

Void 83

Chapter 83 - Meeting [2]

The imperial palace was situated on a massive hill directly in the middle of Aurora. And with its size, it was visible even from tens of kilometers away. Rose led Damien through the high-class neighborhoods that made up the hill before arriving at the gates to the palace.

“Your Highness,” the guards immediately bowed when they saw her. When they got close enough to the palace, Rose had already taken off her disguise.

She simply nodded at the guards and entered the palace with Damien at her side.

The palace was designed similarly to the many smaller variants Damien had seen during his time on Apeiron. From the temple to the legacy tomb, they all had a similar structure.

Upon entry, the first thing one would see was a massive hall leading to a singular set of pristine white double doors.

The sides of this hall were decorated with various ornaments and aesthetics, and besides these, there were countless smaller doors leading elsewhere. These were the routes one could take to the inner palace.

But at the moment, there was no need to use these doors. Rose was making a beeline for the throne hall without paying attention to anything else. She wanted to get the meeting with her father over as soon as possible so they could go back to minding their own business.

When she knocked on the doors, she was met with silence before a deep voice rang out. “Enter.”

The doors swung open on their own and the scene inside was revealed. Similar to the previous hall, this one was also decorated majestically, but the carpets and decorations that lined its interior seemed to all focus on accentuating a single location.

That was, of course, the throne located at the end of the hall. There were seats lined up for ministers and others who would seek an audience for the emperor along the sides of the hall and two thrones at its end.

Yet, only one of them was occupied. The other one had stayed empty for around a decade now. It was the throne where Rose’s mother used to sit.

On the occupied throne sat a lone man with short pink hair and piercing ruby eyes.

If the storm of magic power that surrounded Malcolm could be considered a sea of blood, the one around the emperor was more like a raging tornado.

His cold gaze scanned the two, warming slightly only when he looked at Rose.

“Father, I have returned,” Rose said with a curt bow.

The emperor nodded as he looked at the only other person in the room. Yet, this person didn’t seem to have any indication of lowering himself.

If this was a normal meeting with the emperor, he might've swallowed his pride and showed respect, but it wasn't. He needed to show his future father-in-law that he wasn't someone to be looked down on.

"Good afternoon, senior."

The emperor continued to scan Damien with his indifferent gaze before once again looking over at Rose. It was at this point she realized he already knew what they came here for.

"Father, I-

"Enough. Leave for now and let me speak with him alone."

Rose hesitated, but when Damien also lightly nodded at her, she reluctantly left the room.

Damien and the emperor stared at each other in silence for a few minutes before one of them decided to speak.

"What did you do to my daughter."

"Hm? If anything you should be asking what your daughter did to me."

The emperor's eyes became sharp as he disappeared from his throne. Damien also took out his sword. Fist met metal and a resounding clap rang through the throne hall.

The emperor stayed still, but Damien was thrown back towards the door. But he didn't allow himself to stay in such a vulnerable position.

He teleported a few meters behind the emperor, carrying his velocity through the spatial layers and recycling the force from the emperor's previous punch to strike him.

Molecules were forced into vibration and lightning crackled in the vicinity before tens of plasma beams also shot towards the emperor

And on top of it all,

'Void Sword Art 3rd Step: Spatial Collapse'

Damien directly used his strongest move. He was painfully aware that he couldn't stack up to a 4th class, so he decided to use everything he had in the first exchange.

The emperor stood still and watched calmly as the barrage of different attacks headed his way. When the beams of plasma and lightning neared him, he sliced his arm down at a speed Damien couldn't follow.

The air around the emperor ripped in half, causing space to tear. Every single one of those beams was swallowed by the spatial crack that formed.

It was then that space began to distort and twist, but how could someone who could rip apart space itself be trapped within its collapse? The emperor used the same method to destroy the spatial collapse.

Damien immediately teleported away. His face was twisted into a frown. This was the first time he had ever faced someone who could affect space, leaving him at a disadvantage. His eyes shined as he learned about a weakness he wasn't aware of.

If it was a couple of months ago, he would've been completely helpless already, but he had gained an entirely new arsenal of moves recently. Concentrating on one of the many ethereal connections he had gained, he manifested a flame on his palm.

The emperor finally had a reaction when he saw the flame on Damien's palm. His brow raised and he looked on with interest, seemingly curious about Damien's next move.

Sadly, this was a power Damien only recently gained and didn't have time to experiment with yet, so he could only use it in its most rudimentary form, a fireball.

He simply threw the fireball at the emperor, who captured it in a ball seemingly made entirely of the surrounding air and observed it.

"Hmm, this power is interesting. It seems to come from the sun itself, but it is also not technically borrowed power." Looking back at Damien, the emperor nodded. "Let's stop here for now."

Damien also nodded. He wasn't able to do even the slightest bit of damage, but this was expected. No matter how short it was, he was still glad he got the opportunity to spar with someone this much stronger than him.

He also got to see how different the various beings at 4th class were. While Malcolm couldn't tear space like the emperor, the destruction he caused was more lethal. He couldn't help but wonder which of them would win in a fight.

"Let's get to the most important matter first. Tell me which world you came from and what purpose you arrived here to achieve. Keep in mind that trying to lie in front of me will result in instant death."

Damien nodded. He wasn't surprised by the question nor the fact that he wouldn't be able to lie. The class difference was expansive to the point where even the smallest actions Damien took could be observed by the emperor precisely.

So, Damien told the emperor about earth and how it had only recently been introduced to mana, how he ended up trapped in a dungeon, and how he arrived on the surface.

The emperor listened with a passive expression, but inwardly he was feeling complicated. He saw no lies in Damien's words, but that made things more confusing. 'How can a beginner world produce a talent that can rival even my daughter?'

It had to be known that it had been tens of thousands of years since Apeiron was introduced to mana. Those born in this world would naturally have better talent than those in new worlds until a few generations passed.

Not to mention the fact that the Adelaire royal family was the progeny of two demigods, which further elevated their talent.

The emperor stayed silent. He had seen the close relationship between the two kids long before they had actually gotten together, even back when they first met. He had been evaluating Damien ever since then.

And no matter how he tried to look for faults, he couldn't find anything to warrant rejecting Damien's relationship with his daughter. He was talented enough to not burden her, his character was outstanding and he never seemed to move based on his lust, and his decision-making was good enough to pass.

Though Damien had plenty of flaws, they were things that could be fixed with time. He was still young, after all.

The emperor's only qualm was Damien's background, but even that didn't seem to be an issue. He was smarter than to be hostile to every otherworlder simply because of the Nox. Especially when the other world had the potential to birth talents like Damien even while it was in its infancy.

"Sigh...I will not stand in the way of your relationship with my daughter, but there are certain things you must do in order to keep that relationship. I will speak to you about that when she returns to the room."

Damien smiled brightly but realized there was another topic he had to bring up.

"Senior, we need to talk about the Nox."