

The Nameless 921

Chapter 921: Waste

Everyone's eyes were trained on Dyon, as though in an attempt to see through all of his secrets. Of them, none were more focused than Donari's elder brother.

During his own round, he had remained lowkey, not revealing too much of his hand because he had long begun to take this bet seriously. Even the red robed elder was sweating incessantly, unable to control his emotions. If Dyon really won, he would have to be a servant for 100 years! Even worse, half of that time would be in the service of a child, and the other half would be in service of his worst enemy! That was a fate worse than death!

Even without his soul, Dyon could tell that his nine opponents must be communicating with their essence energy right now. Unfortunately, he had no means of intercepting their messages. However, he had a good guess of what they wanted to do.

From the very beginning, the rule was set that any winner of a group had to be responsible for the defeat of at least three others. So, what do you think happened if a winner didn't meet those requirements?

In past years, this would mean that all members of the group would receive something known as a "fated chance". This would allow the losers of the group to have the opportunity of challenging one of the top 100 disciples with the qualifications to enter the sect. In that case, as long as that challenger displayed battle prowess similar to that of the top 100 disciple, they would then be admitted into the sect as well.

That's right, it wasn't even necessary to win!

These rules were set in place because Soul Rending Peak understood that although group battle royales were quick, they weren't necessarily fair. Often time, stronger opponents would be ganged up on. If one didn't have absolute power to suppress everyone else in their group, even if you were objectively the strongest, you wouldn't have a good fate awaiting you.

To mitigate this, Evangeline implemented this "fated chance" rule, and it was also a major reason why everyone loved her despite her only recently coming to prominence.

Evangeline's kind heartedness had come to the fore of the minds of many. After all, she was so soft hearted that even though she was the supervisor of these assessments, she refused to appear until after the first two rounds were concluded so that she wouldn't have to witness anyone's dreams being crushed before they could even try.

Truth be told, the only reason Dyon hadn't moved yet was because he was still mostly lost in his own thoughts. He was very interested in Donari's kill intent still and couldn't be bothered to worry about the schemes of people he felt he could beat whenever he wanted. Although he wouldn't belittle them, that didn't mean he would go all out. If he did something like that, they'd end up dead.

Although it was called killing intent, as far as Dyon was aware, it wasn't a type of will. Or rather, it wasn't a type of will that was often used.

Wills usually came in the form of emitting type that could directly be used to attack. These were wills like fire or water that could directly be incorporated into attacks.

However, there were also wills like Demonic will that had more subtle effects than the usual. It could be used to strengthen the body, and could also be used as a psychological attack.

Then there was killing intent. Interesting enough, there was no killing will or killing dao, this was what had Dyon lost in thought. He felt like he was back in school where experts would unnecessarily name things similarly as though they were purposefully trying to confuse those who came after them.

Killing intent was more like a martial art than anything else. And like other martial arts, it was reliant on the mind and the body, nothing more.

Presence was cultivated by tempering the mind. Perception was also cultivated by tempering the mind. As for Killing intent, it was no different. It was just that the approaches to each was vastly different.

Dyon's first comprehension of Perception came within the first trial maze. It forced his mind to work and think faster than it ever had before to solve an almost impossible problem.

Dyon fostered Perception before he even stepped into the martial world. It was a mind state he received from imitating his father and hero, while also constantly withstanding his father's Presence.

Killing intent, however, wasn't something Dyon had in a dense enough form to label it as true Killing intent. He simply didn't have the proper mind state to achieve it.

Dyon considered himself to be a person who paid debts where they were due, but he didn't kill indiscriminately. For example, he had no intention of killing the nine opponents that were priming to fight right now. In that way, he fell short of Donari who killed for the slightest slights...

But, was that really the way to groom killing intent? Why was it that Dyon had massacred millions of beasts during the third trial, yet hadn't grown a killing intent of his own? Did he really need to have the will to kill any and everything before he could? Did he even need killing intent since he had his Presence? Didn't they function similarly?

That was when Dyon thought of something else. Killing intent seemed like a regular martial art on the surface, but if he remembered correctly, normal martial arts solely required the body, yet killing intent was heavily linked to the soul as well... What if he didn't foster any killing intent after slaughtering all of those beasts because his soul was sealed then?

Just as Dyon felt he was reaching enlightenment, he suddenly felt gusts of wind rush toward him.

Dyon immediately snapped his attention back to reality. He already assumed what his opponents would have to do for them to have a chance, and under normal circumstances, he would be inclined to allow them a path to success, however, the "fated chance" opportunity wasn't as benevolent as it seemed on the surface.

While it was a blessing for the losers of the round, to the winners, it was a punishment for failing. If a winner of a round failed to be responsible for three losses, they would lose the opportunity to become an inner or core disciple and would also be unable to leave the ranks of outer disciple for ten years.

This wasn't Evangeline's doing, but rather a concession she was forced to make in order to implement her wish to allow more opportunities for commoners.

Although she was loved by the general public, the core elders of Soul Rending Peak, she was an eye sore. She had only been in the public light for about 20 or so years, yet she had become Vice Master, wasn't that just spitting in the face of all the work those elders had put into the sect for their millenniums of life?

Even worse, she had slighted many of them in refusing their advances, while the female elders were simply jealous of her looks, assuming that the Soul Rending Peak Master only promoted her because she was beautiful.

In the end, this resulted in many baseless rumors spreading around Soul Rending Peak and was also the very same reason why a woman with status as high as Vice Master was forced to oversee a mere disciple assessment. Anyone with intelligence could see that Evangeline's life wasn't so easy.

To the public, she was a goddess. To the Soul Rending Peak disciples, she was both their goal and their ideal woman. But, to those of near or equivalent status to her, she was hated... Not for anything she had done personally, but rather out of jealousy and spite. It wasn't rare for rumors of her "immoral relations" with the Peak Master to spread amongst the elders, even trickling into the ears of the highest-ranking disciples as well.

All of this said, while Dyon didn't care about the status a mere Soul Rending Peak could give him, he couldn't afford to muddle around in the outer disciple ranks. That would simply waste too much time. The best combination of status and freedom he could have was to become a core disciple of the Peak.

Chapter 922: Bounds

As an outer disciple, he would be forced into wasting his times on missions, have too many people to answer to, as well as be restricted from entering too many areas of the Peak. As a core disciple, his only obligation was to cultivate and defend the honor of the sect when he was called upon. Nothing more, nothing less.

Immediately, two figures appeared before Dyon. They seemed so similar in appearance that they could be twins, but Dyon could tell that one was other than the other.

Coinciding with this observation, their cultivations were different as well. One was a 9th level essence gatherer, while the other remained at the 8th.

While this occurred, Dyon noticed that not only were the remaining seven keeping their distance, they were also fighting amongst themselves with everything they had.

Dyon understood what was happening.

The two before him were likely brothers and were used to fighting together. At the same time, the cultivation of the elder brother was also the highest among the entire group of combatants. Obviously, this gave them the best chance against Dyon.

At the same time, by sending only two people, even if Dyon defeated them both, he would still be one short of the requirements.

As for the fighting going on in the background, that was even more obvious, they wanted to fight it out until only one of them remained. Or, better yet, until there was mutual destruction amongst them all. Dyon didn't doubt that they were coordinating with each other to make the fight look as real as possible.

Why did they bother to fake the fight? Obviously because rules were in place to prevent false results. If not, wouldn't the nine of them just have to jump off the stage and concede to receive their desired result?

If the fight of seven in the back ended up with one winner, Dyon didn't doubt that the brothers before him would quickly turn on each other to push one among themselves out before Dyon could.

Dyon smiled. "Quite a good plan, I must say."

The crowd watched with rapt attention, not wanting to miss a single detail. They were inwardly nodding to themselves, this was a good strategy indeed. The stage was a few hundred meters across and would take even a peak essence gatherer a second or two to cross. By the time Dyon defeated these two and ran over to the side the other seven were fighting, they would have time to react.

The brothers didn't respond, instead maintaining stoic and focused expressions.

Their fists flew toward each other, causing a massive noise to ravage the coliseum as they slammed together. However, what awed the crowd was the fact that the two fists that collided were actually the fists of the two brothers!

An eruption of fire and water will bloomed from them, creating two spheres of opposing wills.

The beautiful lights of red and blue wrapped around each other, covering the two brothers in a sea of fire and river of blue.

The crowd was stunned. "9th level wills!"

Seeing this, Dyon smiled. He once again casually glanced at the fight happening in the distance only to see one of the participants being blown off, reducing the number from seven to six.

To Dyon, it was clear that this participant had allowed himself to be blown off, although his acting was quite good, it was still flawed.

Out of curiosity, Dyon sent another glance toward the judge to see how he would react. Under normal circumstances, a judge of these proceedings would be at least of the middle saint tier. How could such an expert be fooled by the acting of essence gatherers?

It was simple logic. To saints, the movements of essence gatherers were painfully slow. While to an essence gatherer their movements seemed natural, to a saint who could see every minor movement, it was a sham.

However, much to Dyon's expectations, the judge pretended as though he had seen nothing. It didn't take a genius to know that this judge was a friend or subordinate of the golden robed elder.

If Dyon was forced into being an outer disciple, he would not only be easy to suppress, even killing him wouldn't be completely out of the question. The sect wouldn't care about such a weak talent.

As Dyon was casually observing the judge who pretended as though he hadn't noticed his gaze, yet another of his opponents was sent flying off the stage. As for the brothers, they hadn't moved, content to block Dyon's path while also preparing their own attacks. If anything left the scope of their plans, they would immediately mutually blast themselves off of the platform.

When Evangeline noticed what was happening, she frowned deeply. However, she couldn't act. All the judge would have to do is insist that he didn't see anything, then it would become a matter of Evangeline overstepping her bounds. That would allow those elders who disliked her to leap at yet another opportunity to suppress her. Disrupting the disciple assessments wouldn't lead to a small punishment...

Donari's elder brother snorted. "Is this the supposed genius of Unseen Peak? Can't even handle a small problem like this?"

Even as he spoke, another participant was blasted out, leaving on four.

"What is he doing?" Many in the crowd began to frown and wonder.

Even if he thought that this was unfair or that he had little to no chance, shouldn't he at least try? He just went on the whole speech about how they should risk their lives to become stronger, but now that he was faced with some adversity, he didn't dare to take action? Wasn't that a little too pathetic? Did he think he would look cooler if he didn't try at all?

Thinking about all of those participants before him that were incited by his words and even put their lives on the line to earn a spot, many of the onlookers couldn't help but feel disgusted. There was nothing worse than a person who talked big but had no ability to back it up, or to, at the very least, follow his own example.

The only people who hadn't spoken were the four the beauties. With their cultivation, they could see that there was something more to Dyon's actions... Did he have some sort of plan?

It had to be said, that in Asyna's mind, if she wasn't suppressed by the 98th quadrant, Dyon would be no match for her. In fact, the reason why she wanted to fight Dyon to begin with was because of this.

She saw Dyon as worthy of being her opponent since she was suppressed. Nothing more, nothing less. So, when she saw Dyon not moving at all, although she wasn't as quick as others to condemn him, she kept a skeptic mind. It was just unfortunate for her that she didn't know that Dyon was being suppressed too.

As for the brothers standing before Dyon, although they were elated inside, they didn't dare to have an outward showing. However, even they began to question some things.

All of their preparation was under the assumed strength of Dyon... What if he was tricking everyone? What if they had a chance to win and he was just pretending as though they didn't? If he really fooled everyone, then wouldn't this be the biggest joke round ever? To allow a first stage essence gatherer the chance to move on, where would they hide their faces if he actually turned out to be a weakling?

Despite having these thoughts, they didn't move. They only promised themselves that if he really did turn out to be a fraud, they would destroy him once they became disciples of Soul Rending Peak. After all, the two of them were brothers. One way or another, they would have used this strategy of theirs so that they could both enter together.

In that moment, two more participants were blasted off in a flurry of flashing lights, leaving only two.

Looking at each other, they couldn't help but smile. Even if Dyon started running toward them now, he wouldn't make it in time. On top of that, the two brothers were still fine and could definitely obstruct him! They would get their chance to enter Unseen Peak!

In that moment, the judge couldn't hold back his sneer as he oversaw the situation in the arena, preparing himself to administer the "fated chance" rule.

The two participants charged up their most powerful attacks, quickly explaining to each other how to escape unharmed and the flaws of their techniques before blasting them forward.

At that moment, the two brothers also noticed the situation in the back. Looking at each other and smiling they blasted attacks toward each other as well.

The crowd could only watch with disappointment on their faces as four bodies flew apart, blowing through the air toward the out of bounds line.

Chapter 923: He Didn't...

Even as the crowd wanted to begin to boo and the disciples were looking at Dyon with disdain, he only smiled, taking a step forward.

"Truthfully speaking, I have no will to eliminate you all. Under normal circumstances, I wouldn't want to cut off the path to your future and would have allowed you all the "fated chance".

"However, Vice Master Evangeline has been nice enough to allow you all an extra chance. And, becoming a core disciple is quite important to me, so I can't allow you all to do as you please."

The crowd couldn't understand what Dyon was talking about. The four contestants were already blasting toward the outer boundaries. If he wanted the conclusion he sought, he would have to stop at least three of them from going out!

But, according to the arrangement, that was completely impossible.

The two brothers before Dyon had already blasted apart and were hundreds of meters in either direction of Dyon. On top of that, the final two that had already been fighting hundreds of meters away were also blasting toward their respective boundaries, creating a massive square of flying bodies...

In order to stop three of them, it was no exaggeration to say Dyon would have to travel at least a kilometer in a split second. That kind of speed was simply impossible!

Dyon casually took off the massive sword on his back, causing the eyes of the crowd to widen. Was he going to use it?

Seeing this, the elder sneered. If Dyon sent a long-range attack now, he could just say that he wasn't responsible for their defeats because they were already flying out. Did he really think that just this was enough to defeat him? How ridiculous!

On top of this, he was a mere essence gatherer. What long ranged attack could he possibly use in quick enough succession?

By this point, even Lilith was frowning in disappointment. How could he not have seen through the biased intentions of the judge by now? Or was his cultivation really so low that he was fooled by the "acting" of the other participants.

The red robed finally breathed a sigh of relief before laughing heartily. He wouldn't have to become a slave, how could he not be happy beyond belief?

"It doesn't look like you'll be able to fight him Asyna." RolRol nibbled her lips. Had they really overestimated him so much?

Asyna sighed. "Under this suppression, even I would have to use more than 80% of my strength to still win in this situation. On top of that, I would need to use that technique." She shook her head. "It doesn't matter. Since he was so weak and stupid, there wasn't much of a point in fighting him to begin with."

The golden robed elder smiled complacently, sneering inwardly. He had much more control of his outward appearance than the judge, but he was clearly very happy with himself. Now, he didn't need to worry about what it would mean for him as an outer sect elder to offend a high-ranking disciple. In fact, even if he wanted to kill Dyon after this, it would be as easy as flipping over a hand.

Maybe the only person in the arena who wasn't doubting Dyon was Donari himself. Only he was aware of that facing Dyon was like facing the peak of an eternal mountain. It wasn't even close... He might as well have been in a race without a finish line.

Although others of the Unseen Peak had seen the battle, how could they be more certain than Donari of the power Dyon had? For all they know, Donari was only injured because Dyon had some amazing defensive treasure on his chest that broke Donari's hand when he attacked and that was the only reason the victory was so easy.

However, under the eyes of everyone, Dyon did something inexplicable... He threw his sword into the air!

The massive 700 000 jin sword spiralled in the air, reaching a height of more than a hundred meters in an instant. Before anyone could realize what was happening, Dyon had vanished!

With a speed that made the eyes of the beauties widen, Dyon made it to the side of the fire will wielder of the two brothers in less than a blink of an eye.

At that time, the elder brother had a complacent smile on his face, completely oblivious to what was about to happen. Even as Dyon's elbow slammed downward and into his forehead, he still believed in he had victory in hand.

Dyon didn't even wait for his body to slam into the arena floor, in a moment, he had already disappeared again. What astonished those who could keep up with him was that he actually hadn't chosen the closest individual, as though he was trying to show off, he went for the furthest participant in the distance, swinging his foot downward and destroying his rib cage before moving on as though nothing happened.

The judge and elders could only watch in shock as Dyon's body flitted around as though it was made of wind itself.

In an instant, Dyon had sent out four attacks and returned to his original position, casually catching his massive sword and placing it on his back again as the loud booms of four crippled bodies crashed into the arena floor.

The weaker members of the audience had no idea what happened. To them, Dyon had tossed his sword up and caught it before loud booms sounded throughout the coliseum. What the hell was happening?

It was only at that moment the dust settled, allowing everyone to see...

There, at the very edge of the arena, mere centimeters from being out of bounds, four unconscious and bloodied bodies lay at each of the corners of the platform...

Dyon smiled, looking at the judge. "I guess I win, right?"

Everyone stood rooted in place. Was this speed that an essence gatherer could produce? Was this speed a saint could produce?

Those with lower cultivation had no way of differentiating the speed of those lauded stages of cultivation. Even the judge, who was a saint himself, was stunned. He was absolutely certain he didn't have such speed.

Dyon had done this on purpose. He was simply telling the judge that he wasn't a match for him. If he continued to play underhanded tricks and use underhanded tactics, Dyon would make him suffer. Plain and simple.

This judge was a mere 6th grade saint, the lowest threshold requirement for reaching sainthood. This meant that he had only managed to fill 63 of 108 meridians, corresponding to the peak of 7th stage of essence gathering, before he forcefully ascended from the essence gathering stage. Before Dyon, he was even weaker than some peak-level essence gatherers, and he wanted to flaunt and sneer before him? Who did he think he was?

Just as the judge was about to speak, Dyon's Presence swept over him. It was only for a moment, but it was enough for a cold sweat to permeate the entire back of the judge.

In that moment, he gave up all thoughts of arguing that Dyon had taken advantage of the work of others to win. How laughable, he couldn't even face Dyon himself, yet he wanted to cut off his path to the future?

There was only one reason why they were retained as judges. They came from prestigious families that allowed them to enter with letters of recommendation. Or else, they would have never would have made it into the sect on their own merit.

There was no shortage of characters like this judge in Soul Rending Peak, but they were all outer sect disciples, with only a few managing to become inner disciples. Core disciples had no such corruption issues... Or, more accurately, their corruption issues weren't as obvious.

"D – Dyon Jafari Wins." The judge his way to the verdict, not even able to watch Dyon casually hop off the stage.

Many were still processing exactly what they had just seen. Even those with the capability to witness Dyon's actions were completely baffled. They knew his body was powerful, but was it really to this extent?

"He... He didn't use any wills." RolRol whispered.

She couldn't fathom reaching that speed without the use of a technique or, at the very least, a speed based will. Yet, she had just witnessed it.

Chapter 924: Effort

Asyna's eyes once again brightened, her fighting spirit igniting. "Why do you think he threw his sword up first? Was it to show off? Or did it have another purpose?"

"I don't know... Is the sword heavy? Why can't I tell how heavy it is?"

Lilith frowned, unable to understand either. By all rights, that should be a practitioner level sword, how could it be heavy enough to influence someone who was capable of reaching such a speed? It didn't make any sense

Dyon, of course, was simply smiling as though none of this had anything to do with him.

Back when Dyon first took this sword as his main weapon, he had placed a concealment array to hide its aura as a transcendent level weapon, for obvious reasons. However, the problem was that this concealment array was imperfect for various reasons.

For one, Dyon's soul was sealed and he was forced to use aurora stones instead. It went without saying that Dyon level of precision and control drastically dropped because of this, not to mention the fact the level of array he could create also severely dropped.

Because of these reasons, Dyon usually only used his aurora stones to manipulate already created formations and arrays because this was much easier and much less burdensome.

However, with those issues meant that the concealment array he placed on his sword had many glaring issues. For example, not being able to conceal its weight from prying eyes.

Anyone with half a brain would understand that a practitioner level weapon shouldn't be hundreds of thousands of jin in weight, but concealing something from those with high enough senses to see it required a highly complex spatial type array that Dyon didn't have the capability of creating for himself in these conditions.

Knowing this, Dyon used the crudest method of concealment: a bandage wrap. He then cleverly used that disguise to portray himself as a weapon's master, making the weight he was unable to hide easily explained.

But now, Dyon did something completely different. With the help of Clara, Dyon was able to conceal the weight of his weapon, so now it seemed to truly be a practitioner level weapon. Aside from Dyon himself, no one else, who didn't wield the blade, of course, could sense the weight. Even if they clashed with him, the extra weight would seem to be Dyon's own strength.

Now, this expert concealment was even confusing a 10th stage grandmaster of formations in Asyna, who could not see through it at all. After all, it was an array drawn by a 2nd stage comet level master in Clara.

This was why Dyon decided to be purposefully flashy. Now all of his tactics would come off as showing off, rather than well thought out, conveniently explaining his sword toss into the air.

All of this said, no type of concealment was absolutely perfectly. Lilith's mind was already beginning to have a keen interest in Dyon's secrets, and that may very well not bode well for him.

"He did use a technique." Lilith silently mumbled to herself. "But what technique could amplify the body to such heights with such little backlash?..."

Although Lilith didn't mean for others to hear, Asyna still did. "Technique? You mean how his skin reddened? If my eyes weren't tricking me, his veins also with gold for a brief moment too..."

RolRol blinked her large eyes adorably, but her cultivation was too low to have seen through those things. Dyon was almost a blur to her.

"His power multiplied by at least three to four times." Lilith's frown deepened. Did it really turn out that they would have to get rid of him? But his power still wasn't enough to handle the 98th quadrant experts alone, let alone it being necessary for them to step forward themselves.

But, even if she thought this, the reality was that if Lilith had to fight the top most experts of the 98th quadrant, she was still lacking as well. Of course, that was because she was only 21 years old, but the fact remained true.

So, no. Lilith wasn't speaking in terms of her stepping forward personally, but rather if it would be necessary to call down experts from their clans or not...

"Asyna." Lilith communicated via a line of energy. "When you fight him, go all out. Don't hold anything back."

"But..." Asyna wanted to protest. They were in hiding for a reason. Until they entered the tower inner world, it wouldn't be safe for them to use all of their abilities.

In the martial world, their path of cultivation wasn't looked down upon for moral reasons. No one was so bored or righteous so as to go out of their way to punish them. The reality of the matter was that their path of cultivation only seemed 'evil' to a layman. There was no need for them to delve into truly evil practices like using cultivation cauldron, refining living beings into puppets, or killing the innocent for power.

So, the reason they would be hated here wasn't because of morality. Rather, it was because of their power and their secrets.

The quadrants in which RolRol, Asyna and Lilith came from had many secrets long since lost to the main stream cultivation world, many secrets which even Dyon would drool over. However, they had their own reasons for remaining separate, and now wasn't the right time for that to change.

All in all, them being ousted as devil path cultivators outside of the tower was a massive taboo to their clansmen's futures. Was it really worth risking the good of their entire quadrant for to probe one young man barely older than them?

"I'll handle it. Besides you and him, no one else will be able to surmise the techniques you're using. In fact, there's no guarantee that he would even recognize them." Lilith responded calmly.

"But... What if he does?"

"I plan on killing him regardless of the results. It's no matter." Lilith's voice was cold and devoid of emotion. If one didn't hear her words, she could very well be talking about something completely unrelated to killing another human being.

Asyna frowned, but still nodded. "You better make sure that RolRol doesn't find out about any of this. Or else I won't forgive you. You have better remember that while I'll cross over into the celestial realm in two years at the most, whether you will ever is still up in the air. Keep your heartless ghost queen tendencies to yourself, or I'll make you pay with my own two fists."

Lilith pretended as though she hadn't heard Asyna's words and simply refocused her attention to the fights below, only to find Dyon's eyes staring at her.

At that moment, her dark black eyes, in complete contrast with her flowing white hair suddenly blazed in red. For the first time in her life, it felt as though she was being seen through, and it pissed her off.

However, Dyon was completely unperturbed by her killing intent. Although he didn't know why she was so angry, he assumed that she didn't like being looked at.

Dyon had his own reasons for making sure that he was on the radar of these mysterious beauties. While others may be screaming at him to keep a lower profile, especially his wives, it just wasn't his style. If the underworkings of this odd 98th quadrant wanted to have a war of intelligence and scheming, he would happily oblige them.

The clash of wills between Lilith and Dyon was only a moment and resulted in neither of them backing down. However, it was noticed by no one but Evangeline whose own thoughts were just as mysterious.

In this way, the assessment continued without much suspense. Dyon blazed through his rounds, never again allowing the crowd to witness the flashiness of his group stage round. Instead, his actions were slower, and more deliberate. Often times, he would even give his opponent some pointers which would greatly benefit them in their spar against the Unseen Peak disciples.

Dyon's actions began to overshadow his persona as an arrogant individual and actually started to gain the respect of many of the participants. After all, they had no reason to be angry with Dyon for beating them considering they still had a good chance at reaching the top 200 and still entering the sect.

Just like that, Dyon won six matches in a row and had stepped into the semi-finals without much effort.

Chapter 925: Ended

For obvious reasons, the crowd and the final four contenders themselves were keen with anticipation. If they won just one more match, they would have the best chance of becoming a core disciple!

At this moment, four young men stood on the stage. One was Dyon, the other was Donari and his elder brother. As for the last, he was the commoner that managed to reach the 10th essence gathering stage in less than 180 years.

In the interest of fairness, the tournament, up to this point, hadn't utilized a normal tournament bracket style. Instead, the brackets were only locked in place for a single round, before being randomized for the next, and so on. In this way, there would be continuous randomization that would stop individuals from planning out their matches.

Of course, this was only on the surface. It seemed like a good practice, but the reality was that such organization allowed for even more tampering.

That said, Dyon had still made it all the way here. In the face of absolute power, petty tricks hardly mattered. At least that was the case if your scheming wasn't profound enough.

The golden robed elder stood before them, utilizing a formation to randomize and organize their four names.

"Dyon Jafari vs Donari Caedes!" The elders voice boomed. "Virvor vs Olaf Caedes!"

After hearing this, Donari sighed. He had sworn to become a core disciple, but how could that still be possible now?

However, this dejection only lasted for a moment. This was his chance to spar with Dyon again! Their last bout had ended too quickly and he didn't have the opportunity to learn anything. Even if he couldn't win, he would go all out!

From the very beginning, Donari's performance had shown the world the prowess of constitutions. To be a mere 4th stage essence gatherer, yet effortlessly fight those above his station was something that could only be reserved for those of Donari's ilk.

He confidently walked to the center of the stage, facing off against Dyon with brimming fighting intent and a dense killing intent.

"I don't know how to fight if it's not to kill. You'll have to forgive me." Donari spoke very seriously. Everyone understood how much of a correlation constitution and disposition had to one another, so many understood Donari's plight. It wasn't so much that constitutions caused changes in personality, but rather certain dispositions raised the chances of garnering a constitution of a specific type. Donari was no different. "I'll make you use that weapon of yours!"

Donari blazed forward, immediately using the highly lauded movement technique of Unseen Peak, [Raising Up: Illusory Steps].

"He's actually already stepped into the third act!" The core disciples of Unseen Peak saw through Donari's mastery in an instant. After all, how could many be more familiar with their sect's core teachings than themselves?

Every sect had a core group of teachings. These teachings would encompass the most important aspects of cultivation and combat prowess. One would be the sect's movements technique. Another would be an attack-based technique tailored to the specialty of the sects, for example a sword wielding technique or a fist technique. Another would be a defense-based technique, although this wasn't always part of

the equation, sects that specialized in pacifist teachings or robust wills such as earth will, would definitely incorporate a technique of this branch as part of their core teachings.

The point was that depending on the sect, it could have a wide ranging and diverse group of core teachings.

As for Unseen Peak, it had three teachings. The first was its movements technique, Illusory Steps. The second was its cultivation technique. And the last was its attack-based technique, Illusory Intent.

Other than to anger his family, the other reason why Donari would choose to go to a sect once backed by the Jafari family was exactly because of these techniques. Each ranged from the peak earth level to the lower heaven level, and also perfectly suited his assassin like constitution. What was worse than a killing intent you couldn't see coming?

Donari's body became snake like before disappearing in a burst of eerie red mist. In that moment, his presence was completely silenced, making Dyon smile in praise before punching outward at an odd, downward angle.

BOOM!

Dyon's fist collided with Donari's, starting a flurry of exchanges.

At that moment, it seemed as though Dyon was shadow boxing. If it wasn't for the sonic blasts of air erupting from his fists, many would believe that he was hitting nothing at all.

The crowd was mesmerized. Without the distraction of having to watch the movements of two fighters, they could completely focus on Dyon form and responses. It was only at that moment that they truly understood the difference between them and a true expert.

Dyon body control and form were almost without compare, it was as though none of his movements were wasted in the least. Of course, this was only from the perspective of someone with lower cultivation, but the point still stood.

Without a single will or technique, Dyon's punches remained tight and efficient, blasting back the coming attacks with little effort. It was as though Donari wasn't invisible at all!

Dyon shook his head, "It's a shame that your soul is crippled. With a whole soul, I wonder just how powerful you would be."

Hearing these words, Donari's anger raised to the skies. At that moment, claps of booming fists intensified, followed by blood dripping to the ground in an unceasing rhythm.

While many thought that blood might be Dyon's, those with sharper gazes knew better. The blood came from Donari's own fists!

Dyon slapped a hand to the side, stepping forward toward a seemingly invisible target and slamming a palm forward.

A muffled grunt sounded out, before a spray of blood released itself into the air.

At that moment, a jet of air sped through the arena with such ferocity that the arena tiles below it began to crack.

BOOM!

To the surprise of everyone, Donari's body suddenly appeared, sliding down a far wall of the coliseum. There was clear fighting intent still in his eyes, but he had already been thrown from the arena... His destiny with becoming a core disciple had ended, for now.

Chapter 926: Unimportant

Dyon walked over to help Donari up, sighing inwardly. Although the Unseen Peak core teachings weren't enough to make him envious, he was lamenting something else entirely.

After the Celestial Deer Sect was attacked, its library was ransacked and its core teachings were stolen. After all, if the devil path's Eclipse sect was founded on core teachings that surpassed the divine grade, how could the former number one sect not also have had such caliber of teachings?

Unfortunately, they were all now gone. Even worse, Dyon's master's memories didn't have such teachings within it. As for the reason why, Dyon's master was the guardian beast of their sect, while the core teachings were meant for humans. Why would she have knowledge of them? Unlike Dyon's little brother, Zaire, Dyon's master didn't follow both the beast and human path, she only followed the beast path.

The good news was that this wasn't the case for all of their core teachings. Being a soul centric sect, Dyon's master had thoroughly learned the core teachings related to array alchemy theory.

This truth made Dyon wonder though. His current Soul cultivation technique, Soul Rend, was already a peak divine level technique. Could it be that his celestial deer sect had an even better one?

That idea was truly mind boggling. Dyon's soul cultivation was already going at break-neck speed, even his wives who didn't have good soul talent were cultivating at inconceivable speeds. Of course, that was also due to Dyon dual cultivating with them, but dual cultivation alone couldn't account for everything.

That aside, as much as Dyon wanted to know what happened to his sect's core teachings, he didn't even know where to start looking for them, so he could only leave it be. At least for now, divine level techniques were more than enough to keep him occupied. He wouldn't reach a bottle neck in their cultivation for a good long while.

Donari took Dyon's hand and stood up. Although fighting intent was still brimming in his eyes, he calmed himself.

He usually found it very difficult to control his killing intent, but for some reason he could do so easily in front of Dyon. This wasn't an effect even peak celestials had had on him, so he found it hard to believe a 32-year-old could do this to him.

However, he didn't have time to think about it. Immediately after their bout ended, the crowd was already anticipating the battle between Olaf and Virvor.

For obvious reasons, the meaning behind this battle was much deeper. Although Dyon was technically a commoner himself, the crowd had no idea. To them, he was born of the Jafari family and thus had status equal to Donari and his elder brother.

However, Virvor was a true commoner. In fact, he was an orphan.

From a very young age, he had been alone, having lost his family to the flames of war. Considering he was 170 or so years old, this war was obviously not the same one that drove the Jafari family away, but rather one of the many wars the populace of Planet Cathedral completely ignored.

Although Cathedral Universe was completely tranquil, there were still a whole 99 other universes that those who lived here seemed to never think about. In those universes, there was nothing but a overflowing violent that engulfed the lives of all those who were there.

Because The Cathedral completely ignored the plights of those people, it had become a hotbed for bandits and wannabe overlords. There was no shortage of individuals who wanted to rule over those lands and become the kings of what Virvor saw as nothing more than a pile of garbage.

It was no surprise, then, that Virvor had a disdain for the safe and noble life those of the fortunate lived in this universe. However, he didn't dare to show any dissatisfaction because he understood that he would be hunted down if those here came to know that he wasn't from Cathedral Universe.

Virvor had risked everything to sneak his way into this universe and gain a new lease on life, he wasn't about to lose that opportunity just for some petty revenge on an existence he had no chance against. But, that didn't mean he didn't have a brewing anger within him, waiting to be unleashed.

Unfortunately, he also understood his limits. Because he wasn't born in this universe, he was suppressed by being here as well. Although universal suppression wasn't as overbearing as quadrant level suppression, it wasn't to be ignored either.

Facing off against Olaf, Virvor calmed himself. Although the Caedes family was among the organizations he hated the most, along with The Cathedral and The Jafari family, he knew he couldn't afford to lose his temper here.

If he fought, he wouldn't be able to control himself, and if he revealed his true cultivation, it would become easy to investigate that he was being suppressed. If that happened, his ending wouldn't be good.

However, he wasn't discouraged. Although he hated Dyon, his words had inspired him as well. After earning a spot with Soul Rending peak and becoming an Inner Disciple, he would leave for the tower and temper himself there. If there came a day where he became truly powerful, he would lift this quadrant up from the dregs and forge a path for all the people less fortunate than himself.

So, before the judge could say a word, Virvor cupped his fists and bowed. "I concede."

Under the stunned gazes of everyone, he turned and stepped off of the platform.

Olaf sneered. "It's good that a commoner knows his place."

Virvor froze on his way off the stage, trembling. His fists clenched so tightly that the knuckles of his tanned skin turned completely white before a dark red color began to drip down the cracks of his fingers.

The crowd didn't dare to make a sound. By all rights, after Virvor conceded, the match should be over. However, the judge had still not said a single word, as though he was waiting to see if Virvor was truly willing to take this slap to the face.

In truth, there was nothing particularly wrong with what the judge was doing. In fact, if you spun it properly, it could be seen as him favoring Virvor by giving him a chance to retract his statement. But, the reality was very different.

All of the judges present were too lacking in talent to make it into Soul Rending Peak by normal means, which was why their status was so low. So, how did they don the golden robes of a disciple? It was simple, they were of noble birth and thus took advantage of the biased and corrupt system to receive letters of recommendation to enter the sect.

It couldn't be said that all nobles were terrible people, that would be ridiculous. But, expecting those with such poor prospects in cultivation to not be bitter and resentful of the world was asking for too much.

The day of the assessment were the only days these judges felt that they wielded any real power, and they were apt to use it. If they could force Virvor into an embarrassing situation, they'd do it.

However, things wouldn't go as planned.

"If you want to step off the stage, are you really going to let a word from a clown stop you?" Dyon's voice wasn't very loud, but in an arena constructed for sound reverberation, it didn't need to be for everyone to hear his words.

Virvor's jaw clenched. Although Dyon's words were right, he didn't feel like Dyon was on his side either, so his immediate instinct was to lash out.

"What would you know?!"

"About your life? Next to nothing. But, I know plenty about my own." Dyon replied simply.

This response only made Virvor angrier. "Who doesn't know about your life? Another pampered member of the Jafari family and you deem to give me advice?"

"I don't deem to do anything. But, the difference between me and you is that I don't make assumptions about another's circumstances, I only try to understand them.

"My family was forced to flee to a much stronger quadrant, what kind of noble existence do you think I have? Even if my family retained its prowess, I've already told you that my mother was a commoner, do you believe that this would receive good treatment in a noble family?"

"I don't deem to say that my circumstances are worse than yours, but it would be smarter to not assume things about me.

"My words were simple. If you have something you want to do, do you really need to bother changing your mind because of the words of someone unimportant to your goal?"

Chapter 927: Third Grade

Virvor's eyes bored into Dyon's. Maybe if looks could really kill, Dyon would long since be dead. However, that didn't change the fact that his words were very reasonable.

Who didn't know that the Jafari family was forced to flee? Who didn't know that their Patriarch, Bol Jafari, was heavily injured during the war? And Dyon had, in fact, made it clear that his mother was a commoner and that even the 74th quadrant, even as a Duke, knew nothing about it.

In the end, no one doubted him. Nobles couldn't understand the idea of someone who was noble, pretending that he wasn't. While commoners couldn't understand the idea of someone purposefully lowering themselves to their level unless they were there.

Clenching his jaw, a resolute expression appeared on Virvor's face as he resolutely stepped off, no longer bothering with anything else around him.

The moment he did, Dyon leisurely leapt onto the stage to see the steaming Olaf. He no longer cared about Virvor, but hearing Dyon call him a clown was enough to make him rage.

If he lost this battle, not only would an elder of the Slaughter Peak become a slave, he would have to give up his family's core teaching to their mortal enemy!

There was no need to explain why this was a slap to the face of the Caedes family... This was a battle he simply couldn't lose!

Below the stage, Donari had wanted to warn Dyon about their family core teaching. Although he had broken off from the Caedes family and thus refused to use their techniques, that didn't mean that he didn't understand their ins and outs. However, he felt that even if he did this, it wouldn't help Dyon, so he simply held his tongue.

Up until now, Olaf had been very lowkey. Only using simple techniques and his overwhelming cultivation to win up until now. In fact, many of his opponents directly conceded aside from two that overestimated their abilities and tried to use the Caedes family to gain notoriety.

While the Jafari family was always noted for the excellent use of wills and excellent perception, what set the Caedes family apart was their bloodline abilities and how it connected to the core teachings!

Now, Olaf had no more reason to be lowkey. He would unleash everything and kill this Dyon from the dregs of the Jafari family right here!

Dyon silently stood before Olaf, his features serene. It was almost as though he was spectating rather than participating.

In truth, this fight was useless to those of Soul Rending Peak. Considering there were two core disciple spots, fighting it out between them was a bit excessive.

After wasting more than an entire day watching inferior talents fight, the disciples of Soul Rending Peak were beginning to feel an itch they very much wanted to scratch.

Oddly enough, despite knowing that Dyon and Olaf would be two new core disciples of their sect, even the outer disciples hadn't shown any true respect to them. Of course, Dyon noted this down. It seemed claiming a spot through assessments didn't cement your position in the sect.

However, Dyon didn't mind. After all, this made sense.

The assessments took place relatively often, every two years, in fact. At this pace, wouldn't the sect be overrun with core disciples? What kind of respectable sect had so many core disciples?

It wasn't that the number was particularly important, per se. But, these things needed to be put in context.

Core disciples received the most resources and guidance a sect had to give. On top of that, they were also seen as the future pillars of the sect and they were all meant to be talents only seen once in a

century, if not once in a millennium. At the very least, this had to be true in the context of the 98th quadrant.

If Soul Rending Peak really accepted one core disciple every two years, over its long history, it would have tens of thousands of core disciples by now. The idea of having so many talents was absolutely ridiculous and made little to no sense.

The truth of the matter was that had it not been for the rule change, now including a spar before acceptance, there wouldn't be any disciples here to watch this farce at all. Unfortunately, they were the ones chosen to take on this thankless task.

As for how Soul Rending Peak cut down on its number of accepted disciples, Dyon didn't know. But, that hardly mattered to him. With his personality, would he really think that there was something these core disciples could do that he couldn't?

Seeing Dyon distracted by his thoughts like this, even going so far as to scan his surroundings as though he wasn't about to fight a tough battle, it was no surprise that Donari's elder brother was pissed. However, this entire time, he hadn't shown a single change of expression.

After being suppressed by his own younger brother for so many years, would he really allow some Jafari family member to do the same?

Before Donari's birth, Olaf was the most talented member of the Caedes family in centuries. As one might expect with that kind of talent, over the 40 or so years between his birth and Donari's, he lived a pampered life. Constantly protected by his father, loved by his family elders, and all but guaranteed to inherit the family in the future.

However, that was when his father took a concubine. Not only did he refuse to tell the family about her origins, he treated her as though she was more his first wife than his true wife was!

Being the son of the first lady of the Caedes family, this left Olaf wallowing in hatred. He couldn't understand the actions of his father, yet he could only wait for the day that this concubine would give birth...

That entire time, he comforted himself by saying there was no way this new sibling of his would become more important to the family than him. After all, he was so talented, what were the odds? As long as this child was born mediocre, his father would snap out of it and start loving him again.

However, for the first time in Olaf's life, he faced the reality of not having everything in his control... No longer did his noble status mean much of anything in the face of a younger brother who exceeded him in all things.

Soon after, all of the attention, praise and filial piety Olaf had received completely transferred to his younger brother. And maybe the worst part? That very same younger brother through it all away, yet the family still hadn't given up on him yet!

This was Olaf's chance. To defeat a man his younger brother acknowledged as his better, wouldn't that be the ultimate slap to his family's face? Wouldn't he finally be able to show them all just how wrong they were?

"I've waited for a moment like this for a long time." Olaf sneered, releasing a dense black fog that warped the vision of everyone witnessing the scene.

Suddenly, the fog thinned, covering the entire arena in a translucent grey. It was clear that this was the lauded peak heaven technique. Even saints felt their senses being manipulated under its effects.

It suddenly felt as though up was down and down was up. As though left was right and right was left. And that was just for the audience! None of them could imagine what it felt like for Dyon!

However, immediately after that, something even more shocking occurred.

A crackling sound echoed from Olaf's body as though something was releasing. A moment after, an eruption of dense saint energy blasted out from his body, increasing the effectiveness of the technique to another level.

Those with weaker cultivation immediately passed out from dizziness, unable to stop the feeling of their heads imploding from the inside out.

It was only at that moment that everyone understood they had underestimated Olaf's talent... He had already stepped into sainthood as a third-grade expert!

Dyon didn't have much of a reaction to Olaf's outburst. He was just sneering at the fact the judge was allowing Olaf this much time to prepare without having said anything about starting the match. Was this really how they decided to do things?

In a normal battle, would anyone have this much time to deploy their technique? Although it was quite good, it was clearly flawed. No one would allow anyone to just charge up their attacks like this.

On top of all of that, restrictions on cultivation weren't so easily removed either.

Chapter 928: Vice Master

Originally, Olaf hadn't wanted to stroll in with his sainthood cultivation to look down on those around him and clear the assessment easily. However, unlike others, he was privy to private information.

According to Evangeline, the rule changes should have been a surprise to everyone, but was it really so shocking that this "everyone" she was talking about didn't include those with statuses as high as Olaf?

As much as a week before this day, Olaf had already learned of the rule change. However, he wasn't confident. In front of a core disciple, what the hell did saint cultivation mean?

So, his plan was to fake his cultivation, thus lowering the evaluation requirements. After all, if he was saint disguised as an essence gatherer, he would have proficiency far exceeding the normal bounds of an essence gatherer. If he could do that, then he would impress and thus his journey to becoming a core disciple would be far easier. Not to mention the fact that passing the trials a couple months from now, the very same trials that would decide whether he had the right to remain a core disciple, would also be far easier.

However, Dyon had ruined all of these plans. It was suffice to say that he was pissed.

To seal his cultivation in a way that wouldn't be detected by even the judges and elders was a massive feat, not to mention the fact it costed a ridiculous amount of money. Yet, he didn't even get what he needed out of it. It could be said that it was a massive wasted investment. But, it was still better than losing his family's technique... If that happened, he would have no chance of entering the good graces of the family again.

Seeing this abrupt change, it was only now that the disciples of Soul Rending Peak began to take Olaf seriously. To be a saint definitely gave you the right to be an outer disciple. In fact, considering he was a 10th stage essence gatherer first, being a third-grade saint was definitely enough to remain an inner disciple, albeit near the bottom of the rankings. But, considering they were the disciples chosen to come this time, weren't they all near the bottom of their respective rankings too?

"Can we start yet, judge?" Dyon looked over at the golden robed judge. Although he didn't say much, his words exposed exactly what was going on. What made it worse was that the judge couldn't control his eyes and accidentally glanced at Olaf as though asking for confirmation.

"Battle between Dyon Jafari and Olaf Caedes, begin!"

The moment these words were spoken, Olaf's body disappeared into the mist. But, it was clear that this technique far exceeded Unseen Peak's illusory steps. Even Dyon was having problems finding him because he had to constantly orient himself to the quickly changing directional rules.

It seemed that Olaf could change the rules of movement whenever he wanted. Dyon suddenly felt like he was back in the formation that protected the Elvin Tombs, except this time, it was all in his mind instead of being reality.

If Dyon's soul was unlocked, dealing with this would be as easy as flipping a hand, but, unfortunately, the biggest weakness of body cultivators were attacks on the mind. Every cultivation path had its own pros and cons.

Seeing Dyon not find him immediately like he had with Donari, Olaf's laughter echoed through the arena.

"Watch very carefully, younger brother. Let big brother show you that bastards birthed from whores will never be equal to those of true noble birth!"

Suddenly, Dyon's nonchalant expression froze over into an icy glare. "What did you say?"

"You heard m –"

At that moment, a Presence filled a malevolent aura blazed to life. There wasn't a single person in the coliseum left unaffected. It was as though all of their deaths were imminent...

Olaf froze midway through his speech, unable to speak clearly. His technique shattered completely, dispersing the thin grey fog in an instant and causing him to fall to the ground shivering.

Dyon walked over, his face completely expressionless. With one swift motion, he picked up Olaf by his neck.

In the silence of the arena, the odd sounds of dripping water were suddenly all they could hear. At first, there was confusion, but that was only before everyone's eyes widened to see a pool of yellow, emanating an acrid smell spread before his dangling feet.

The judge was completely flustered. Olaf couldn't concede because his throat was clamped, but if he allowed a member of the Caedes family to die, his place in the 98th quadrant would be forever lost!

"Dyon W –"

"It's best you shut the fuck up." Dyon's gaze sharply turned toward the judge, causing him to collapse in a heap the moment the Presence that was focused on Olaf swerved over to him.

Olaf's eyes panicked. He had so much he wanted to say. He wanted to threaten Dyon with his family's power, he wanted to remind Dyon that there were hundreds of members of the Caedes family within Soul Rending Peak, far more powerful than him, he even wanted to beg for his life! But, from beginning to end, he couldn't speak a single word... He could only allow himself to be held up, dangling with his life about to end.

The golden robed elder was the first to snap out of it, "Stop!"

However, Dyon paid no mind to him. "In your next life, learn who you can and cannot offend. Learn who you can and cannot talk about. Understand that my mother doesn't have a name that can be used by the likes of you."

Without any further words, Dyon crushed Olaf's throat, ending his life in an instant.

Dyon directly dropped Olaf's corpse in his own filth.

The sound of dead wet hitting a puddle was likely one those observing wouldn't forget for a long time. But, maybe what was even more memorable was Dyon's lack of reaction to killing a person... As though it was just an ordinary action.

Dyon had never had qualms about killing those who deserved to be killed. It had little to no impact on him.

He remember his first kill clearly. Madeleine's "fiancé", Akihiko. Dyon didn't blink before directly killing him for laying a hand on his woman, especially after seeing him abuse Madeleine in her memories.

Since that time, 15 or so years had passed. Considering it was easy the first time, why would it be difficult now?

Dyon's disposition was perfect for cultivation. He had never run into a heart demon, nor had he ever faced anything that tested his dao heart. With such a clear mind, it was only a matter of unsealing his cultivation before he would improve by leaps and bounds.

"You!" The golden robed elder had already begun to rage, but he was immediately stifled by a particular womanly sound of a throat clearing.

"Elder Claive. It's best you don't forget yourself. I've said nothing about liberties you and your judges have taken with the sect's proceedings, however that doesn't mean I haven't seen them." Evangeline's words were sharp and clear, yet still maintained that melodious quality to them that made the bones of those who heard them go soft.

"But, esteemed Vice Master." The golden robed trembled. He had never seen the Vice Master get angry. Even in the face of all of the rumors she faced and the backhanded compliments from those she clearly outranked, she had never said a word. So, why would she change that now?

If the Vice Master of their sect suddenly began to assert herself, the power dynamic of their Soul Rending Peak would definitely begin to shift drastically. Although she had no faction to speak of now, with her position, did she really need it? She could even directly suppress the Grand Elder if she so choose.

However, in all this time, people took advantage of her timid personality, directly defaming her and hoping to take advantage of numbers to outweigh her power in the end before stealing the sect master position right from under her nose. But... How was this the same timid woman they had come to know?!

Elder Claive steeled himself. "He very clearly attacked an elder of our sect. Even though his position is lowly, it is still higher than a disciple who hasn't entered the sect at all. He deserves respect!"

Chapter 929: Another?

"Do you think me as blind?" Evangeline stood up, releasing a majestic aura.

"No -N"

"Where is your proof that Dyon attacked a judge? There are thousands of pairs of eyes here, yet which one of them saw the manifestation of an attack?"

"This..."

The crowd was stunned. Not only had they never seen their goddess act so imposing, they couldn't understand why she was twisting what everyone witnessed to be in favor of Dyon so much. Even if they couldn't see an attack, wasn't it obvious that an attack happened?

"If you don't have proof, then don't speak on it. But, in this case, how about we speak on things we do have proof of?"

"Did this judge not have bias? Did he not allow Olaf to prepare an attack before the battle began? Did he not try to end the fight before there was a concession or a ring out? What right did he have to do those things?"

"And you. Do you think I don't know that you tried to skip steps during the second round, blatantly using your power to belittle a participant of my Soul Rending Peak's assessments? Did you think to make a joke of the proceedings? To use what little influence you have to sway hearts you have no business touching? Who do you think you are?!"

Decades of frustration, resentment and anger spilled from Evangeline's cherry lips. At that moment, Lilith realized that she had not even a small chance of defeating this woman in a battle, something she found shocking beyond belief.

"Adequate punishment must be handed out for all crimes!" Evangeline continued, her tone fiery and inspiring. "This judge will be expelled after having his cultivation crippled. As for you, Elder Claive, you will go into seclusion to think over your actions today for 10 years!"

These words for the trembling judge on the ground were like a call from hell, while Elder Claive felt himself trembling with an anger that he didn't dare to speak out. They had indeed been in the wrong, but such a punishment was far too harsh!

Evangeline then turned to Dyon who was currently staring at her without expression, as though he was absentmindedly pondering something. "As for you, your punishment will be decided based on your placement as a disciple.

"This isn't fair, but it is simply the way of life. The more useful you are, the more leniency you receive.

"Even if there is no proof of your attack, the fact of the matter is that you interfered and disrespected the decision of a judge of Soul Rending Peak.

"If you do not manage to become a disciple, you are forever banned from attending any future assessments and will have your cultivation crippled.

"If you become a core disciple, there will be no punishment as a judge has no right to question you.

"If you become an inner disciple, you will face 10 years of seclusion.

"If you become an outer disciple, you will face 100 years of seclusion!"

The crowd was in shock. At first, they thought that Evangeline was stepping forward because she had some sort of ambiguous relationship with Dyon. But, how could they continue to think that now?

Not only did she admit to Dyon being cheated, she actually said that it didn't matter!

One had to understand that Evangeline's words about "becoming a core disciple" weren't so simple as they seemed. Those who earned the core disciple spot within an assessment didn't become true core disciples until after they passed a certain trial coming in the future. On top of this, the very same truth was the reality for becoming an inner or outer disciple.

To put into perspective just how difficult it was to become a true core disciple, when Olaf revealed his true cultivation being at the saint level, the only disciples who batted an eye were the lower ranked outer sect disciples! Even the lower ranked inner disciples didn't care about the revelation even a little bit.

In everyone's eyes, especially those who were the most informed, even Dyon's chances of maintaining an inner sect disciple position was slim. In all likelihood, he would become an outer disciple, and thus be forced to endure 100 years of seclusion!

Even in the case where he gets lucky and manages to become an inner disciple of the lower rung, he would still have to endure 10 years!

Then there was still the daunting possibility that he might not become a disciple at all, or worse yet, become a working disciple. In that case, his cultivation would be crippled and his life would be completely ruined.

Anyone who knew even a small piece of this reality suddenly realized that Evangeline wasn't showing favoritism. Rather, the truth of the matter was that she was venting anger she had held within her for too long. The judges and Elder Claive had pushed her past her limits and she could no longer endure it.

What no one knew was that Evangeline still wasn't done with her punishment...

"In addition to this, your path to earning an opportunity for the Ranked Trials will also be increased in difficulty. During your spar with a disciple of my Soul Rending Peak, you must win. If you do not, it will count as failure and you will have your cultivation crippled."

The sharp intakes of cold breath filled the arena. How was this fair at all?! To be cheated and then punished in your attempt to vent your anger?! Was this truly the same goddess they had come to know? What was going on?

The worst part about all of this was that Dyon had just killed a member of the Caedes family. Even if he had his cultivation, his future prospects would be dim... What do you think would happen to him after he was crippled?!

Even the outer sect disciples were already saints. In the case that Dyon failed to beat a core disciple and an inner disciple, he would not only be tired after failing, he might even be heavily injured. At that point, he would still have a chance to challenge an outer disciple, but what would it matter if he only had a fraction of his battle power left? It was almost as though Evangeline was setting him up for failure!

At this point, even some nobles began to look at Dyon with pity. There weren't any members of the Caedes family here aside from Donari, so it was obvious that they found him insufferably arrogant. However, there were exceptions to everything. Those members of the four up and coming families seeking to taking the place of the Jafari felt that a massive road block has just been removed, allowing them to finally sigh in relief. Even if Dyon managed to become an outer disciple, 100 years of seclusion would completely destroy his future prospects, or, at the very least, slow him down to their level.

As for the red robed elder, he had an incomparably relaxed expression on his face. For some reason, after Dyon killed Olaf, he hadn't even reacted. It was as though that was exactly what he wanted.

At this point, the entire arena was completely silent with tens of thousands of pairs of eyes trained on Dyon. However, he had yet to react to Evangeline's words at all. From beginning to end, he simply looked her in the eyes, completely unperturbed by the air of an expert she was releasing.

Suddenly, Dyon grinned. "Many thanks for your leniency, Vice Master. I already expected to get cheated, but somehow it stings a lot less when the culprit is such a beauty."

"OUTRAGEOUS!"

The disciples sitting behind Evangeline suddenly stood up in anger.

"What right do you have to call Vice Master Moon's decision in to question?!"

"Apologize immediately!"

"Vice Master, allow me to teach him a lesson!"

Every disciple from outer to core was completely enraged. Even before this Dyon's challenge was difficult enough, why would he then give them such motivation to destroy him?!

Dyon, however, didn't think much about it. He didn't completely understand what this Vice Master's motive was, but he wasn't a fan of being manipulated, nor was he a proponent of bowing his head. If this Vice Master wanted to play games, he'd play right along with her.

"Say, Vice Master." Dyon spoke, not caring for what her response would be to teasing words. "One of my bets today was ruined because I was forced to kill a fool. What say you about my making another?"

Dyon's words did nothing to quell the rage. In fact, his nonchalant attitude only increased the public outrage.

However, what they did do was make everyone realize something. When Dyon used the blood contract with Olaf, the red robed elder and Elder Nova, it required all four parties to come into effect. The moment one of the parties died, the contract was immediately voided. The reason why this worked was because there was no clause exempting death, nor was there a stipulation that protected Olaf's life. So, although Dyon had won, not only would he not receive the peak heaven technique, he also wouldn't receive the red robed elder as a slave.

This was unfortunate. Not because Dyon cared about the technique, but rather because he wouldn't be able to gain the information he wanted as easily anymore.

"What right do you have to make a bet with me?" Evangeline responded calmly, having not even reacted to Dyon's pointed comments. "Even if you have the battle prowess of a saint. Even if you had the battle prowess of a celestial. It still wouldn't be enough."

Hearing the Vice Master's word, the disciples nodded in unison, as though she was speaking for them all.

Dyon smiled. "I see. So, you'd like to be responsible for your Soul Rending Peak losing an opportunity to attain the Jade Queen Bee's honey?"

Dyon's words sent an uproar through those very same disciples. Although the crowd might not entirely understand the value of that honey, even after hearing Dyon's explanation, how could they not?

When Dyon had finalized his bet with Olaf, they had no been here yet. Although Evangeline had the cultivation required to monitor the situation from afar, they definitely did not. So, this was the very first time they heard about it despite Evangeline knowing long before.

"For someone who is seemingly intelligent, that was quite a stupid question. What use does a crippled man have for such treasures?" The Vice Master's words were simple and vague, but how could everyone not understand what she meant?

If Dyon failed, what chance would he have to protect his treasures? Even if he didn't fail, what was stopping her from forcefully taking them away for "the good of the sect"? In retrospect, Dyon's question was fairly stupid.

"I think we have a misunderstanding here, Vice Master." Dyon didn't seem bothered by her response. "If I wanted to leave right now, even you couldn't stop me. There's no need to be so timid, I'm sure the lauded Soul Rending Peak Vice Master wouldn't be scared to bet with a small essence gatherer, would she?"

Evangeline held her hand up to stop the incessant shouting of the disciples behind her.

"Alright." She said with a smile. "If you lose, not only will your cultivation be crippled and your treasures taken away, you'll become my servant for the rest of your life."

Hearing such words, the disciples nearly fell into depression. Was it really a punishment to serve such a woman for the rest of their lives?

"However," Evangeline continued. "I am but a woman, and as such, I am forced to protect my image, don't you think?"

There was an eerie treat to her words, as though whatever she had to say next would be malicious beyond belief. Unfortunately, she didn't disappoint.

"For the sake of my reputation, you'll have to be publicly castrated. Do you still dare to bet?"

Evangeline had repeatedly shocked everyone who could hear her. Even the elders around felt like they were looking at a completely new woman.

Those who had spent the past few decades scheming and talking behind her back suddenly felt a cold sweat permeate their backs. Had she just been acting timid this whole time? What was it that gave her the confidence to unveil her façade now? What were her plans? How would she deal with them?

These questions flashed in and out of their minds as they hurriedly began to make reports to their various factions. It was clear that a sleeping dragon had awoken and they had no idea where to take it from here!

Against everyone's expectations, Dyon only grinned again. "I agree! But!"

Dyon's words hung in the air as though he was purposefully holding everyone in suspense.

"After I become a core disciple, I'll be moving into your personal courtyard. I don't think it needs to be said that you won't be allowed to move out, right?"

Seeing the contrast between Dyon's innocent expression and the dirt that came from his mouth, everyone was baffled by his shamelessness.

"Also, since you decided to be so harsh, I don't think it's too much to ask that I move in immediately after these assessments, right?"

Dyon's words were indeed reasonable. After all, whether he or Evangeline won the bet, both would require him to enter her courtyard, whether that be as a servant or a guest.

Not waiting for Evangeline to respond, Dyon turned to Elder Nova. "I'll be troubling you for another contract, old man. I'm sure that the same accident won't happen again."

Dyon's aim was clear to everyone. Since Evangeline had been so protective of her reputation, what could sully it more than an able-bodied male moving into her home? Whether anything happened between them was irrelevant. With the conservative nature of this quadrant, especially with the existence of The Cathedral, Dyon had truly hit the Vice Master where it hurt.

Evangeline had no choice but to accept had no choice but to accept Dyon's proposition. If she backed out now, it would not only look bad on her, but also Soul Rending Peak as a whole. For the matter of face, she boldly signed as though she wasn't worried at all.

However, everyone knew something very clearly: if Dyon won this battle, there really was no need for him to take the core disciple trials. After all, if he defeated someone who could pass them, what need would he have for them? This was the other reason why Evangeline had no choice but to accept Dyon moving in without completing the trials.

Just like that, the crowd suddenly got something else to look forward to. The spars between the disciples and other participants were almost an opening act, just prepping for Dyon's opportunity.

Currently, there were two core disciples that had come today. In the entire Soul Rending Peak, there were only 12 of them, but these two were the lowest ranked. That said, even if they were the lowest ranked core disciples, they were still core disciples! None of the others dared to show them any disrespect.

That said, those two disciples had completely lost their sense of prestige. Under the eyes of everyone, they blatantly argued about who would get the chance to fight Dyon, even coming close to exchanging blows while the sparring sessions were still going on. Although Asyna knew that the answer would be neither of them, she said nothing, instead waiting for Lilith to handle it later.

At first, the three young beauties had been worried that Evangeline was protecting Dyon for some reason or another. But, the things that happened afterwards had allowed them to calm down. If Dyon really had the protection of a Vice Master, killing him would become hundreds of times more difficult.

However, now, they had a reason to do as they please. In fact, it was possible for Asyna to directly kill Dyon during their bout since it had turned from a spar to a true fight. This made everything far more convenient.

As for Donari, he said absolutely nothing from beginning to end. It was as though it wasn't his own brother who had died at all.

But, who could blame him? Didn't Olaf also insult Donari's mother before he died? If Dyon hadn't killed him, Donari would have on his own.

This was the first time that his elder brother had so blatantly provoked him, or else with Donari's personality, wouldn't Olaf have died ago?

That said, although saying this sounded good, Donari knew that he didn't have a shot at beating a saint. The fact he could beat high level essence gatherers was already stretching himself thin. So, he was caught between feeling grateful to Dyon for dealing with the situation for him, and being pissed off that he neither had the strength nor the opportunity to seek revenge for himself.