

The Witch 941

Chapter 941: Gold-Horned Mutant Serpent

"You didn't hear it clearly? Should I repeat it for you to understand?" Astoria nonchalantly asked.

Veins immediately protruded on Emperor Carpus's temples.

The ten Void realm experts of the Martial Saint Hall, Medicine King Sect, and Heavenly Sword Manor also frowned.

They had greatly underestimated the UN's shamelessness. They didn't expect that just because the UN had become powerful in recent days, it was already acting so rampant in a foreign country.

Whether it was Astoria's opinion or Kemun's provocations, Emperor Carpus was seriously angered by them.

"The Pure Moon Palace's people lived as citizens of my Divine Serpent Empire, and they shall die as dogs of my Divine Serpent Empire! All deserters are punishable by death!" Emperor Carpus barked before adding, "Since you dare to interfere in my empire's private matters and act unreasonably, your words mean nothing to me. I don't need to listen to your bullshit!"

"Your words also mean nothing to me," Astoria said, her expression turning cold. "I am here to give you a choice, not listen to your opinion. The Pure Moon Palace has joined the UN and is now under our protection."

"If you insist on attacking, we will definitely retaliate with force, and I can assure you, your side will definitely lose," Astoria stated strictly.

Although she wasn't familiar with the Divine Serpent Empire's cultivation system, she was already given a comparison by Ninth Fairy Sue. She could also roughly guess their strength based on their aura and energy fluctuations.

Nevertheless, Emperor Carpus was not deterred by Astoria's threat. In fact, he even responded with furious contempt.

"Do you think my Divine Serpent Empire is afraid of you?! Do you believe yourself superior to us?! You can't be more ignorant and wrong!" Emperor Carpus snarled.

Shortly after, he took out a crystal ball and raised it into the sky. When spirit energy was channeled into it, powerful green radiance immediately surged out in all directions.

Kemun snorted, and a strong fire barrier appeared to shield everyone from the penetrating green light.

However, the brilliant green light shooting out of the crystal ball wasn't an attack. Besides its blinding radiance, it had no offensive capabilities whatsoever.

After the green light faded as time passed, nothing else seemed to happen.

"Kekeke, was that bit of lightwork the source of confidence? Even if it's a beacon to summon something, don't you think it's rather in arriving? Do you think we are just going to wait to find out?" Kemun snickered disdainfully.

Emperor Carpus retreated with a few steps with an ugly expression before he shifted his dark gaze to the defective crystal ball.

The summoning was taking much longer than he had anticipated. It made him look like a fool.

With Kemun in the front to handle the Divine Serpent Empire's side, Astoria no longer paid attention to Emperor Carpus's buffoonery, and she shifted her focus where it mattered.

"Open up the mountain and rescue the people inside!" Astoria directed the Transcendent-rank red dragons.

"Stop them!" Emperor Carpus immediately barked.

The ten Void realm experts from the three major forces immediately hesitated, considering the superior numbers and strength of the twenty Transcendent-rank red dragons.

However, Emperor Carpus's increasingly dark and gloomy aura quickly caused their hearts to tremble.

As such, they had no choice but to steel their hearts and charge forward.

"Finally!" Kemun's eyes lit up before he roared excitedly, "Hahaha! Where do you think you're all going? Your opponent is me!"

With a single dragon swiped, a wall of flames encircled the ten Void realm experts in a flash, cutting off their paths of advancement and retreat.

At the same time, the Transcendent-rank red dragons sensed the situation was under Kemun's control. Thus, they continued to open up the mountain to bring the trapped people out.

However, the entire mountain suddenly shook.

No, it wasn't just the mountain everyone was standing on but several dozen mountains in the area as well. The source of the trembling seemed to come from the bottom of the mountain, in the depths of the thick and endless fog.

Whatever was rushing toward them was fast, but more shockingly, it seemed very huge.

Roar—!!!

The colossal figure of a Gold-horned Serpent soon emerged from the thick fog. Its swift arrival brought forward a powerful surge of wind as it abruptly stopped, towered over the mountain, and eyed down everyone with its sharp, piercing gaze.

Shortly after, it glanced at Emperor Carpus, silently asking what it was summoned for.

Meanwhile, Astoria and the dragons were shocked.

No one had ever seen a Gold-horned Serpent before, especially not one that was several hundred meters long with scales that seemed harder than ordinary dragon scales.

Furthermore, it also possessed the strong aura of a Late-stage Demigod, a minor stage above Kemun's.

The corners of Kemun's eyes immediately twitched.

Nevertheless, he did not shy away from the challenge. His level might be lower, but he wasn't necessarily weaker. His true dragon bloodline was stronger than the bloodlines of most species on Pangea.

That said, Kemun was still slightly concerned and suspicious about the Gold-horned Serpent's faint draconic aura.

Meanwhile, Ninth Fairy Sue, who followed everyone on the back of a Transcendent-rank dragon, completely paled at the sight of the enormous creature.

"Gold-horned Mutant Serpent!" she cried out loud.

She vaguely remembered hearing that a powerful guardian beast protected the Evermore Imperial Family.

However, it was the first time she had actually seen it.

Had she realized it sooner, she would have warned the others about this powerful foe.

That said, her warning might not have deterred everyone from retreating, even if she did realize it sooner. After all, she did not know its exact strength.

However, the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent before her was so big that it might as well be a Divine-rank creature.

"Your Majesty! Since the Darkans have never treated Lunarans kindly, why can't you just let us go?! Why must you go to such lengths to exterminate us?!" Ninth Fairy Sue cried.

Her question was also something Astoria was curious about.

Why was the Divine Serpent Empire going to such extreme lengths to exterminate the Pure Moon Palace for leaving the country?

Was it simply because it did not want its knowledge spreading outside?

Or was there a bigger reason?

Chapter 942: Unexpected Savior

While Astoria's group was confronting the new threat known as the Gold-Horned Mutant Serpent, few noticed another person had quietly arrived in the sky.

However, the person only arrived for a brief moment before disappearing with a spatial shift. The person relocated to the collapsing mountain cave, which took the survivors of the Pure Moon Palace to hold up.

That person was none other than Vaan.

It hadn't been long since he returned to Pangea's side after settling matters with Valefor.

The moment he did, he was immediately attracted by a desperate cry or plea for his help. At the same time, he could vaguely sense where the source of the sad voice was coming from.

He had once experienced this sort of strange phenomenon before; it was something that originated from the power of faith.

However, besides the first time, Vaan had not heard the voice of any believer or sensed their distress.

This was more evident when his soul reached half-step divine rank.

It was as if none of his believers had any problems that required them to pray for his divine intervention. He found this hard to believe, considering his ever-growing number of believers alongside the UN's expansion.

No matter how good the current conditions were in the UN, it was impossible for zero crime and injustice to exist. Wherever a society existed, order and chaos also existed hand in hand.

Even if there were no problems, wouldn't he be able to hear the prayers of his most devoted believers? Or were their faith too lacking for their prayers to reach him?

Vaan didn't think this was the case.

Although Vaan didn't walk the path of faith, he still benefited from its power and knew a thing or two about it.

After all, the infinitely small power of faith was constantly nourishing his soul due to his increasing followers. Thus, their lack of faith couldn't be the reason for his inability to hear his followers' prayers.

Furthermore, he didn't believe the reason was because he wasn't a divine soul yet, which might result in the ability being incomplete.

Otherwise, why would he hear the desperate prayers from someone so far out at the border of the Divine Serpent Empire and not anyone else's?

For that exact reason, Vaan couldn't help but investigate.

When Vaan arrived inside the mountain and identified the person behind the desperate prayers in his head, he was finally able to draw some conclusions.

If the difference in the level of existence between him and his followers were too great, he would not be able to hear their voices. Unless the believers had special abilities or a high enough level of existence to negate the gap, their voice would not reach their god.

Vaan wondered if this was also the reason why only the strongest or most special beings were chosen as their god's agent.

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Nevertheless, Vaan's sudden arrival surprised the surviving members of the Pure Moon Palace.

"You are..."

"Are you the one who called for me?"

When Vaan asked the Palace Mistress of the Pure Moon Palace, his question was not answered.

Shortly after Palace Mistress Celestia recognized who Vaan was, her will momentarily relaxed and succumbed to her accumulated fatigue. She quickly fell unconscious.

At the same time, the ice barrier she desperately maintained with the help of her sect members also collapsed.

Panic and fear instantly spread through the group of cold beauties. Only a few rare exceptions just stared at the falling ceiling and accepted their impending deaths. They were tired of their struggles.

Vaan frowned as he made a lifting gesture with his hand.

In that instant, space seemed to have frozen as the falling ceiling and broken shards of the ice barrier paused in their tracks.

Then, with a flick of his wrist, Palace Mistress Celestia's unconscious body flew over to him for inspection.

When Vaan saw that she was on the verge of death, he immediately fed her some of his potent blood essence to boost the recovery of her damaged organs. He couldn't just let her die when she seemed to be important to his study of faith power.

He summoned Emerald shortly after to continue the healing process.

After Emerald awakened the life attribute, she became a powerful healer among other things. The wood spirit space she resided in was also filled with life energy for her to use.

As such, pulling the Palace Mistress away from the clutches of death wasn't difficult.

"W-Who are you? What are you trying to do to our Palace Mistress?" a brave soul cried out despite her concerns and fears.

Vaan was like an omnipotent being, freezing space with a single thought.

"T-That is Lord Vaan. We are finally saved," First Fairy Marina sighed with great relief after recognizing Vaan with the other Moon Fairies.

They had all seen his appearance in the image crystal back in the sect when news of the Heavenreacher spread to the Divine Serpent Empire.

Nevertheless, after the other sect members heard First Fairy Marina's words, they finally relaxed their anxious hearts as well. Not long after, the icy cave was filled with sad sobs as they poured out their repressed feelings.

The past week's experience had been a terrible ordeal. Everyone had thought they were goners.

"Thank you, Lord Vaan... Thank you for coming to save us..."

Countless young ladies poured out their hearts with gratitude as tears flowed down their fair yet slightly malnourished cheeks.

"Lord Vaan... How did you find out about us? Did our... ninth sister reach out to you?" Eighth Fairy Pumpkin couldn't help but ask with doubt.

Although everyone had done their best to help their ninth sister escape to look for help, they still found it surprising that the rising overlord would come in person.

None of the Moon Fairies could imagine how desperately their ninth sister had searched to get the rising overlord's help. They couldn't help but think that their ninth sister might have worked the hardest during this period.

The mental burden of saving their sect must have been unimaginable.

Nevertheless, Vaan had no idea what they were talking about. He simply furrowed his brows and replied, "We will talk about this later."

Shortly after the Palace Mistress's life stabilized and the members of the Pure Moon Palace calmed down, he took everyone outside of the collapsed cave with a big spatial portal.

It only took a brief moment for everyone's view of the icy cave to be replaced by a vast open field filled with warm sunlight.

They had relocated to a nearby region in the Holy Knight Empire.

At the same time, the icy cave back in the snowy mountains completely collapsed under the absence of Vaan's spatial power.

Chapter 943: Pleasant Gain

Having moved from the mountain cave to the lush open field bathed in warm sunlight, the three hundred members of the Pure Moon Palace felt like they had escaped from an icy hell and entered a heavenly paradise.

They felt the warmth of the sun and held a new, profound appreciation for life. They were thankful for being alive.

Nevertheless, the drastic change of scenery also felt unreal. Some members couldn't help but pinch their cheeks to confirm, while others didn't dare to wake up if it was an illusion.

"This is..."

The Moon Fairies studied their surroundings before noticing the snowy mountains in the distance. They realized they were seeing the Grand Misty Serpent's Coil from the Holy Knight Empire's side.

Astonishment quickly filled the hearts of many.

Everyone couldn't help but compare the lands in the Divine Serpent Empire and the Holy Knight Empire and realize how depressing of a life they had lived.

If they had never left the endless cold fog of the Divine Serpent Empire, they would have never realized how beautiful the world could be.

People were meant to live in the light. The kiss of sunlight was life's greeting.

The Divine Serpent Empire felt much more like a deathly place after the members of the Pure Moon Palace savored the fresh air and warm sunlight of the new world.

They were enamored, drunken, even.

They did not miss the home they left behind, only the sisters they lost along the way. Those who lived had to live even harder to honor those who died.

"Thank you for saving us, Lord Vaan. We will forever remember your act of kindness," Palace Mistress Celestia immediately expressed her sincere gratitude after regaining consciousness.

"We don't have much to offer for what you have done for us. However, if you don't look down on us, we, the Pure Moon Palace, would like to swear our loyalty and allegiance to you."

"Our lives are yours to use, Lord Vaan," Palace Mistress Celestia solemnly said as she prostrated before Vaan.

"There's no need to be so formal," Vaan gestured for Palace Mistress Celestia to stand and said, "You have only just escaped the clutches of death and recovered slightly, Palace Mistress."

"Myu, myuu!" Emerald chimed with a critical look like she was admonishing a patient.

"Even so, this is what we must do, Lord Vaan," Palace Mistress Celestia insisted, saying, "We can't be half-hearted in repaying our savior. Please accept our respect!"

Following her words, the Moon Fairies and sect disciples also copied her actions. They prostrated on the ground in front of Vaan as they paid their respects and honored their new lord.

Although Vaan didn't say he would accept their loyalty and allegiance, he didn't deny it either. As such, they took it as him having already agreed.

"Suit yourself then," Vaan shrugged.

Shortly after the three hundred members of the Pure Moon Palace performed their formal and ceremonious offerings to Vaan, Pumpkin couldn't help but ask her question.

"My Lord, did Fairy Sue not come with you? Where is she now?"

"Who is Fairy Sue?"

Vaan's reply immediately dumbfounded everyone. Words were stuck in Pumpkin's throat like stubborn fishbones; she was at a loss and didn't know how to respond.

Who was Fairy Sue? Did their ninth sister not introduce herself before asking for help?

Many members couldn't help but wonder the same thing.

"My Lord, Fairy Sue is the Ninth Moon Fairy in our Pure Moon Palace," Palace Mistress Celestia explained before asking with doubt, "Did she not reach out to you and ask you to save us?"

"I was still in Gehenna until a while ago. How would she have reached me? Rather, wasn't it you who prayed for my help? I believe it was your desperate voice that led me to you," Vaan stated.

Palace Mistress Celestia was immediately stunned.

At the same time, the members of Pure Moon Palace were also confused. Although the situation was dire back then, they did not remember their Palace Mistress crying out for help.

Even if she did, how could Lord Vaan have heard it when he wasn't there?

Nevertheless, after Palace Mistress Celestia's initial surprise, she was immediately shocked. She knew what Vaan was talking about.

However, she never could have imagined that Vaan had actually heard the prayer in her mind during her most desperate moment. This kind of situation felt rather miraculous and wonderful.

Wasn't this like being an agent chosen by god?

"I am overwhelmed by this honor, my Lord!" Palace Mistress Celestia couldn't help but kneel and express her elation.

After all, the Pure Moon Palace would have a better position and opportunity in the UN if she had truly become Vaan's divine agent.

There were a few things Vaan wanted to ask Palace Mistress Celestia regarding the power of faith. But after seeing her reaction, he decided that there was no longer a reason to.

He could see that while she was excited, her faith wasn't particularly strong; it was much weaker than those from the cults created by his devoted followers.

As such, he understood that at his current level, he couldn't hear the voices of any followers below the Transcendent rank.

On that note, Vaan was quite surprised to see that the members of the Pure Moon Palace were all spirit energy cultivators. Most likely, it was the same for other people in the Divine Serpent Empire.

The mist covering the Divine Serpent Empire had certainly hidden such a big secret.

Suddenly, Vaan found the Pure Moon Palace more pleasing to his eyes. Their loyalty and allegiance were unexpected boons.

The members of the Pure Moon Palace could all become teachers and help spread the knowledge of spirit energy cultivation.

"Is this all of you in the Pure Moon Palace?" Vaan inquired.

Once this question was raised, Palace Mistress Celestia's face paled with guilt and self-blame. She felt unqualified for forgetting about her stranded sect members.

"Our Pure Moon Palace had more than two thousand members. However, we were separated after getting ambushed by the Divine Serpent Empire's forces. Please, if it's not too much to ask, I beg you to save our remaining members in the mountains, my Lord Vaan!"

"Please save our sisters, Lord Vaan!"

Following Palace Mistress Celestia's pleading, the rest of the Pure Moon Palace's members also dropped to the ground and begged.

"If they are still alive, I'll save them. If they are dead, I will bring back their corpses," Vaan calmly promised.

With a wave of his hands, medicine and food fell out of his Heaven-Swallowing Space.

Vaan left them for the Pure Moon Palace to use before immediately departing for the lost members in the Grand Misty Serpent's Coil.

Chapter 944: The Demigod Serpent's Bloodline

Rumble...!

Ten minutes ago, the snowy mountain peak suddenly shook violently before plummeting over thirty meters lower.

The Divine Serpent Empire's forces were immediately into confusion and disorder by the mountain peak's sudden collapse. They may have been aiming for it, but they had also stopped for some time.

As such, no one expected it to happen so suddenly. Clearly, the inflicted damage was more than previously thought.

After Emperor Carpus's initial surprise, a goading smile soon hung on his smile.

"It seems you came in vain. The Pure Moon Palace has been crushed to death. There's no reason for you to intervene anymore," Emperor Carpus said smugly.

Ultimately, he did not want to fight the UN if he could avoid it.

After all, even if he could borrow the power of the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent to kill Astoria and all the red dragons present, their deaths would hardly affect the power of the UN.

So long as its prophecized overlord was alive, the UN's position would remain strong, even if all its experts died.

The prophecized overlord was simply too strong.

Nevertheless, Astoria and the red dragons remained unfazed by the sudden collapse of the mountain peak. Even the situation within the collapsed cave had been made known to them.

While Vaan had arrived quietly without notice, he was still the supreme leader and dragon god of the Red Dragon God.

Kemun and the other red dragons were made aware of his presence when he used his powers to hold the collapsing cave before dropping it. They could also guess where the Pure Moon Palace's people had disappeared off to.

Only Astoria would have remained ignorant had Kemun not informed her with a silent voice transmission.

Knowing Vaan's presence was in the vicinity, much of the weight on Astoria's heart was released.

Vaan had disappeared for two weeks without a warning.

If not for the news coming from Gehenna's side, everyone would have thought he had suffered a mishap. The faith in the UN would have also collapsed overnight.

Nevertheless, everyone's courage was boosted after learning Vaan was in the vicinity. The enormous Gold-horned Mutant Serpent also did not look as intimidating; it even seemed cute.

Astoria felt a little amused when she looked at Emperor Carpus's ignorant smugness.

"Go and hunt down the remaining survivors of the Pure Moon Palace! There's no further reason to stay here!" Emperor Carpus confidently hollered at the forces of the Martial Saint Hall, Medicine King Sect, and Heavenly Sword Manor.

"Stop them!" Kemun roared.

The Transcendent-rank dragons immediately rushed out to intercept the departing Void realm experts of the three major forces and their subordinates.

However, the enormous Gold-horned Mutant Serpent was like an unsurpassable wall. It stood tall and firm, disdainfully gazing down on the smaller red dragons flying in its direction.

Hiss~!

"Do you think this Lord is just a statue or something?!" the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent snarled with contempt.

In the next moment, a seemingly unstoppable force suddenly rushed at the Transcendent-rank dragons as the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent flicked its huge tail at them like it was trying to swat away flies.

However, Kemun immediately greeted the tail sweep with a powerful dragon breath.

Boom!

The Gold-horned Mutant Serpent's tail sweep immediately paused in its tracks after colliding with Kemun's big fire breath. The mighty clash between Demigod-level strengths instantly generated a powerful outburst of wind.

Snow, humans, and dragons alike were all swept away by the blast.

However, the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent's tail sweep continued to clash with Kemun's beam-like fire breath, which targeted its very tip.

The Gold-horned Mutant Serpent was forced to exert more strength before overwhelming Kemun's fire breath. At the same time, it redirected its tail sweep at Kemun after being angered by his interference.

"Die, lizard trash!" the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent cursed.

Kemun's stern expression crumpled as he realized he couldn't overpower the tail sweep. He was ultimately a minor stage lower than the serpent. As such, he forcefully parried the attack with his draconic body instead.

Even so, the remaining force still sent him crashing into another mountain peak in the distance!

However, the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent also knew such an impact wasn't enough to kill Kemun. The gold horn on its head quickly lit up with golden light as it gathered solar power.

Bzzt...!

The Gold-horned Mutant Serpent immediately fired its scorching-hot solar beam after a short charge. It was a lightning-fast attack that left a small window of time to react.

Kemun had not emerged from the cloud of floating snow on the other mountain peak at all before the solar beam struck his supposed location.

The intense heat from the solar beam instantly melted the snow and punched a hole right through the mountain.

Emperor Carpus didn't think Kemun could survive such an attack. Thus, he stared mockingly at Astoria, who was on her own.

"Your backer is gone. Do you still insist on interfering with my..."

Emperor Carpus didn't finish his words when he noticed Kemun emerging from a newly formed spatial rift.

Although Kemun survived the fast attack, he wasn't completely unscathed. The solar beam had scorched part of his left side before he escaped.

Nevertheless, no one paid any attention to Emperor Carpus. Kemun and Astoria's attention wholly focused on the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent with grave expressions.

"Be careful, Lord Kemun. This mutant serpent has the Golden Dragon Bloodline," Astoria warned.

Kemun had already sensed the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent's faint draconic aura before and found it a little suspicious.

However, he never expected it to be the Golden Dragon Bloodline, which was superior to his own dragon bloodline. After all, the mutant serpent wasn't a descendant of true dragons. It must have obtained its Golden Dragon Bloodline from elsewhere.

"You're well-informed, Human. You actually recognize this Lord's Golden Dragon Bloodline," the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent said to Astoria, not putting Kemun in its eyes.

After Kemun suffered from the solar beam attack, he lost ten percent of battle power. He wasn't its opponent then, and he definitely wouldn't be its opponent now.

Kemun felt a little depressed.

Meanwhile, Astoria still maintained her calmness despite the clear difference in their power.

"I don't just recognize it; I also have it!"

Shortly after Astoria said that, she immediately exerted her golden dragon aura and tried to suppress the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent with her awakened bloodline.

Chapter 945: Irresistible Temptation

Swoosh!

An invisible pressure immediately weighed down on the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent. However, it remained firm and inviolable to Astoria's bloodline suppression.

On the other hand, Emperor Carpus was suddenly forced onto his knees. He felt like the blood in his body had suddenly become as heavy as a ten-thousand-kilogram block of iron.

The situation immediately shocked him.

It only took a moment before he realized what was going on. However, the realization shocked him even greater. He couldn't believe someone from one of the five ancient families had actually awakened the Golden Dragon Bloodline!

Emperor Carpus immediately felt complicated.

"Oh? There is still a descendant of the Blessed Golden Dragon Tribe capable of awakening the Golden Dragon Bloodline in this day and age?" the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent expressed its surprise yet nonchalantly before smirking, "Unfortunately, it's too diluted to affect me."

Astoria witnessed the ineffectiveness of her bloodline suppression and understood its limitations. Awakening her bloodline did not necessarily grant her absolute power over descendants of the same bloodline.

Bloodline purity also mattered.

Descendants with lesser bloodline purity would never be able to suppress a direct descendant of the Golden Dragon Pangea.

Although the Gold-horn Mutant Serpent was not the direct descendent of Golden Dragon Pangea, it had somehow obtained her golden blood and acquired the Golden Dragon Bloodline.

As such, Astoria's bloodline suppression couldn't work on it.

Nevertheless, shortly after Astoria revealed her awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline, the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent began to express its greed.

If it could devour all of her blood, it would have a better chance at a higher awakening of its Golden Dragon Bloodline and gain even greater strength.

The Gold-horned Mutant Serpent had already undergone body metamorphosis once after absorbing some of Golden Dragon Pangea's blood essence.

Thus, if the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent could undergo a second body metamorphosis, it might be able to free itself from the inferior Sea Serpent Bloodline once and for all and evolve into a true Golden Dragon.

When Astoria met the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent's gaze, she had a bad feeling. She could feel its growing desire and greed.

"Lady Astoria, please escape. The situation is not looking good. I will cover your retreat," Kemun said seriously.

However, Astoria felt unsatisfied if she were to escape just like that.

Whether it was Astoria or Kemun, they both felt that the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent's background was not simple. Not only did it have such a pure Golden Dragon Bloodline, but it also knew about the Blessed Golden Dragon Tribe.

Considering the covenant of the five ancient families, Astoria didn't want to believe the Evermore family would sell the secret of the Blessed Golden Dragon Tribe to a sea monster race.

However, she couldn't understand how else the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent knew about the Blessed Golden Dragon Tribe.

Did the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent's clan have a history as old as the Blessed Golden Dragon Tribe? Or did its clan stumble upon an unrecorded inheritance of Golden Dragon Pangea?

Considering the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent's pure Golden Dragon Bloodline, Astoria felt the latter was more probable.

"Do you think she can escape in my presence, Dragon? The only place she is going is into my stomach!" the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent grinned.

However, not even a few breaths later, its face fell.

Rumble...!

The mountains and ground suddenly started trembling.

At the same time, large shadows could be seen moving swiftly through the thick fog beneath the snowy mountains.

The situation was similar to when the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent arrived. However, there were far more movements than before. Evidently, there was more than one large body approaching the mountain peak.

The Gold-horned Mutant Serpent wasn't the only one of its kind and definitely wasn't the only one at the Demigod level.

"Dammit!"

The Gold-horned Mutant Serpent knew what was coming. The other mutant serpents in his clan must have been attracted to the awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline.

If it waited for them to arrive, they would definitely fight over it.

The Gold-horned Mutant Serpent couldn't allow that to happen. As such, it immediately glared at Astoria with bloodshot eyes.

"Human, become my meal!" the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent roared.

The Gold-horned Mutant Serpent sprung at Astoria like a powerful spring with enough force to pulverize her body in an instant.

However, Kemun had long been prepared to receive the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent's attack. The Gold-horned Mutant Serpent was too powerful for him to meet head-on. Thus, he was ready to redirect it with spatial magic.

Unexpectedly, everyone had underestimated how crazy the serpent clan was.

Before Kemun could act, three solar beams zoomed in on his location. However, they weren't aimed at him, but at the spot the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent was about to reach.

He had thrown himself in front of the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent's path to stop it.

"You desperate bastards! You have all gone mad!" the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent roared furiously.

It had no choice but to forcefully cancel its spring dive at the cost of straining its own body in the process. It simply couldn't take the three solar beams.

Those three solar beams had enough power to cause serious harm to its body.

After all, concentrated solar power could damage its genes in various ways, making recovery very difficult. The damage might even impact its potential for future evolutions.

Swoosh!

The enormous bodies of three new Gold-horned Mutant Serpents surged out of the thick fog. They rushed at the first Gold-horned Mutant Serpent with maddened gazes.

In order to obtain the awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline, they had to take out their strongest competitor.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The three newcomers quickly ganged on the first Gold-horned Mutant Serpent. They did not hesitate to sink their fangs into its body and tear out its flesh bit by bit.

Blood gushed out of its open wounds like waves as the injured Gold-horned Mutant Serpent hissed painfully.

"You bunch of bastards—!! Are you seriously trying to kill your kind over some awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline?!" the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent cried furiously.

"Forget about us, anyone serpent in the clan will kill for the chance at higher awakening. This is the awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline we are talking about, Soska! Who wouldn't take the risk?!"

The three Gold-horned Mutant Serpent tried to justify their wicked act.

Meanwhile, Kemun and Astoria had long retreated in shock. Neither of them could have imagined the situation would turn out this way. The mutant serpents would actually turn on each other instead of uniting their strengths.

The irresistible temptation of Astoria's awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline was far beyond their expectations.

It could actually drive the mutant serpents mad!

Furthermore, they were also greatly shocked by the deep heritage of this mutant serpent clan. Even three new arrivals were all Demigod-level Gold-horned Mutant Serpents with pure Golden Dragon Bloodlines.

Just how many more of them were like this? How many more were still on the way?

Chapter 946: The World's True Master?

The snowy white mountain was quickly dyed red in the blood of the Late-stage Demigod-rank Gold-horned Mutant Serpent. With each gallon of blood lost, its strength weakened, and its life slowly slipped away.

The other three Gold-horned Mutant Serpents were only Mid-stage Demigods. That was why they decided to gang up on it.

Only by taking out the bigger threat would they have a better chance at obtaining the awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline in Astoria.

Astoria had only been able to obtain a minor boost in strength after awakening her bloodline. Her Golden Dragon Bloodline was just too diluted over the generations for it to give her bigger benefits.

On the other hand, the mutant serpent clan seemed to have obtained Golden Dragon Pangea's pure blood essence.

As such, they were no different from first-generation descendants of the Golden Dragon.

If they could use her awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline to stimulate and awaken their own purer Golden Dragon Bloodline, they were more likely to step into the divine rank directly.

That was why they could be so frantic and crazy over it.

When the Late-stage Demigod-rank Gold-horned Mutant Serpent got seriously weakened to the point that it could no longer threaten Kemun, one of the other three Gold-horned Mutant Serpent began forming ideas.

Puchi!

One of the three Gold-horned Mutant Serpents suddenly turned on its group. A hole was punctured straight through the main body of another with its penetrating tail strike.

Its treacherous sneak attack also marked the end of the trio's temporary alliance.

"Damn you, Kershe!"

The punctured Gold-horned Mutant Serpent furiously roared as it retaliated with a tail strike of its own.

However, the treacherous Gold-horned Mutant Serpent was prepared for its counterattack. It immediately evaded the all-out tail sweep by springing into the sky.

Unfortunately, it did not account for the third Gold-horned Mutant Serpent.

The third and unharmed Gold-horned Mutant Serpent had acted swiftly, biting into its rear end. It forcefully dragged the treacherous Kershe back into the ground with all its strength.

"Damn you too, Taha!" the treacherous Kershe cursed.

Boom!

Following the treacherous Kershe slamming into the ground, the punctured Gold-horned Mutant Serpent sent out another all-out tail sweep.

However, this time, the treacherous Kershe could not evade, not with its tail end pinned down by the unwounded Taha. The furious retaliation of the punctured Gold-horned Mutant Serpent shattered countless dragon scales on its body.

"Thank you, Taha—"

The punctured Gold-horned Mutant Serpent wanted to thank Taha for having its back. However, its expression quickly changed when it saw Taha aiming for it next.

"Dammit!" the Gold-horned Mutant Serpent cursed.

In the face of the temptation known as the awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline, there was no eternal alliance among them, only eternal interest.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

In mere minutes, the snowy mountains were greatly devastated by the battle between the four Gold-horned Mutant Serpents. The extensive damage to them far exceeded what the ten Void realm experts had done to a single mountain peak in a few hours.

Nevertheless, the situation became even more chaotic when another five Demigod-rank mutant serpents arrived.

They tried to bypass the four fighting mutant serpents to get to Astoria. However, they ended up getting dragged into a nine-way conflict instead. Any mutant serpent that went for Astoria would be obstructed by one of its own.

In their eyes, Astoria was just food that they could eat anytime; she was no threat to them, and she couldn't escape them either.

On the other hand, it was their own clansmen that posed the biggest problem in reaching their grand prize.

Meanwhile, Kemun and Astoria had retreated further away from the battlefield. However, they also did not get too far away. If they exceeded a certain distance, the mutant serpents would give up their inner conflict to give chase.

Emperor Carpus had also retreated from the mutant serpent clan's frenzied battle. Furthermore, he wasn't far from Astoria and Kemun.

"Does the Evermore family still honor the promise of the five ancient families?" Astoria coolly asked.

Emperor Carpus's expression became complicated again. After some struggle, he eventually shook his head.

"Our ancestors made the promise between the five ancient families. It has been countless generations since then, so it means nothing. Times have changed, Holy Empress," Emperor Carpus stated.

"I see," Astoria uttered, unsurprised.

She knew the old pact meant nothing to the five ancient families of the Blessed Golden Dragon Tribe today.

After all, even the Armstrong family of the Great Ratholos Empire wouldn't have honored the old pact if its country wasn't indebted to Vaan and the UN. People in high positions wouldn't bow their heads to others so readily.

The Evermore family and Weissman family seemed to be in better positions than the Armstrong family.

Thus, it was no surprise to Astoria that Emperor Carpus wouldn't honor the old pact.

"I suppose your Evermore family had been too busy serving a new master. I wouldn't be surprised at this point if all the secrets of the Blessed Golden Dragon Tribe had been sold out to these sea monsters by your family," Astoria said with ridicule.

The mutant sea serpents belonged to the sea. Yet, so many powerful mutant sea serpents appeared inland in such a short time.

Clearly, these mutant sea serpents had been occupying the lands of the Divine Serpent Empire.

As such, it was also hard to believe that the Evermore family ruled over the mutant sea serpent's clan. Instead, their people were more likely to be the slaves of those sea monsters.

Nevertheless, Emperor Carpus wasn't angered by Astoria's ridicule.

"As if you aren't serving a master yourself," Emperor Carpus snickered with mockery and said, "Even if you unite the five ancient families, you wouldn't be the ultimate ruler of these lands; you'll just be the servant of someone else anyway."

"However, that's not important. You are just like everyone else – ignorant monkeys. None of you even know who the true masters of this world are, nor their horrifying power. No matter what we do on land, we are just ants to those people."

"Your prophecized overlord is no exception. A single continent can't compare to the entire planet," Emperor Carpus stated disdainfully.

"The true masters of this world? Do you mean those sea monster masters of yours? Or are you referring to the ancient super civilization who only knows how to hide?" Astoria nonchalantly asked.

In her view, the ancient super civilization wasn't worthy of her respect.

If it was truly strong, it could have guided the rest of Pangea into a better future—one that didn't live under the constant threat and fear of Gehenna or allow its atrocities to reach Pangea.

Instead, it had hidden away and avoided all problems facing the world. It even robbed one of the best powers humanity could wield to defend against the demons.

As such, even if the hidden super civilization was the true ruler of the planet, it still had nothing to do with them.

It did nothing when the land was invaded in the past, so why would it ever do anything now?

"Haha..." Emperor Carpus laughed light-heartedly before saying, "Even if that super civilization doesn't do anything for us land-dwellers, it is still the true ruler of this world. Why would it feel obliged to lend ants its help?"

"Even my Divine Serpent Empire is only considered a small-time bandit. We only dare to steal a bit of spirit energy and cover its trace with a grand formation to avoid offending that hidden super civilization."

"But you? Your UN is very bold. Do you think they will continue to ignore what your UN is doing in the sea of stars? Your mass production of spirit energy is truly challenging their bottom line."

"I don't mind telling you that hidden super civilization had most likely secured Golden Dragon Pangea's inheritance long ago. So, you should have never revealed your awakened bloodline."

"Not only have your UN provoked that hidden super civilization, but you, yourself, have tempted it with your awakened bloodline. I'm willing to bet its people will come for you once they learn of it, Holy Empress."

"By then, the Black Serpent Clan would no longer have a chance to fight for it, even if it wanted to," Emperor Carpus stated confidently.

"You seem to have a great understanding of this hidden super civilization... Perhaps you have already seen it or even contacted and made deals with it," Astoria speculated with narrowed eyes.

However, her assumption only triggered Emperor Carpus's self-deprecating scorn.

"Oh, how very wrong you are, Holy Empress. Believe me when I say I do wish to contact and make deals with such a powerful civilization. However, why would it be interested in ants?" Emperor Carpus sneered pessimistically.

The Divine Serpent Empire had been a reclusive country for thousands of years.

As a fellow secluded power, how could his country not even be aware that there was such a powerful hidden neighbor?

The Divine Serpent Empire couldn't possibly be so ignorant, especially after it had been serving the Black Serpent Clan for so many years.

While Emperor Carpus and Astoria were discussing and the Black Serpent Clan was fighting among itself, a blue-skinned humanoid man quietly arrived in the airspace above the snowy mountains.

The blue-skinned humanoid man paid attention to the Black Serpent Clan's inner conflict before tracing the lingering aura of Astoria's awakened Golden Dragon Bloodline onto her body.

In that instant, his face became colorful, feeling pleasantly surprised by his discovery on this investigation trip.

Without warning, he immediately made a hand-grabbing gesture at Astoria like he was looting a rare plant on the roadside. He didn't bother reasoning with words; he simply acted.

Divine power quickly formed a giant hand that reached down from the sky.

"Lady Astoria, be careful!" Kemun cried with alarm.

When Astoria looked up at the large, transparent hand descending from the sky, she was startled at first but recovered a peaceful expression shortly after.

In front of such unstoppable divine power, people at her level could do nothing but resign to her fate.

However, she didn't feel particularly concerned. Her lack of concern stemmed from her faith in Vaan.

True to her belief, before the divine hand could reach her, space suddenly distorted. The divine hand failed to maintain its form and had its divine power dispersed after getting crushed by spatial power.

At the same time, a painful cry resounded from the sky as a severed blue-skinned hand fell to the ground.

"Arghhh—!!!"

Chapter 947: Celestial Human

Up in the sky, the blue-skinned divine being painfully clutched his right forearm as red blood with a hint of gold gushed out from the severed line that separated his right hand.

"Gahhh!! Insect—!!! Do you have any idea what you have done?!"

The blue-skinned divine man howled furiously ahead. After Vaan emerged from the split in space, he glared at him venomously.

He couldn't believe that he, a mighty Divine Origin realm expert, would have his hand severed so easily by one of the primitive land-dwellers. He didn't expect his invincible position would be threatened.

The growth of the primitive land-dwellers had seriously surprised him.

'The Ocean Master was right to send me out for investigation. These primitive land-dwellers have grown beyond our expectations in recent years,' the blue-skinned divine man thought.

Although he needed to report the news back, he was also unwilling to leave just like that.

How could he just leave after suffering an injury from a damn insect?

As the blue-skinned divine man glared at Vaan venomously, Vaan also looked back at him with indifference.

"Maybe you should have considered whose woman you were trying to grab before acting on it,"
Vaan coolly stated.

"Do you ask the roadside flowers for their opinion whenever you want to pick them?!" the blue-skinned divine man gnashed his teeth and said, "You have made a grave mistake by offending me, Vermin. You will not die a pretty death!"

"With your strength? Even if I stand still, you won't even be able to put a scratch on this body,"
Vaan confidently stated.

Ding!

<Target's information has been collected>

...

=====

[Target's information]

Name: Hurgas Grendar

Race: Celestial Human

Age: Over 3000 Pangean Years

Position: Seventh-class Land Investigator in the Celestial Kingdom

Existence Level: Rank 6 Divine Being

Spirit Energy Cultivation Level: Second-stage Divine Origin realm (Heaven-Defying Path).

Abilities: [Spiritual Arts] [Martial Arts] [Water Manipulation] [Advanced Swimming] [Movement Technique] [Throwing Master] [Dark Vision] [Marine Language] [Sonic Scream] [Water Spirit Body]

=====

Looking at the information on the blue-skinned man, Vaan didn't find it surprising that the hidden super civilization would have divine beings within its ranks.

After all, the super civilization was capable of building a spirit-gathering formation on a planetary scale, and it had been siphoning the world's spirit energy for an unimaginably long time.

If its people weren't even this strong, it would be far too disappointing.

Meanwhile, the blue-skinned celestial person called Hurgas tried to gauge Vaan's true strength.

Although Hurgas felt humiliated that a primitive land-dweller was able to hurt him, he also acknowledged that Vaan was possibly stronger than him. Even so, that didn't stop him from plotting his death to avenge himself and regain his honor as a proud celestial.

Being weaker didn't necessarily mean that he couldn't kill the primitive land-dweller.

There were many ways to kill a stronger person, including inviting even stronger allies to help and using divine-slaying poisons, among other things.

After Hurgas jabbed a few points on his right arm to stop the bleeding, he swallowed a green-color restorative pill before launching a water-type divine projectile at Vaan.

The attack consumed divine energy, which was refined from spirit energy. While it also had limited applications compared to mana, it also had more raw power. As such, it was also more powerful than a mana-powered spell of the same level.

Swish!

The fast-spinning water spear closed in on Vaan in no time.

However, it was still half-heartedly evaded by him before he retaliated with an attack of his own. The difference between them was too great for Hurgas to pose a threat to him. As such, most of his attention had been on Hurgas's regenerating hand.

The green-colored restorative pill seemed to be quite miraculous.

Puchi!

Blood sprayed as Hurgas's other hand got severed off by Vaan's half-hearted dimensional slash.

"Arghhh!!!" Hurgas howled in pain.

"What were you even hoping to achieve?" Vaan glanced at the Hurgas weirdly and said, "You know the difference in our power, and you still chose to attack me? Are you in a hurry to reincarnate?"

Hurgas gritted his teeth through the pain and glared at Vaan, "Enjoy your superior position while you still can. I may be weaker than you, but my celestial race is far more powerful than you can imagine!"

"I am not the only land investigator out on a mission this time, and I am definitely not the strongest!"

After saying this, Hurgas laughed, "Hehe! After using that last divine attack, my people will definitely come to check out the situation!"

"If you have the balls, I dare you to wait here for them to come!" Hurgas goaded.

"Whether I have balls or not, I know it very well," Vaan casually glanced down at Hurgas and said, "On the other hand, yours probably shriveled and shrunk until it's no longer visible from all those years in the cold water."

Vaan suddenly made a horizontal swipe, and Hurgas found his world sliding despite staying still in the air. His head had been so cleanly severed that it slowly slid off.

By the time Hurgas registered the pain and realized what had happened, his vision was already darkening.

He died with a look of disbelief.

Vaan intended to wait for the celestial race's reinforcements to arrive, but that didn't mean he needed to keep Hurgas alive until then. The person had already outlived his usefulness.

Based on the person's attitude towards Astoria, Vaan had already understood one simple truth – The UN wouldn't be able to get along with the Celestial Kingdom.

Hurgas possessed a superiority complex and looked down on land-dwellers.

Although he might have been a rare exception, the Celestial race's overall attitude shouldn't be too far from it. Since they didn't consider land-dwellers as their equal, they definitely wouldn't bother negotiating.

As such, once the Celestials found out about the mass production of spirit energy in space, they would most likely go to war with the UN to end it.

In the original timeline, Valefor had never made contact with the Celestials and spirit energy cultivation. The Celestials had never emerged, even after Pangea fully integrated with Gehenna in the following hundreds of years.

However, this time, they had been baited out of their hiding due to him and Astoria.

Chapter 948: A More Humanly Vaan

Shortly after Vaan killed off Hurgas, he descended to the surface and welcomed Astoria's emotional embrace. Through her warmth and heartbeat, he could tell how much she missed him at that moment.

Much of Astoria's concern had also disappeared with that one simple hug.

Vaan didn't find it surprising that Astoria would feel burdened with concerns. After all, he had disappeared for more than two weeks.

If not for Valefor making waves in Gehenna and exposing his traces to Pangea, Astoria and the rest of his women would have been worried sick about his wellbeing.

Vaan tightened his hug and brought Astoria in closer. He sunk his head into her delicate neck and sniffed the sweet, floral scent of lavender in her beautiful blonde hair. It was as if he was trying to imprint her scent in his memory.

When he did that, Astoria felt his deep affection. She couldn't help but feel shocked yet pleasantly surprised at the same time.

Although she didn't know what had happened to Vaan in the past two weeks, he seemed to have become more normal and human-like. He felt less mechanically driven by calculations and more by emotions.

A normal person might not be able to notice it. But as one of Vaan's lovers, how could she not feel his changes?

She also didn't know if this change was good for Vaan or not. However, she at least didn't hate it. In fact, she liked it very much. She felt like a young girl who had just fallen in love again.

Being feel Vaan's raw affection gave her a never-before sense of bliss and happiness. She could feel the jittery butterflies in her stomach as Vaan held her in his arms.

Astoria refrained from asking questions and simply enjoyed the moment.

At the same time, Vaan sensed Astoria's emotions and smiled with satisfaction.

Although he couldn't predict how the future would unfold from now on, he believed this bit of happiness gained was worth the price he paid to acquire.

Naturally, his change was brought by the recreation of Valefor's persona and autonomy. Half of his computational power had been given to Valefor.

In exchange, Vaan had also learned a bit from Valefor's courage and decisiveness. He understood that sometimes, he had to take risks for the greatest reward. He couldn't always take the safest route dictated by his calculations.

Sometimes, he had to choose the most ideal path, even if it meant taking on avoidable risks.

He couldn't always let calculations and probabilities dictate his life's road. He might have a great destiny to realize, but it didn't have to be linear and solitary.

Living solely to fulfill his destiny couldn't be considered living; it was just going through the motions.

However, he, of all people, understood just how often life did not go the way one wanted it to. His millions of reincarnations had taught him this. As such, while he was blessed with more fortune in this life, there was no telling if he would succeed in fulfilling his destiny.

While it was important to succeed, it was also important to prepare for failure so as to not be disappointed by it.

After all, in case he failed to succeed, he had to be at least confident enough to say he had lived his best and did not hold any regret.

Sometime later, Vaan and Astoria finally separated. No mushy words of love needed to be exchanged between them.

"Find some time to arrange for someone else to manage the Holy Knight Empire for you, and then head to the special zone in the moon base to cultivate. I have left something there that will help everyone cultivate more quickly and effectively," Vaan said.

Astoria immediately revealed her surprise before eventually nodding, "Mmm, I will listen to you."

After a short and passionate kiss, Vaan and Astoria separated again. Only then did Vaan turn his attention to Kemun to say the same thing.

"Everyone in the Red Dragon Clan should also find some time to cultivate in the special zone in the moon base."

"Understood, Supreme Leader."

Shortly after receiving Kemun's compliance, Vaan sent him off with Astoria. Even the Transcendent dragons were dismissed from the region after locating all the missing members of the Pure Moon Palace.

They only need to handle the Pure Moon Palace's matter and settle down all its members in the Black Rose Empire.

As for the matter with the Divine Serpent Empire and the Celestial Humans, Vaan had promised to take care of them. It was just much more efficient for him to act personally, even if it meant Kemun and Astoria would lose the rare chance to temper themselves.

There would be plenty of chances for them to temper themselves in the future.

A few moments later, only Vaan and Emperor Carpus were left on the snowy mountains. One was the ruler of the Divine Serpent Empire, and the other was the leader of the UN.

However, Emperor Carpus felt like he was far beneath Vaan. Their statuses were just too vastly different.

It was only after Emperor Carpus saw Vaan in person did he realized he had greatly underestimated his strength. He had never sensed such a horrible vigor and aura in a person.

It was as if he was not looking at a person but a miniature star—Vaan's body felt oppressive and heavy even when he wasn't trying to pressure him on purpose.

They were clear signs of a truly strong person, even more powerful than the Great Devils.

But how could that be? – Emperor Carpus wondered with disbelief.

He never imagined it was possible for someone so strong to be born on Pangea. Vaan's rise was simply meteoric.

Meanwhile, Vaan briefly studied Emepero Carpus's imperial attire and glanced over the information provided by the system and his Fourth Dimensional Sense.

"Who's side are you on?" Vaan asked simply.

However, when Emperor Carpus heard this question, he couldn't help but put on a bitter and wry smile. He naturally understood Vaan was talking about the UN and the newly emerged Celestial race.

He had taken that hidden super civilization as a god-like and invincible existence.

Yet, when one of the celestials emerged for the first time, he also died so pathetically. Vaan had beheaded him so effortlessly. Even if stronger Celestials still existed, it no longer mattered.

That one scene had shattered his illusory image of the Celestial's invincibility.

"What will become of me and my Divine Serpent Empire, Your Excellency?" Emperor Carpus asked humbly.

In front of Vaan, who was more celestial than the actual celestial human, Emperor Carpus did not dare to put on any airs.

Chapter 949: Talking to Emperor Carpus

"That depends on the attitude of you and your Divine Serpent Empire, Emperor Carpus. Are you blindly loyal to these Blue Skins?" Vaan coolly asked.

When Emperor Carpus heard this question, he smiled bitterly.

Up until now, he had never seen a single trace of the super civilization or its people. He had only derived some clues from the Black Serpent Clan, who his Evermore family had served for thousands of years.

Most of the Divine Serpent Empire's cultivation knowledge and technology was also taught by the Black Serpent Clan.

As such, the Evermore family and the Divine Serpent Empire were indebted to the Black Serpent Clan for the country's mighty development, allowing it to become one of the top powers in the world.

Considering the Black Serpent Clan seemed to be a servant clan of the super civilization, Emperor Carpus's gratitude and awe had also transferred over to it.

However, having seen the attitude of the blue-skinned celestial man for the first time, Emperor Carpus understood the super civilization would treat land-dwelling humans very differently.

The blue-skinned celestial man did not view the Holy Empress as another human, but as a precious resource he could just plunder. That was no way to treat another intelligent life, especially one that shared human origins.

As such, Emperor Carpus imagined the super civilization would treat land-dwellers even worse than the Great Devils if it suddenly decided to dominate the continent.

"I have to pick solely based on sentimental feelings and moral reasons; I would naturally choose the UN. The super civilization does seem kind to land-dwellers," Emperor Carpus first stated.

"However, I am a ruler of a large nation. My decision determines the fate of two hundred million lives. As such, I can choose sides based on my personal feelings but what benefits my empire and guarantees its survival."

"So, forgive me for being realistic, and let me ask you instead, Your Excellency – Can you win against this powerful super civilization, which had monopolized the world's spirit energy and existed for a long time?" Emperor Carpus asked seriously.

Vaan glanced at Emperor Carpus interestingly.

It was hard to like realistic people, but they couldn't be hated either. After all, it was fine to look down on other people's different ways of life, but it was wrong to deprive them of their basic right to live.

If the UN couldn't defeat the Celestial Kingdom, it had no reason to drag the Divine Serpent Empire down with it.

To be selfish was human nature.

Vaan understood that well. That was also why he did not mind realistic women. Countless witches offered him their bodies, and he would offer them breakthroughs in their cultivation. The pleasure derived from the experience was just a bonus.

Nevertheless, Vaan still clearly distinguished between women who were just transactional partners and lovers who were worthy of his emotional investment.

"Information on the Celestial Kingdom is limited, so I cannot guarantee that I can defeat the Celestials. As such, I will also not force you to choose a side," Vaan calmly stated before adding, "However, I do have to remind you."

"if you plan to sit on the fence and watch which side emerges victorious, don't complain that you can't enjoy the same benefits as others from joining the UN late once we win," Vaan reminded.

"I understand, Your Excellency. I have decided to abstain from choosing a side for now," Emperor Carpus ultimately said.

While it seemed like he had three choices—choosing one of the two sides or staying neutral—In truth, he only had two options.

If he stubbornly chose to side with the Celestial Kingdom, the prophecized overlord would likely destroy him and his empire first.

After all, his Divine Serpent Empire occupied a strategic point that could hinder the UN's movements in the war with the Celestial Kingdom. The prophecized overlord had no reason to ignore an existing threat in his neighborhood.

Nevertheless, Emperor Carpus couldn't choose to side with the UN right away, either, even if he wanted to.

The Divine Serpent Empire was deeply tied to the Black Serpent Clan. Its influence had stretched to every corner of his country. Countless people worshipped serpents as their guardians and deities.

If he suddenly voiced his opposition to the Celestial Kingdom, the Black Serpent Clan would likely turn on them. The chaos and confusion were hard to estimate and he did not dare to gamble on the extent of the damage it would cause.

As such, Emperor Carpus could only pick the safest option, even if it meant giving up potential benefits from joining the UN early.

"Are you sure?"

Vaan gave Emperor Carpus a mysterious smile, causing his heart to tremble with alarm.

The silent implication of Vaan's smile seemed to tell Emperor Carpus that he might have missed an important consideration in his thought process.

Emperor Carpus immediately hesitated and pondered more deeply.

However, Vaan wasn't so patient.

"Even if your Divine Serpent Empire wants to sit on the fence and watch, the Celestials might not be as reasonable as me. They might force your country to join them. The UN won't offer you help since you would have already chosen neutrality," Vaan mentioned.

"Furthermore, even if the Celestials didn't force your empire to join their side, do you think your country will be safe being in the middle of the conflict between the UN and the Celestial Kingdom?"

"The war between my UN and the Celestial Kingdom will lay waste to your land. Your buildings will fall, and your people will die. This is the true consequence of choosing a conservative option," Vaan stated.

Emperor Carpus's face instantly paled, and a chill ran down his spine as he broke into cold sweats. Vaan's words were like a splash of cold water, waking him up.

"Do you still want to sit on the fence and watch, Emperor Carpus?"

"No, I change my mind! Please let my Divine Serpent Empire join your UN, Your Excellency!"

After seeing Emperor Carpus's change of heart, Vaan smiled with slyness.

If he could pull the Divine Serpent Kingdom to the UN's side with just the words from his mouth, why would he need to bother resorting to force with his fist?

Chapter 950: Origin of the Lunarans

Vaan had indirectly insinuated that the Celestial Kingdom was hidden to the west of the Divine Serpent Empire. Emperor Carpus was able to believe this since the blue-skinned celestial man had emerged from the west.

As such, it was easy to convince Emperor Carpus what would happen to the Divine Serpent Empire if it got caught in the middle of the war between the UN and the Celestial Kingdom.

However, Vaan didn't actually believe the Celestial Kingdom was hidden in the Western Sea.

Even if traces of the Celestial Kingdom were found in the Western Sea, it would only be a single outpost or city of that super civilization and not its entirety.

After all, at the peak of the Celestial Kingdom's prosperity, it had reached for the stars and colonized other celestial bodies in the local solar system. That alone made the Celestial Kingdom a Type-1 civilization on the Kardeshev scale.

It might have been a Type-2 civilization.

Nevertheless, being at least a Type-1 civilization on the Kardeshev scale would mean the Celestial Kingdom was able to access all the energy on its planet and store it for consumption.

Its monopoly on spirit energy was enough proof of that.

Nevertheless, spirit energy wasn't the only form of energy to be found on Pangea. Vaan didn't believe spirit energy alone was enough to support the entire Celestial Kingdom either.

As such, the Celestial Kingdom would just settle in a single location; it must have established countless cities and outposts across Pangea to collect all the available resources and energy required for its development.

In other words, the Celestial Kingdom could be anywhere and everywhere in the vast and boundless ocean.

If Vaan had to venture a wild guess, the Celestial Kingdom's cities and outposts weren't just limited to the ocean but also the underground layer beneath it and even the mantle layer.

He found it hard to believe that the Celestial Kingdom wouldn't be interested in the vast power of magma if it gave up solar power to remain hidden in the world.

Once a war broke out between the UN and the Celestial Kingdom, the land could be attacked from any direction.

Furthermore, it would also be difficult for the UN to guard against the Celestial Kingdom's attacks since it wouldn't be easy to track its movements in the vast ocean.

As such, Vaan was prepared to seize the initiative by taking the war to the sea instead of waiting for it to arrive on land.

"Right, there's something I want to ask you, Emperor Carpus."

"Please ask away, Your Excellency—No, my Lord!"

Vaan blinked upon witnessing Emperor Carpus's adaptability. Since Emperor Carpus had already sworn his allegiance to him, he did not hesitate to serve him seriously.

"Alright," Vaan calmly nodded with approval before asking, "Why are you going to such lengths to exterminate the Pure Moon Palace?"

"Actually, before that, why do you discriminate against the Pure Moon Palace's people? You should know better that such poor treatment wouldn't have forced them away in the first place."

"So, why do you do it?" Vaan asked.

Emperor Carpus smiled ruefully before saying, "Actually, I have nothing against Lunarans personally. The same goes for the rest of the Darkans in my empire."

"However, the Black Serpent Clan had always been extremely prejudiced against Lunarans since the beginning of history. Those who worshipped serpent guardians and deities began to distance themselves from Lunarans as a result."

"Eventually, that distance evolved into the discrimination it is today. People believe Lunarans are symbols of misfortune, and favoring them would earn the ire of the serpents."

"I was only following the Black Serpent Clan's order to eliminate the Pure Moon Palace, my Lord."

After listening to Emperor Carpus's explanation, Vaan began pondering the relationship between the Black Serpent Clan, the Lunarans, and the Celestial Kingdom.

He couldn't help but suspect the Lunarans were connected to the Celestial Kingdom.

After all, Lunarans were said to be people of the moon. It was a common legend that all Pangeans knew about.

However, there could have been some truth to that legend.

Vaan began to believe the Lunaran ancestors were once part of the Celestial Kingdom. However, they had different ideals and decided to cut off their relationship with it.

Most likely, the Lunaran ancestors didn't want to adapt to the sea like the blue-skinned celestial man and wanted to live among the primitive land-dwellers. Because they were also a minority, they couldn't inherit the knowledge of the Celestial Kingdom and eventually declined into obscurity.

The truth about the Lunaran's origins was probably something like this – Vaan speculated.

Perhaps the order to eliminate the Pure Moon Palace came from the Celestial Kingdom, who may have feared the Lunarans returning to the moon and reviving the lost glory of their civilization, ultimately attracting calamities from the deep void.

Nevertheless, that would imply the Celestial Kingdom was aware of the Heavenreacher.

Once the Celestial Kingdom learned about the mass production of spirit energy in space, the war might come to the UN sooner than expected.

Time was ticking.

...

Sometime later, Vaan sensed the arrival of the celestial reinforcements.

Three blue-skinned Divine Origin realm experts made a stop in the exact airspace where the deceased Hurgas had discharged his divine art. Two were Sixth-class Land Investigators, and one was a Fifth-class Land Investigator.

The strongest among them was the Fifth-class Land Investigator, a Fourth-stage Divine Origin realm expert.

After a short investigation, they quickly discovered Hurgas's corpse, along with the carcasses of Gold-horned Mutant Serpents, snowy mountains away from Vaan and Emperor Carpus's location.

Emperor Carpus did not know when, but the Gold-horned Mutant Serpents had all been silently killed off by Vaan.

Nevertheless, the three blue-skinned Land Investigators were greatly shocked and alarmed when they discovered the corpse and carcasses. Unfortunately, Vaan didn't give them a chance to continue their investigation or flee the scene.

A silent yet deadly cold breeze flew past the three blue-skinned Land Investigators before their heads separated from their bodies.

Emperor Carpus's heart immediately turned cold when he witnessed the scene.

When they arrived, he had sensed their great strength and didn't even dare breathe for fear of giving away his location.

However, such strong Divine Beings from the Celestial Kingdom were also killed off so effortlessly by Vaan. Emperor Carpus couldn't even tell what power or skill Vaan had used to behead the three blue-skinned celestials.

Emperor Carpus suddenly felt fortunate for getting the chance to pick the right side. Those three poor fools didn't even get to choose how they died.

Even worse, they didn't even understand why they had to die.