there was often competition between them and it wasn't rare for geniuses of the 74th quadrant to come and temper themselves here... To describe them as unruly would truly be an understatement. So, when the crowd heard that the Jafari family had been chased off to the 74th quadrant, causing them to lose a talent as great as Dyon, they had mixed feelings about it.

The good news was that Dyon had come back... The bad news was that he had might have already completed his trials under the 74th quadrant banner, thus not allowing them to benefit at all. After all, where else could he have gotten that talent increasing honey of his?

Dyon shook his head. "Has nothing to do with the quadrant I'm from. My mother is a mortal woman, what benefits do you think I received from the 74th quadrant? They're not even aware of my existence. To them, I'm likely just another fool who overestimated himself and died in his trials."

Donari was stunned by these words, but he suddenly understood.

Unlike the 98th quadrant, although the 74th quadrant didn't have any kings either, they did at least have dozens, if not more, Dukes. This was already tens of times the number their quadrant had. If Dyon's mother was truly a mortal like he said, it would be very easy for him to go unnoticed by the 74th quadrant even if he became a Duke.

"What I meant is that if you want to improve, staying here isn't the answer. If you go to the tower, yes, you'll be humiliated. Yes, you won't stand a chance against those greater geniuses. Yes... You might even have to lower your head in order to survive, or learn to keep your head high even in the face of death. But, all of that is better than doing what your supposed title holders do."

Suddenly, Dyon sounded like he was lecturing everyone in attendance instead of just speaking to Donari. His words resonated with them all, and those who had been proud of the titles they had earned turned their heads in shame, avoiding the scrutiny of others.

"Your 98th quadrant is already practically unified under one head. You have no campaign wars, so what reason do you have to be here instead of tempering yourselves in the tower? You won't improve here."

When Dyon had come here, he had assumed that he wouldn't have to deal with the title holders of the 98th quadrant. Usually, title holders would only return to their quadrants when campaign season was in

full swing, choosing to spend the rest of the time training in the tower and facing the danger there. It was only in this way that they'd improve.

And yet, that wasn't the case here. Instead, they all cowered, choosing to flex their muscles in front of the weak instead of confronting the strong. This was truly too pathetic.

Everyone took Dyon's words differently.

Some who had been too scared to attempt their own trials resolved in their hearts to do so.

Some who had already taken their trials, but decided to cower here after facing the tough competition of the tower resolved themselves to cower no longer.

While others still became angry at Dyon's words, as though he was personally attacking their character.

In the end, Dyon was content that at least some individuals took his words the right way. Those who chose to become angry had no future to speak of and were destined to forever remain mediocre.

The path of cultivation was one rife with struggles and hardships, if you weren't willing to face them head on, did you deserve to cultivate at all? And even if you did, and you somehow made it through, muddling in mediocrity, there was no doubt in Dyon's mind that people with such weak mindsets would be destroyed under their tribulations.

There was no denying that Dyon had been gifted with a lot of luck in his path, and he would never deny such a thing.

Nearly from the beginning of his journey, he was blessed with a great master who gave him all the tools he could ever need. And then after that, he met a man he was truly proud of becoming the successor of.

However, he would have never received either of these opportunities if he had chosen to remain in his mortal realm. If he had chosen to cower, and stay behind his computer screens and gadgets, he would have never worshipped the 25th White Mother as his master, nor would he have ever met the Demon Sage.

He had to suffer through all sorts of hardships during his time in Focus Academy, even being pushed to the point of near death twice before he received his first opportunity to truly improve.

Although Dyon was lucky, one could never say that he hadn't worked for what he received.

Donari fell into deep thought hearing Dyon's words, before he nodded in the end and walked away without saying a thing.

It took a moment for the battles to start up again after the 'heated' exchange between Dyon and Donari, but finally, under Evangeline's guidance, it did.

Dyon's words had risen his place in the hearts of those four beauties, albeit for vastly different reasons between them.

Lilith simply nodded, acknowledging that although Dyon might be of lowly birth, at least he wasn't a coward. Although it didn't surpass a simple nod, it was more than Lilith usually gave people.

As for Evangeline, she had already been interesting in this Little Brother for one reason or another, but she seemed to like his fiery temper.

RolRol's thoughts were much more innocent, and hardly had to do with Dyon at all, truth be told. She only thought to herself that the man she liked in the future shouldn't be a coward. While Asyna wanted to fight Dyon even more after hearing his words. She wanted to see if he really didn't back down in the face of pressure, or whether those were just high and mighty words he could speak now that he was in front of people he was sure he could beat.

In this vein, even Lilith was moderately interested how Dyon would react when his opponent was someone as powerful as Asyna.

Just like this, the rounds continued, with a few standouts here and there, mostly members of the up and coming families of Planet Cathedral. With the Jafari family gone, there was a huge piece of the pie left than no one had been able to grab a hold of yet. So, many of these families heavily invested in their younger generation, hoping to increase their prestige from the ground up.

These families included the Mogy family, the Acor family, the Coudry family and the Novrel family. Of which, they all had geniuses younger than 180 years old, yet had stepped into the 9th and 10th stages of essence gathering. There was no question that they were promising youths.

For obvious reasons, they had hostility toward Dyon. Their families were finally getting in perfect position to steal the position the Jafari family once held, yet here was Dyon, far younger than any of them, yet supposedly also much more power. They weren't convinced! They would fight it out with him until the end.

Soon, the final round came to the fore, and under a mixture of excited, anticipatory and killing intent filled eyes, Dyon walked to the stage with his group, waiting for it to be their turn to fight.

Maybe by design, the other groups ended quickly, and everyone's eyes finally trained on Dyon. Was he really as powerful as Donari made it seem? Or not?

Dyon had quite a leisurely aura, yet people couldn't help but constantly look toward the massive sword strapped to his chest with jet-black chains. Was this the reason he was so powerful? They were all eager to see him use it.

Dyon's nine opponents fanned out around him, looking around with caution in their eyes at everyone other than themselves, but it was clear that they spent most of their time observing Dyon.

Unlike Donari, though, Dyon didn't belittle people that hadn't insulted him first, so he simply waited patiently, clasping his hands behind his back while lamenting the fact these stupid black disciple robes didn't have pockets. He truly missed his comfy sweat pants.

"Start!" The judge's voice roared into the silent arena.