

Void 1001

Chapter 1001 Blaze [1]

"Huu...huu..."

Elena stood in the deepest depths of the Tomb of Ayakashi.

Drip!

Drip!

Droplets of black water leaked from the ceiling and dropped onto the ground around her, the only remains of the opponents she once faced.

'Finally...it's over...'

Her body was stained in dry blood and her spiritual world was filled with cracks caused by the last week of bitter battle. The branch of Yggdrasil she wielded was dyed in an eerie black aura, a consequence of the countless demonic spirits that were vanquished by its body.

She was no longer in the central area. No, she killed that massive agglomeration of demonic spirits within two days.

After that, she moved through the various corridors of the lowest layer of the pyramid and sent every demonic spirit she found back into the clutches of oblivion.

Their total number was close to 60,000, and the endless battle was far more taxing on Elena than she would've ever expected.

In fact, she tried to escape and heal 3 days in, but she found that there were no exits present at all, with even the entrance she found her way through completely gone.

'The amount of blood vitality I've been forced to burn is concerning. I've sacrificed around...15,000 years of lifespan...'

Elena frowned.

'Even though I specialize in Life Laws, my lifespan is still only around 30,000 or 40,000 years. I basically shaved off half my life.'

Blood vitality was a last resort for a reason. The ratio of the amount of blood vitality burned and actual power granted was far too unbalanced.

After all, though the act of sacrificing oneself for power in this way was approved by the universe, it still went against the way of heaven in a certain sense.

Short-term gain without consequences wasn't possible.

'The only thing I can be thankful for is the Genesis Bead trying to heal me.'

Her comprehension wasn't high enough to do it on her own, but the treasure was different.

It was far higher in league than she was, so while it could only do so at a snail's pace, it was still somewhat working to heal her.

'Still, it's not smart to exert myself too much for a few weeks. I should get out of this temple and find a safe place to retreat.'

Elena glanced at the walls around her with a sigh.

'If only I could find a way out...'

The corridors were even stronger than the central area, which had been thoroughly worn down by the power of the coagulated demonic spirits.

It was impossible to leave this place.

...or was it?

Elena's attention abruptly snapped to a glint she noticed out of the corner of her eyes.

Flash!

She appeared in its position in a second and dug her arm into a small hole in the wall.

"Got you!" She exclaimed, grabbing the furry creature at its end.

She pulled it out, ignoring its screeching and scratching as she finally caught sight of her target.

"Hm...?" She muttered.

"The cat distribution system is actually universal?!"

Her eyes lit up magnificently.

In her grasp was a little orange tabby cat, its big and dumb eyes gazing up at her defiantly.

"How did you get here, little guy?" Elena asked, her voice suddenly several pitches higher.

Hiss!

The cat hissed in hostility, making its position clear.

However, to Elena, this gesture only made it cuter.

"Did you get stuck? Do you want me to help you get out?"

Her question was baseless since she had no means of accomplishing what she promised, but she asked anyway.

After all, who could resist those eyes?

Unfortunately, the cat was far less enthusiastic about the interaction than Elena. Regardless of her coaxing and prodding, it only made attempts to flee her grasp and escape.

Elena's eyes hardened.

"Then I can only bring out my secret weapon."

Meow!

The cat purred in fear and cowered as Elena reached into her spatial storage with an extremely evil expression.

"Take this!"

Nyaaaa!

The cat let out a scream and closed its eyes, turning its face away from danger before...!

Sniff...sniff...! I think you should take a look at

Hm? What was that smell?

It opened a single eye and peeked at its captor, who was currently holding a massive piece of meat in her other hand.

Drip!

Elena grinned as she watched the cat visibly drool.

"Do you want it?" She asked temptingly.

The cat nodded furiously.

It didn't know what she was holding, but it definitely wanted that!

"Hmm, but there's a problem..."

Nyaaa!

"Okay, okay, I can give it to you, but only if you form a contract with me."

Meow?

"Forming a contract with me means becoming partners! We'll eat good meat and have fun together for the rest of time!"

The cat eyed her strangely before glancing back at the meat.

Its eyes moved between the two multiple times before it finally lowered its head.

Elena smiled. "I knew you'd be interested."

She didn't have a cat when she was on Earth, but she always adored the little things. What she knew about them was that they were extremely bratty, extremely cute, and extremely addicted to food!

She gently pressed her index finger against the cat's forehead, initiating a beast contract, which it also accepted.

'I feel like I'm tricking a child, but oh well.'

Elena shrugged as she felt the newly formed connection between her and the little creature.

"Take it. It's all yours," she proclaimed with a smug expression, finally letting go of the cat and throwing the large slab of meat in its direction.

The cat's eyes immediately lit aflame as it rushed to the meat and devoured it.

This texture!

This juiciness!

This utterly magnificent taste!

How come it had never tried something like this before?!

"Hehe, I didn't know you'd love it that much. Since you like to eat so much, should I just call you Fatty?"

Nyaaa!

"I thought so. I'm still going to call you Fatty though."

Elena giggled as the cat glared at her.

"I'll call you Isla when we meet people, but don't think you'll get out of this one when we're alone!"

There were only two proper ways to treat cats.

The first was to coddle them and pamper them to the extreme.

And the second was to bully them as much as possible!

Of course, as a true cat owner, Elena was going to balance both, but that was beside the point.

"Say, how did you get here?" She asked again.

Nya?

Meow!

"Eh? That's possible? Show me where!"

Her eyes lit up excitedly.

From Isla's thoughts, Elena learned the cat was born and grew up within the Tomb of Ayakashi, but it had found several routes to traverse the tomb itself.

Only, it was blocked from ever leaving by a mysterious restriction.

After finishing her meal, Isla skittered through the winding corridors until she came across a nondescript wall, only differentiated by the rest by the faintest scratches on its surface.

"It's here?" Elena asked, receiving a nod in response.

Her smile widened.

Finally, she could leave.

She walked into the wall, and mystically, she passed right through it, her eyes landing on a weathered staircase that led upward as far as the eye could see.

'This is really it!' She exclaimed inwardly as she began making her way up.

She could finally make her way out of this damned tomb.

However, as she made her way up, a thought floated in her mind.

'Is it just me, or is it getting hotter?'

Chapter 1002 Blaze [2]

"The First Calamity will begin soon."

A voice only heard in Luxurion prophesized the Holy Light Realm's belligerent future.

Elena felt the change from within the Tomb of Ayakashi and only became more solemn as she got closer and closer to its exit.

However, not many were like her.

Regardless of their position, these geniuses didn't quite notice the slight darkening of the sky.

The atmosphere heated up only a few degrees at first, but in a single instant...

VOOM!

A terrifying heat swept through the realm.

Flames burned through Heaven and Earth, and the sky was covered in a thick black smog.

"W-what's happening?!"

"Fuck, run!"

"Someone help!"

The geniuses on Holy Light Star were abruptly wrapped within those flames, their yells of panic drowned in the blaze.

The first and second banquet halls were met with an influx of hundreds of geniuses in that moment, as they were burned and expelled from the realm by the disaster.

As for those who remained, they ran, scattering in every direction. They desperately searched for shelter from the flames that could burn even them in just a few seconds.

Some tried to fight back, but that wasn't as easy as expected. Because...

"This flame burns through mana," Su Ren realized with interest.

He observed the spherical forcefield he'd placed around himself and Xiao Yue to protect them and watched as tongues of flame devoured it piece by piece, breaking it down to nothingness.

"Senior Brother, what's happening?!" Xiao Yue cried, evident fear in her voice.

Su Ren turned around calmly and responded, "Nothing special. It seems this realm is more complex than we originally expected, but it isn't anything I can't handle."

"Really?" Xiao Yue asked, clutching his sleeve.

Su Ren clearly felt her shaking hands. He sighed and placed his own hand on her head warmly.

"Have I ever lied to you?" He asked comfortingly.

"No..."

"Exactly."

Su Ren smiled inwardly as he felt her calming down.

He turned his attention back to the disaster outside, his eyes slightly narrowing.

'This shouldn't be an original mechanism of the realm. If it was, the experts outside wouldn't have allowed their geniuses to enter.'

The flames were incredibly powerful, and those early and middle stage 4th class geniuses had no way of surviving more than one or two seconds inside it.

'Nevertheless, since it is already here, there is nothing to do but survive it.'

With Su Ren's strength, which could match Damien at his power level that surpassed the 4th revolution, making it through this calamity was not that hard of a task.

However, not everyone could enjoy this same relaxed attitude...

VOOM!

WHOOSH!

The roaring inferno was almost nonsensically loud.

Rose rushed through its embers, her skin red and peeling from the heat attacking her.

'Dammit!' She yelled inwardly.

She swept her hand through the air, affecting a large area with her mana and pushing Illusion Laws into that space.

Whoosh!

The flames immediately quieted down. Their material blaze had been turned into an illusion, removing any effects it had on reality.

Rose didn't wait to admire her handiwork. After clearing the area, she shot back into the firestorm, her eyes constantly searching for any signs of shelter.

BOOM!

From behind her, the terrifying sound of tides of flame clashing against each other as they rushed to fill the space she cleared resounded.

It didn't even take a single second for this to occur.

'I can only use illusions to create momentary respite. If I want to survive this, I need to find something to shield myself!'

Haa!

With a sharp battle cry, she leaped into the air and summoned a massive scythe from her spatial ring.

She twirled it through the air, her every movement attracting tongues of flame like a snake whisperer with his flute.

However, what she controlled was not flame, but wind!

WHOOSH!

A tornado formed around her body. With the nature of fire, this tornado only served as an attractive force. The swirling winds drew in the surrounding flames and instantly transformed into a small firestorm within its greater counterpart.

'Hoo...'I think you should take a look at

Rose's eyes sharpened as she stood in its center.

'I can't keep going like this. I'll run out of mana sooner or later, and I don't want to waste pills unnecessarily.'

Even if she could avoid the fire, she couldn't avoid the mana-burning heat. Her skin was blistered madly, and she could feel its ability to protect her internal body dwindling.

'There's no other choice.'

She gritted her teeth and shot down to the ground.

Boom!

The impact created a crater and disrupted the tornado she'd created, but Rose didn't care. Her scythe tore through the ground, digging the crater deeper and deeper.

Vam!

She freed one arm and threw it in the air, controlling her Illusion Laws to fill in the space above her head.

'The illusion will break in 3 seconds.'

She'd bought herself this short amount of time by tunneling into the ground, and now that she was away from immediate danger, she rapidly spread her awareness in every direction, looking for a subterranean tunnel or any sort of isolated area that could shield her from the disaster.

'There...!'

In a realm densely packed with hidden areas and fortuitous encounters, her awareness that spread over ten thousand kilometers easily found a place for her.

'Illusory Shift.'

She gently tapped her foot on the ground and glided forward, straight into the wall before her.

And mysteriously enough...she passed right through it!

Rose's body became incorporeal, which allowed her to travel through solid rock for several hundred meters until she reached the open area she found.

BOOOOOOOM!

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The faint sound of her illusion breaking and the storm invading her original hiding spot resonated through the rock and vibrated against Rose's back as she made the final push and rematerialized in reality.

"Fuwah...!"

She let go of the breath she'd been holding and leaned against the wall, taking a few pills out of her spatial ring and eating them.

Her scarred and blistered skin began to heal, and even her muscles saw some slight readjustment.

Her mana recovered as well, but only to half of her full capacity. After all, she wasn't trying to waste pills.

"Phew...now that that's over with, let's find out where I am."

She glanced up at the damp ceiling, through which she could still hear the roaring flames above.

"I'm not too deep underground, but I'm deep enough to be safe. As for this location..."

Honestly, she didn't pay much attention to where she was going due to the time constraint, but she was hoping it would be the location of a lucky chance.

Compared to the rest of the group, Rose rarely received such chances.

It wasn't a matter of luck nor was it a matter of talent. In fact, Rose's ability to keep up with the rest despite this fact was a testament to her great talent.

Merely, she studied Illusion Laws. Her Wind Laws were entirely secondary, and she only ever practiced them when she had free time, which was hardly ever.

Illusion Laws in the way Rose used them were rare on a universal scale, as she was essentially learning to manipulate reality itself.

How could it be easy to find chances for such a Law?

'Rather, because I'm studying something so heaven-defying, I'm being denied chances I would've received otherwise.'

Rose sighed wryly as she explored the dark cave around her.

"Whether it's through awareness or regular perception, I can't find anything wrong with this place, both in a good way and a bad way," she muttered.

"Haa, a curse is a curse, I guess."

She sat down once more, planning to simply wait in the empty cave and recover until the firestorm passed.

She leaned back against a nearby wall and placed her hands on the ground to her sides, entering a relaxed state until—

Click!

"What the hell?!"

Rose's right hand sunk a few inches along with a square portion of the ground around it.

"This is...secret mechanism?!" Rose exclaimed excitedly.

Her smile only widened when she felt the ground dropping out below her.

"Haha, this is classic!"

She eagerly gazed into the darkness below as she fell several thousand meters and slammed into the ground.

BANG!

Her expression soured the moment she felt flat ground.

She sighed once again.

"Haa...a curse really is a curse, I guess."

She drew her scythe and took a battle stance...

...facing several tens of thousands of hostile beasts that occupied the massive abyss she'd fallen into.

Chapter 1003 Blaze [3]

BOOOOOM!

Flames tore through the open entrance of the Tomb of Ayakashi and stormed through the entry corridor, making it impossible for anyone to leave.

Elena's eyes narrowed as she jumped back and avoided the spreading blaze.

'Am I stuck here?' She wondered inwardly.

She set up a defense around her body and turned the corner into a connected corridor, avoiding the flames that slammed into the wall behind her.

She had to run through several hundred meters of the corridor before she finally felt the heat on her heel weakening.

'Luckily, the force isn't continuously pushing, otherwise, this whole tomb would be burned to the ground.' She sighed in relief as she stopped and rested against the wall:

There was nothing wrong with destroying a tomb like this one, but the problem was that she was still inside it!

'Why does this shit have to happen right when I decide to leave?!' She complained to herself.

The fire may have weakened, but it wasn't dying down nearly enough. Its heat still corroded the entry corridor, and was slowly creeping into the connecting pathways as well.

'With my strength, it's still possible to escape, but what's the point? If the flames outside are powerful enough to charge so far inside before dying down, leaving will be far more disastrous than staying put.'

As she entertained her thoughts, her attention turned to the left, from which she heard several sets of footsteps approaching.

A group of men was revealed from the shadows.

When they noticed Elena, their brows raised in unison.

"Eh? Big brother, isn't that...?" The second foremost man said, nudging the man at their head.

The so-called "big brother" looked Elena up and down before pulling out a piece of parchment.

A grin spread on his face.

"You're right. That's her," he said suspiciously.

Elena's eyes narrowed.

'Enemies?'

"State your names and affiliations," She uttered, quietly summoning Yggdrasil's branch.

"Us?" The foremost man said, turning his head towards her strangely.

"Who we are doesn't matter. The only thing that matters is..."

He turned the parchment towards her.

"This is you, right?"

On it was a picture of two people together. Naturally, they were Damien and Elena.

"All you need to know is that someone wants your head, and there's no way for you to escape death! Brothers, get her!"

Elena clicked her tongue and jumped back as six bandit-like men leaped at her in unison.

She swung Yggdrasil's branch in a horizontal arc, infusing it with the concept of Transcended Death as she let the slash go.

Shiiiiing!

The branch sliced through the air with the sharpness of a peak treasure, beheading all six men at once.

She turned back to their leader.

"Is this it?" She asked, boredom evident in her eyes.

"You...!" The man exclaimed, his face red in fury.

"How dare you kill my brothers?!"

He drew a large axe from his spatial ring and charged at Elena, swinging it powerfully.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

His every swing caused the air to quake and the earth to shatter. His gait was like a raging bull, untameable and unstoppable.

Elena dodged left and right, swerving her body with utter precision to avoid the impact of the blows. Yggdrasil's branch lightly vibrated in her hand as she quickly maneuvered it to redirect any force she couldn't dodge.

'I can kill him now, but there's no point in that.'

Whoosh!

She ducked down, avoiding a great sweeping slash of the axe as she placed her hands on the ground and kicked her lower body into the air.

Her legs went through the gap in the man's arms and wrapped around his neck.

WHIP!

BANG!

Elena snapped her body with a force that seemed impossible from her smaller frame and slammed the bandit leader's head into the ground, using the same momentum to straighten herself.

Slash! Slash!

Yggdrasil's branch went through the man's arms and legs, rendering him immobile.

"Nggh...!" He groaned in pain.

Elena ignored him and stabbed her branch into his chest, lightly pressing its tip against his heart just enough so he could feel the grip of death.

She smiled. It was a cold and unfeeling smile, not reflected in her eyes at all.

"Now then, why don't you tell me who sent you and I'll give you a painless death?"

"Hmph!" The man scoffed. "Do you think I'm cheap?! If you want to kill me, then do it! I dare you!"

"Oh? You say that like I'd regret killing you?"

"Of course! You cannot bear the hatred of our Lord!"

"And your Lord is...?"

"The Lord is— keuk...!"

Just as the words came out of his mouth, he choked, blood splattering on the ground around him as he coughed uncontrollably.

Elena raised her brow.

"Dead?"

She kicked the corpse to be sure, but the man was truly lifeless.

'Hmm, I guess the person behind them was prepared for their stupidity. The restriction activated so fast I couldn't even react.'

It was a shame that she couldn't get any real information out of him, but it was fine.

She swept his spatial ring off his hand and emptied its contents into her own, specifically taking out the parchment he showed her earlier.

The picture was truly a good one, almost like a professional painting of Damien and Elena while they were in Beast Emperor Star.

And along with it were a few words written on the page.

"These two evil practitioners committed serious crimes in the universe and enslaved countless innocents."

"Bounty: 150,000,000 in currency cards and a special God-rank treasure."

Elena's eyes widened as she read it.

The charges were one thing. If someone was going to use another's knife to kill them, they needed to make up at least this much.

However...

"Tch, we're only worth 150 million?! What kind of bullshit is that?!"

Elena tore up the bounty paper annoyedly and clenched her fist.

"Dammit, you sent bounty hunters and your own subordinates against us, but you're only offering such a measly reward?! Only trashes are going to come after us!"

She scoffed to herself and leaned her back against the wall again, brooding slightly as she went back to patiently waiting for the firestorm to calm.

In reality, the reward wasn't a small amount at all. Her entire fortune was only around 150,000,000 in currency cards.

However, what she held was the fortune of a level 399 master who wasn't yet at the extreme peak!

Nevertheless, it became clear that someone was targeting her and Damien.

Elena glanced at the strange needles in her spatial ring, trophies of her recent victory.

And she glanced at the detailed account nearby that clearly explained how to circumvent the realm's laws and definitively kill within.

Perhaps the first enemies she met were disappointing, but Elena slowly realized...

...the plot behind the scenes was far more dangerous than this group let on.

'Good. Let's see which bastards dare go against us.'

It had been around a day since she first encountered the firestorm, and nothing special happened aside from the first encounter.

Until finally, she saw the flames retreat.

Elena walked into the entry corridor and looked into the blue skies beyond.

'Damned world, I'm coming for you.'

Chapter 1004 Blaze [4]

Roaring winds and the booming sound of explosions were the most common to hear at this time.

The firestorm raged for an entire day before stopping, and not everyone was lucky enough to find shelter during that time.

Specifically, Long Chen and Xue Fang.

These two, rather than finding safety, ended up finding each other!

They stood back to back with their swords drawn, sword intent blazing around them and slicing through the immaterial flames.

Their bodies were just as injured as Rose's was when she escaped, but they didn't have the luxury of rest. They were exhausted already, but they had no choice but to keep fighting.

Otherwise, they'd embarrass the Human Domain!

"Brother, can you hold out?!" Long Chen roared, his voice drowned in the air.

"Of course! Who do you think I am?!" Xue Fang responded, clearly understanding him.

Shing!

His sword slashed through the air, sending waves of ice into the inferno and weakening it slightly.

Long Chen joined him, using his own sword intent to break through the storm so they could once again push forward toward safety.

'Dammit!' Long Chen raged inwardly.

Despite all his improvement, he was still stuck in a situation like this?!

Unacceptable!

"Let the Heavens hear your cries, Empyrean Dragon Sword!" He yelled with all his might, slamming his massive sword into the ground.

OOOOOOOOOOOH!

A menacing bellow exited its blade as a titanic dragon shadow manifested itself and opened its mouth, letting loose a fierce devouring force that encompassed the surrounding flames.

Like a swirling torpedo, the flames entered the dragon's mouth and sat in its belly. Long Chen could feel their heat in his own stomach, making him want to gag.

"Brother, let's run!" He exclaimed, quickly ignoring the discomfort.

Xue Fang nodded and instantly shot to the west, Long Chen following not far behind.

The dragon shadow bought them a considerable amount of time. Its devouring force spread for several thousand meters, clearing a large path for the duo.

However, just how unlucky were they?

Regardless of their efforts, they could find no shelter at all!

ROOOOAAAAAAR!

The roaring flames crashed through the surroundings and slammed into each other like colliding tsunamis. The force rapidly spread and found its way to the fleeing duo.

"Underground!" Xue Fang yelled hurriedly.

He stuck his sword into the earth and sent a pulse of mana downward, opening a large crater in the ground.

Long Chen jumped in with him and slashed his sword through the earth as well. The two spread their awareness in search of shelter, but they didn't have any time!

WHOOSH!

Flames rushed into the crater and enveloped them, burning their flesh and bones.

"ARRRGH!"

"DAMMIT!"

The two roared in pain as they tried to put their mana up to block the attacks, but the corrosion force of the flame only seemed to grow with their insistence on fighting it.

"There is no way out!" Xue Fang said solemnly.

"Then...we can only fight and die honorably! We cannot disappoint the expectations of our peers and seniors!" Long Chen replied.

Xue Fang nodded in agreement.

It was unfortunate to be expelled from the realm here, but nothing could be done about it.

Rather than dying cowardly deaths like those they'd come across as they fought for survival, they would put on a beautiful show for those outside to make sure they were never underestimated!

The duo raised their swords in unison, their fighting spirit blazing with more heat than the surrounding inferno...

...and they confronted the world itself with everything they had.

A beautiful icy display covered one half of the world while dancing dragons of gold graced the other. The Laws they utilized were not only mystical, but filled with a complexity that allowed their mana to exist without being immediately burned away by the flames.

It truly was a magisterial display. The experts watching from the outside were thoroughly impressed, and both Long Chen and Xue Fang became names to watch as long as they could survive.

Their display almost usurped the flames' light entirely, but it had to come to an end eventually. With so many powerful attacks being thrown out every second, their mana dwindled within minutes.

And when their mana finally ran out...

They stared the blaze in its face without fear and accepted the death that approached them.

WHOOOOSH!

BANG!

Long Chen's eyes widened.

Mysteriously and miraculously, the flames slammed against invisible walls that formed around the duo.

On all sides, regardless of their attempts to burn through the walls, the flames were completely unable to penetrate their surface.

Long Chen cautiously pressed his hand forward and felt the mana of those walls.

A wry smile formed on his face.

"This bastard...is this how you say hello to an old friend?"

"Old friend? Don't you mean little brother?"

Within the central region of the Holy Light Tomb, a small smile formed on Damien's face.

He lowered his hand and shook his head.

'That damn guy...I expected more from him.'

His words were those of disappointment, but the smile widening on his face gave him away.

How could he ever be disappointed? His companions were outshining almost every genius who came to the Grand Assembly, including those from great forces with huge status in the universe!

'I can't affect such long distances with anything else, but luckily Dimensional Cages directly affect natural space so it's different. Otherwise, that idiot would've been kicked out so early.'

Damien's awareness was extremely powerful, more than enough to wrap around most of Holy Light Star. When he felt the strangeness filling the air, he spread it to check on the situation, only to find an utterly calamitous atmosphere outside.

Dimensional Cage allowed him to alter portions of space that already existed in reality, thus its effective range was anywhere within his awareness.

For normal attacks that had to be exerted from the body, such distances couldn't be covered unless Damien wanted to destroy everything in the path between him and his target.

Only Dimensional Cage operated on such strange principles.

'Rose and Ruyue found shelter, Elena is also still in the other tomb, and I don't need to worry about Su Ren. Now that those two are safe, it should be fine, right?'

He and Xue'er couldn't even feel the heat from where they were, so he wasn't really worried about being affected by the situation. Currently, Xue'er was challenging the main opportunity of the Holy Light Tomb, so what Damien wanted to do was be sure nothing would ruin both his and her concentration at the moment.

He was fortunate enough to save his friends, but seeing their outlines in his perception only made him want to meet up with them all the sooner.

'Well, we should be able to reunite after this firestorm dies down, since Xue'er should also be done by then. But...'

He paused as a sudden thought entered his head.

'...wasn't there five of them?'

The timing was almost too coincidental.

Suddenly, Damien felt something wrap around his leg.

He looked down alertly, only for his eyes to widen in shock.

"This...you are...!"

What he found was none other than a certain little girl hugging his leg like a daughter overly attached to her father.

And in fact, that explanation wasn't too different from the actual situation.

Because this little girl, Reva, who came with the Human Domain's forces...

...was none other than the little girl who acted as Damien's daughter while he was in Niflheim!

'What the hell is going on?!'

Chapter 1005 Shattered [1]

Damien stared at the little girl on his leg with no idea what he was supposed to do.

How did she get here? And why did she come?

He wanted to get the answers to these questions, but he didn't know if it was actually possible.

"Um...do you know where you are?" He asked awkwardly.

Reva nodded with dull and clueless eyes.

"Do you know who I am?"

Reva nodded again, nothing changing about her expression or demeanor.

"Ehm..."

Damien scratched his face in genuine speechlessness.

'Am I supposed to consider her an enemy? I can't really bring myself to be cautious against her...'

The way she appeared and latched onto him while evading his perception was definitely concerning. If she truly was an enemy, she could've made an attempt on his life in that moment.

But her nonaggression wasn't the reason for his calmness. Rather, it was the strange connection he felt with her, almost like they were from the same source.

'However, she isn't a product of the Void. With my current abilities, I would've immediately known if that was the case.'

Back then, Niflheim's situation spiraled out of control extremely fast, and he eventually forgot about this fake daughter of his in the confusion and destruction.

Now that he'd seen her again and felt that bond, his curiosity was once again awakened.

"Do you know how to speak?" He asked.

Reva shook her head.

Damien sighed.

"Haa, I figured. Then, will you allow me to see inside your mind?"

Reva stared at him for a moment, quirking her head just slightly before nodding.

She closed her eyes and lifted her chin to face Damien, and in response, he gently placed his index finger on her forehead.

A wisp of Void Mana traveled into her head and infiltrated her spiritual world. At that moment, it immediately shifted into the Breath of Nothingness and swam towards her memories.

Damien received a view of the inside of Reva's mind...

...and genuinely, he could not make sense of the scene at all.

'What is this absolute chaos? Even the Breath of Nothingness is having trouble navigating it!'

Reva's spiritual world was made up of a collection of swirling vortexes, the force of each colliding with the rest and practically tearing apart anything between them.

'It's a miracle she's even alive.'

Damien was sure that any other person, regardless of strength or ability, would not be able to stand this kind of spiritual torment for years on end.

How old was Reva?

While she looked no more than ten, she looked the same years ago when Damien first met her.

And with the state of her spiritual world, it was clear that her age didn't match her appearance in the slightest.

'There.'

Damien eventually found a narrow gap between the vortexes, not in three-dimensional space, but in four.

'No, that's just the fourth dimension. If I'm sensing it properly, there are at least 16 dimensions making up the structure of this spiritual world.

Damien maneuvered the Breath of Nothingness through the fourth, fifth, sixth, and many other dimensions, each showing a state of decay that differed from the rest.

παΠδαςNovel From the first three dimensions, which were a representation of total chaos, each proceeding dimension showed a more complete state.

By the tenth dimension, Damien could faintly make out physical structures, best compared to stray debris.

By the thirteenth, those structures solidified into small rocks and celestial bodies.

By the fifteenth, the size of the space had grown rapidly and it was beginning to look like a true universe.

And finally, in the 18th universe, Damien encountered the universe itself.

However, this universe—

'—is not Grand Heavens Boundary.' Damien thought solemnly.

With a turbulent sigh, he pulled the Breath of Nothingness out of Reva's spiritual world and returned his mind to reality.

He looked down at the little girl who was still staring at him with the same clueless expression.

He didn't need to see her memories.

No, he'd already seen them.

"I'm sorry," he said, slightly mournfully.

However, Reva only quirked her head in confusion.

Because she...

'She cannot remember what she originally was.'

The memories locked behind several layers of decay were nothing more than pieces of code that Reva didn't have access to.

And Reva herself was not a human.

'She is a remnant, a piece of that shattered universe that somehow survived and made its way to Grand Heavens Boundary.'

Damien's mind moved at lightning speed. With his understanding of the Void, Dimensional Magic, and Universal Flow, he could somewhat make out what occurred at that time.

'Somehow, that universe was destroyed. It was consumed by the Void, but either intentionally or unintentionally, the universe itself split a portion of its law and tried to save it. That piece of universal law collided with the Void, and somehow it gained a physical body...'

How she gained a physical body was unknown, which pointed to the fact that there was surely a third force involved in the event.

In addition to that, how she made it to Grand Heavens Boundary was also a concern.

'Yet, even if there were countless miracles involved in her meeting with me, the Heavens are still just.'

As consequence of that phenomenon, she almost wholly lost her ego, left as an empty shell that could only follow its instincts.

And that instinct connected it to Damien, who was practically the Void's apostle.

'She is not part of the Void, but the Void aided in her creation. Not only that, she is also a fragment of a universe, which falls under my Celestial Authority. No wonder the bond was so muddled and unreadable.'

Damien didn't know how common it was in the universe, but he was a double-class individual. With both elusive and rare classes drawing a connection between him and Reva, it was natural for him to be unable to understand it.

Though, now that he knew this information...what was he supposed to do with it?

'She isn't some avatar, she's a genuine piece of universal law, and a foreign universal law at that! If I can restore her memories, she can be invaluable in all three of my main comprehensive paths...'

As a Celestial, as a Voidbringer, and as a follower of Universal Flow, Reva's existence was extremely profound.

But if he wanted to interfere so deeply in her psyche without harming her already fragile mind...

'I need insurance.'

He looked back to Reva hesitantly before finally opening his mouth and asking:

"Do you know what you are?"

Reva shook her head in denial.

"Do you want to know?"

This time, she didn't give a proper answer, seemingly unknowing of what she wanted.

"I have a way to help you, but you'll have to become my subordinate first. Are you willing?"

Reva's eyes suddenly clouded over.

Flash!

Their clear and dull appearance shifted as they were filled with the light of shining galaxies.

And as the light emitted from them grew, it materialized into the form of a beautiful woman with long flowing white hair and a body made of stars.

[Please...protect her.]

"You are..."

The projection shook its head, and Damien's eyes turned solemn.

"I understand what you want. But you understand what it means for me to bind her, right?" He asked, his expression containing utmost seriousness.

[I...trust...you.]

The woman reached out, her ethereal hand brushing against Damien's face almost as if it was tangible.

And Damien's eyes briefly became covered in the light of stars as well.

When he came back to reality, he sighed lightly and nodded his head.

"Fine. If that's your wish, then it shall be so."

Damien pushed his hand out again, and sent a Celestial Mana Thread into Reva's forehead, imitating his previous action.

However, this time, the meaning behind it was far, far more complex.

Chapter 1006 Shattered [2]

The projection of the woman disappeared as soon as the Celestial Mana Thread made contact.

Damien only briefly saw the relief on her face as she left, choosing to ignore it for now.

The binding of a universe fragment, what did it entail?

In all honesty, Damien had no idea. The fact that other universes existed wasn't known to many at all, let alone fragments of them existing in this universe.

'I doubt this is the first time, but those who've found universe fragments would do everything possible to keep them hidden...'

'...and none of them were Celestials.'

Damien let loose a distressed breath as the binding process ended. He closed his eyes and looked inward. There, he found a new entity inside the World Core Fusion Reactor.

Sitting above the many worlds under Damien's control was a rhomboid crystalline object that shone with rainbow light, representing Reva's bind.

Only, this newly created bind didn't benefit Damien in the slightest.

He smiled wryly.

'I guess I'll only find out how crazy what I just did was after I've unsealed her, but what can you do? A beauty's gratitude is the hardest debt to repay.'

His thoughts drifted back to that woman, the shattered universe's true universal law.

What she'd shown him...

'Never mind. Let's just get through the Grand Assembly first.'

He opened his eyes, and Reva had disappeared.

'Is her physical body that unstable? It seems she'll be resting inside that crystal until I manage to unseal a few of those seals.'

Like Damien originally said, nobody could survive with such terrible damage in their spiritual world. Regardless of her true identity, Reva's physical body wouldn't have been able to bear the pressure of her mind for much longer without any support.

'Now that she's found refuge, the process should be stalled for a bit, but she's not safe yet.'

Damien finally set Reva's matter aside, as it wasn't something he could focus on at the moment, and swept his hand through the air.

Over a hundred thousand protective layers of space and time were dispersed, returning Damien to the Real Plane.

As for when he'd set them up? Of course, it was the instant he spotted Reva!

With so many eyes on him, his every action had to be taken with caution.

Nevertheless, now that he was out, he was once again graced by the sight of Xue'er sitting in a lotus position in the midst of a cloud of white and gold aura like a warrior who returned valiantly and victoriously from battle.

This chance of hers, he had no idea what it was.

In fact, he was sure the central area of the tomb was untouched by the Angels, and whatever Xue'er was currently experiencing was a factor of the original Mystic Realm that the Holy Light Realm was built on.

Hadn't Elena experienced something similar before?

Damien had no way of knowing it, but the Angels were never able to conquer the two tombs of the original mystic realm.

It wasn't a matter of their ability, but the tombs themselves.

Because Mystic Realms were, in part, created by the universe itself.

The true benefits to be gained from them would never appear unless they found their proper owners.

'All I can say is that she's benefitting immensely. This might even be her opportunity to find her path.'

Damien shrugged and sat back, observing and making sure nothing went wrong.

'Anyway, putting that aside...this is supposed to last for 2 months? With the way things are progressing, I'm afraid this event will be ended soon.'

He smiled to himself.

What could he say?

The forces of Grand Heavens Boundary really underestimated the younger generation this time.

'Let's hope she finishes quickly. I still want to have some more fun before we're kicked out.'

His awareness spread past the bounds of the Holy Light Tomb.

In his eyes...

...the firestorm faded into the atmosphere as if it never existed.

After raging for one full day and night, it vanished in the wind like a passing wanderer with no desires or ambitions.

Geniuses in all corners of Holy Light Star peeked their heads out from their various hiding places, embracing the bright sun and the passing of danger.

It was a moment of respite.

But it was not one to be cherished.

"Everyone, gather immediately."

A message entered the ears of the Human Domain geniuses.

Within four hours, three geniuses gathered at their original rendezvous point.

In fact, they weren't too far from it, but after the chaos, orienting themselves and understanding their position took time.

Nevertheless, as the three of them reached the rendezvous point, Xue Fang was the one to speak first.

"Sister, why did you summon us this time?" He asked, looking at Ruyue.

Ruyue rolled her eyes. "I'm not your sister. You still want to consider me a part of the Xue Clan?"

Xue Fang put his hands up in surrender as sweat dripped down his temple. "What're you talking about? The Xue Clan has long been destroyed. I have no attachment to that place."

"Then?"

"Ehem...Little Yue wan—"

"Don't talk about her. Anyway, let's drop this for now. We have more important matters to discuss."

"En, if it's you, the only reason for a summon would be a crisis."

Ruyue nodded, looking at the two men solemnly.

"First of all, the concentration of evil aura in the atmosphere has increased significantly since the passing of the firestorm. The smell of blood radiating from the east is extremely concerning. If I'm correct, there will be a beast tide soon."

Long Chen's eyes widened in realization.

"The firestorm didn't just kill, it destroyed the environment thoroughly. Every beast in the realm has been deprived of a home. However, how many of them could survive the tide?"

Xue Fang shook his head and joined the conversation.

"That isn't the case. The beasts on the surface have likely all died. The subterranean world, on the other hand..."

"Right," Ruyue nodded, "that brings me to my second concern."

Her eyes hardened.

"I'm afraid Rose has been trapped in the subterranean world."

Her expression was immediately mirrored on the faces of her companions.

They didn't doubt her words at all, nor did they question how she knew this information.

Because the bond of sisterhood between Rose and Ruyue was something inexplicable that neither of these men could understand.

They always had a perfect understanding of what the other was thinking, and this ability seemed to transcend reality itself.

If Ruyue felt Rose was in danger, and in the subterranean world at that, it could only be so.

"We need to find her first. Do you have any idea where she is?" Long Chen asked.

Ruyue nodded once more.

"Yes, and that's why I called you here. Currently, Rose should be around 10,000 meters under our feet."

Shiiiiing!

The sound of three weapons being drawn as one resounded through the air.

"Then, let's get to work."

BANG! BANG! BANG!

A crater was formed instantly, and it was torn into a cavern within seconds.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The furious impacts attracted the attention of many geniuses, but who would dare go near people who could exert such power to casually slap the ground?

These crazy people had to be avoided at all costs!

Under this atmosphere, the Human Domain geniuses tunneled roughly 4,000 meters into the earth until finally...

BANG!

Ruyue's spear slammed into the rock, causing it to collapse inward.

The trio fell through the same abyss Rose experienced, but unlike her, they were able to see the slightest flashes of light coming from below.

'There she is.' Ruyue thought in relief.

Her expression sharpened as she used mana to actively increase her falling speed.

"Prepare for battle!" She shouted powerfully.

"When we land, immediately slaughter everything!"

Chapter 1007 Tide [1]

Xiu!

Whoosh!

A body swerved through the darkness of an underground cavern, almost big enough to be considered its own world.

Its movements were lithe and graceful, yet held an element of brutality that couldn't be ignored.

Especially when considering the massive scythe in that individual's hands.

Rose was always aware that she didn't have the best luck.

It wasn't just due to the Laws she studied, but also due to the special pupils she possessed.

As someone who could see and toy with the karma of all things, how could she be allowed positive fortune of her own?

Rose had experienced her fair share of extreme situations, and falling into a beast den wasn't anything new.

This specific situation, she'd experienced three times before.

Only, this one was far more dangerous.

Xiu! Xiu! Xiu!

The projectiles flying through the air were balls of razor-sharp white thread. The threads were strong by themselves, but when grouped, their slicing power could raze any 4th class being easily.

Rose flipped, using her momentum to narrowly dodge the projectiles as she wielded her scythe, slashing through the air with utmost precision.

Spurt!

Her scythe pierced the head of a massive spider, roughly the size of a semi-truck. Its blue blood sprayed through the air, sizzling as it interacted with the air.

"Tsk!"

Rose clicked her tongue and jumped off the spider, wiping the blood off her face and wincing.

'Damn. These guys have poisonous blood too?'

Rose retreated several hundred meters, swiping her hand through the air and creating a massive windstorm that tore through the space.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The explosions were deafening, and the cracking of the area's structure made the noise far more harrowing.

Yet, Rose was more than aware that her attack didn't cause much actual damage.

παπδαςNovel There were over ten thousand beasts in this cavern when she first entered it.

As she was forced to fight them, she realized that not a single one of these beasts was weaker than her.

The lowest-level beasts were still level 375, and their true strength surpassed that level completely.

'I've killed around 1,000, but I've used up too many pills here. This is life or death, so it isn't the time to be frugal, but what other choice do I have? If I replenish myself as I need to, I won't survive this encounter.'

Her eyes were hardened, but her spirit was raging as bright as ever.

'Regardless, this is a setting where I can be a little more serious. There are a few things I've been wanting to try.'

Rose's power of illusion was her strongest suit, but it wasn't her only specialization.

She'd always been trying to upgrade her eyes, following that beautiful vision she saw all those years ago in the Eternal Secret Realm.

Unfortunately, the power of her pupils couldn't be tested casually, for wrongly using them could completely destroy people's lives, even people she didn't intend to target.

Her mother's story was a prime example of this.

'There weren't many strong beasts in the Human Domain, only traitors and shitty scum who were bringing us down. Now that I have some prime test subjects in front of me...'

Her eyes widened as she stood in the air, shining in beautiful gold light.

The world she saw changed. Every beast became a muddled lump of grey strands, while several colored strands connected them to each other, creating a web of relationships that defined the ecosystem this cavern had created.

This web was crucial information.

Rose immediately learned how these beasts interacted with each other, as well as their specific roles in the ecosystem.

Despite the cohesion they showed when an outsider disturbed their peace, they were actually quite divided.

With this knowledge, the possibilities became endless.

'Let's...play a little.'

Rose stared into the interwoven strings and slowly reached her hand out, pinching two strings between her fingers and pulling slightly.

Snap!

The sound of those strings breaking was deafening.

Rose's eyes instantly returned to their usual color, and the mana in her body drained to nothing.

However, as she took a load of pills to replenish her systems, a change occurred.

Bzzz! Bzzzz!

A furious buzzing emerged from the depths of the cavern.

There, a group of abnormally large black wasp-like creatures crowded around a corpse.

It was the mangled corpse of a spider, but nearby were several greatly disfigured corpses of their kind.

The situation was clear.

These spiders sacrificed one of theirs to kill tens of wasp larvae.

SKREEEEEEEE!

A wasp twice the size of the rest let out a terrifying screech. The sound wave bounced through the cave and amplified several times over.

Bzzzz!

The buzzing of extremely fast wings filled the cavern.

Countless wasps appeared from the shadows, and together as one...

They launched an all-out attack on the spiders.

Rose staggered to her feet in an isolated corner of the cavern, just barely recovered again, and smiled.

'I guess it works, though the price is a bit high.'

She shook her head and started moving again.

Her scythe materialized in her hands.

And she reentered the battlefield.

The wasps and spiders would kill each other and eliminate the long-range and aerial threats Rose was facing, but she still had to deal with every other beast on the ground.

Insects, mammals, reptiles, and every type of creature one could imagine were present in some quantity, but the insects and bugs took up the majority of the numbers.

'After this, I'm not sparing a single bug I see.'

Rose became a whirlwind of death. Her scythe, backed by pure physical force and just the slightest trace of mana strengthening, slashed through enemies at a staggering rate.

Perhaps this rate was only one or two every minute, but considering the strength of the enemies, this wasn't slow at all!

Rose could feel it within her. With every passing moment, she could feel herself growing.

Sparks flew into the air and created a beautiful display.

Rose's hands took turns wielding the scythe itself, with the non-occupied hand swimming through the air, manipulating reality itself to separate the massive horde of beasts into manageable portions and weaken her enemies before she had an opportunity to personally strike them.

All the while, the grudge war that originally started with just the soldiers and wasps, in this space without much free ground, involved several other beasts until it became an all-out melee between the beast tribes of the underground cavern.

At this rate, Rose wouldn't have any trouble managing the situation as long as she acted with caution.

And...

BOOM!

The ceiling caved in.

BANG!

BANG! BANG!

BANG!

Three objects slammed into the solid ground, kicking up massive clouds of dust and throwing tens of beasts back into the hordes they came from.

"Hm?"

Rose's attention turned in that direction, curiosity written on her face.

That expression turned into a smile within a second.

"Hehe! You came before I could even have any fun. Did you miss me that much?" She said, projecting her voice toward the group.

"Nonsense. You're just not allowed to die until I've thoroughly surpassed you," another voice came from within the smoke.

"Cheeky," Rose muttered with a grin.

"Hmph."

Ruyue snorted with a slight smile, turning her attention away from Rose and towards the situation at hand.

"Beast tides on the surface and beast tides underground. I guess it makes sense."

Not another word needed to be said.

Because she'd already given the order.

Kill until there was nothing left to kill!

Chapter 1008 Tide [2]

With Ruyue and the rest joining the battle, Rose's burden was greatly reduced. After all, these three were fighters just as capable as she was.

And with them present, she could use the safer powers of her pupils effectively.

Such as...

"Ruyue, go to the far depths and take care of the beasts there. The dark aura in that location is extremely condensed, and all the species are Yin attributed. There are some hostile and some peaceful, so only kill if you can't tame."

Ruyue nodded without question and took off, making it evident that this kind of routine was well practiced at this point.

"As for you two, spread in opposite directions. Your affinities won't have much of an advantage here, but your sword styles are best used differently. Long Chen, focus on mammalian and reptilian creatures. Xue Fang, you take the insects."

The two followed Ruyue's example and spread.

Long Chen had a lot more raw power, so using him to crush those without the hard carapaces of bugs was best. Xue Fang, on the other hand, had extreme cutting power that could slice carapaces into oblivion.

After watching the three reach their assigned positions, Rose nodded to herself.

'Good, they can take care of the combat. Now, my job should be...'

She raised into the air once again to gain a vantage point where she could watch the entire battle situation.

And once she'd mapped it out in her head, she moved her hands through the empty space like she was conducting the most exquisite symphony.

Was it reality or illusion?

Even her allies could never tell when she used her power.

The cavern separated into dozens of rooms, each connected by a series of tunnels. While the structure itself was simple, the mechanics behind it were anything but.

Under Rose's precise control, each room was filled with only beasts from opposing tribes that would fight amongst each other. The rooms were constantly shuffled, and the amount of space they took up changed every few seconds.

There was no consistency for the enemy, but those who'd fought within this formation knew very well.

They were already inside Rose's Illusory Throne Domain.

Rose could truly do as she wished in this domain, but her actions were part of an extremely long sequence that didn't repeat very often, a sequence that couldn't be easily followed unless the battle was prolonged to a great extent.

But why would these geniuses who'd long since memorized the pattern of Rose's manipulation allow their enemies to reach the same understanding?

It was mainly Long Chen and Xue Fang. The duo moved between rooms and incited chaos among the already tense relations between these tribes, assassinating beasts who held importance and instigating enmity.

Ruyue's job was separate. The space she'd been granted was operating under different laws from the main labyrinth.

These laws, in this universe only Rose and Ruyue knew them.

Currently, Ruyue moved among the darkness as if it was her closest friend.

The species around her were strange, just as Rose said.

While they showed blatant hostility towards her presence, they didn't move to attack, almost as if they were wary of something.

'Only kill those that can't be tamed? What do you expect to do with tamed beasts?' Ruyue wondered to herself.

What Rose wanted wasn't to form permanent bonds with these beasts as Damien had done with Zara. She wanted Ruyue to control and dominate these beasts so they could be used later.

The only question was: for what?

'Never mind, I've never been able to comprehend her mind.'

Ruyue dropped the thought and raised her arm into the air, summoning her mana and spreading it thinly through the atmosphere.

The mana of Yin was a powerful force.

Some believed yin and yang to be mere human concepts, created to explain the universal law. Others saw yin and yang as the pinnacle of universal forces, the two sides of the coin from which all other laws and concepts emerged.

In reality, the role of yin and yang in the universe wasn't quite known, because not many experts had risen while using these elements in their raw form.

However, Ruyue knew.

The mana of Yin had untold power.

All those beings who existed under its umbrella...

Voom!

...would submit under a force of Yin more powerful than their own, almost like dragons.

Ruyue's mana cast a terrifying suppression through the atmosphere that forced every yin-attributed beast in the vicinity to its knees.

Her eyes panned the surroundings coldly, picking out every entity that struggled against her pressure and tried to escape.

And within seconds...

Pah! Pah! Pah!

These beasts exploded without a chance to fight back.

Ruyue just recently remembered the flexibility and serene nature of yin. Until this point, she'd been refining her ability to use its other face.

Absolute suppression.

The class she received upon completing her Baptism was Yin Spirit Queen, and there was no such thing as a benevolent ruler.

If she wanted to truly rule the Law of Yin, she needed the cruelty and judgement to control all things.

In the distance, Rose watched her display with a smile.

'Stupid sister, shouldn't you learn to be a bit more graceful?' She joked happily.

With her comrades aiding her, cleaning up this cavern was no trouble at all.

And finally, when those beasts were exterminated, they'd be able to find out what great treasure existed in this space.

With all the effort it took to clear the place, there had to be one...

...right?

Rose was usually the one in their group who made the strategic decisions and whatnot, however this time, Ruyue was the one who made a scarily accurate prediction.

The skies of Holy Light Star were already darkened by the smog from the previous firestorm, and the environment itself was almost completely destroyed.

If it wasn't for the vibrant vital aura in the earth, one would believe this star was utterly barren and unable to support life.

Rumble!

An earthquake.

In the silence following the blaze, it was incredibly noticeable.

There wasn't a single genius that didn't notice it.

Thousands of guards went up at once. After their experience with the previous calamity, they weren't planning to take the next one lightly.

RUMBLE!

The rumbling of the earth became fiercer. It didn't originate from one specific source, but from the entirety of the ground itself.

And after many moments of shaking...

BANG!

A cloud of dust rose on the horizon.

A shadowy figure rose into the sky along with it.

ROAAAAAAAAAR!

It let out a deafening roar that shattered the sky around it.

It was a dragon.

A true dragon whose pressure swept across the lands and struck fear in the hearts of all those who witnessed its majestic gait.

It was the first of many.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

All across Holy Light Stars, portions of earth imploded and beasts rose up from below.

The Second Calamity, a calamity of beasts, was beginning.

And at the same time, many more forces arrived in Luxurion.

Countless geniuses were eliminated from Holy Light Star, but an equal or even greater number was always present to replace them.

Yet...

Perhaps entering the realm at this time wasn't such a good idea.

After all, for most, it would only lead to a humiliating and extremely fast defeat!

Chapter 1009 Tide [3]

The firestorm lasted for a day, which gave people false hope when the second calamity arrived.

However, the beast tides didn't end so easily.

The calamity of beasts lasted an entire two weeks, until the end of the first month of the Grand Assembly.

In these 2 weeks, several heroes arose and even more geniuses were ruthlessly eliminated from the realm. The smaller forces who came to show some face and make connections were mostly eliminated from the competition, and replacing them, several larger forces finally made their arrival in Luxurion.

These forces were mostly Holy Land influences such as Fallen Star Holy Land, as well as individual High Commanders and Executioners affiliated with Heaven's Army.

The only force from the Divine Realm still not present was Blood Asura Holy Land, but this wasn't uncommon.

Of the large forces of the universe, Blood Asura Holy Land was widely known as the most arrogant and domineering. Even when facing the Heavenly Clan that represented the Divine Realm itself, they kept their same arrogance.

The visitor that attracted the most eyes was also the most elusive.

Prismatic Sun Holy Land.

In the same way the Demon Sealing Pantheon existed with great reputation but was still unknown to the world, Prismatic Sun Holy Land never showed its head outside of the most crucial moments.

The only difference between them was that the Demon Sealing Pantheon only ever had one successor at a time, while Prismatic Sun Holy Land was a true great influence with countless experts.

The five geniuses from this Holy Land were all women, wearing veils and thick clothing that hid their appearances from those who looked at them.

Oddly enough, this clothing even repelled the gazes of Demigods in the crowd, marking their garments as God-rank artifacts.

It was a true show of power to possess so many rare artifacts and use them as regular clothing.

The clothing of these five women wasn't what drew attention to them. Rather, it was their performance once they made their way into Holy Light Star.

To put it simply, they stood equal to the Human Domain's spectacular performance, and in the eyes of those experts, were just a step below Su Ren and Damien.

Nevertheless, two weeks was a great amount of time. Aside from the aforementioned influences, there were ten more Holy Lands and hundreds of smaller forces, whose geniuses raised the population of Holy Light Star to over 20,000.

As for what the Human Domain's geniuses did during the time these newcomers stole the spotlight...

Rose, Ruyue, Long Chen, and Xue Fang were currently deep underground.

For two straight weeks, they'd been exploring the world connected to the massive cavern Rose first landed in.

Their original goal was to find the treasure the cavern hid, but it didn't take long for them to find that there was none at all.

On the other hand, there were 16 hidden tunnels that led to completely different tunnel systems within the earth that didn't interlap at all. Each one led to different beasts and different dangers, but as they learned after fully exploring the first one...

Each tunnel system was filled with treasures.

Chaos rank treasures with various usages, and even dangerous areas with strong auras suggesting the existence of God-rank treasures led them to remain in this cave system for days upon days.

Their strategy was simple.

For Chaos rank treasures, they split up and worked individually. Whenever they found the signs of a stronger treasure, they marked the area and left it alone so they could challenge them all consecutively as a group.

It was a great plan that allowed them to systematically claim every treasure they found, but at the same time, this common movement slowed their momentum and made the gazes on them slowly recede.

Not that that was a negative, of course.

At the end of the day, these Human Domain geniuses also wanted to grow. Their goal here wasn't just to impress and show off. This was their first experience in the wider universe, and they planned to grow as much as they could from it.

Overall, for the geniuses who could hold their own in the perils of Holy Light Star, life became boring.

The true trouble existed for those who couldn't, those who faced endless tides of rabid beasts with the only goal of tearing them apart.

And finally, near the end of the two week period, a beautiful phenomenon occurred in the Holy Light Tomb.

The light around Xue'er brightened and filled the entire central area, glimmering splendidly before finally dying down.

Xue'er sat alone, floating a few inches off the ground in a lotus position.

Her eyes fluttered open, and to Damien's surprise, her pupils were now an emerald green color, like two shining jewels decorating her face.

"How do you feel?" He asked hesitantly, running her awareness through her body to make sure there were no abnormalities.

"Feel...? This...what is the current day?" She responded hazily.

Damien's brow raised cautiously.

"What do you mean?" He asked again.

Xue'er looked up at him, her eyes clearing.

"How long has it been since this Emperor entered his slumber?"

Damien's eyes hardened.

"You..."

His hand shot out without warning, slapping against Xue'er's forehead.

Pak!

"Ow!"

"You little brat, don't think you can fool me with that."

"Dammit!"

"Who taught you to curse?!"

παΠδαςNovel "Hehe~ oopsie !"

Xue'er naively knocked her head and smiled cheerfully as if nothing was wrong.

As for Damien, he could do nothing but sigh to himself.

"Haa, for a second, I thought...never mind."

He could only say he was lucky for the Breath of Nothingness that allowed him to check her spiritual world!

'This brat doesn't know what I'm like out here. This could be dangerous.'

Because Damien wasn't someone who'd panic and mourn, he was someone who'd immediately obliterate the spiritual consciousness trying to take over Xue'er's body.

'Either way, it's good that nothing happened. However, her bodily situation...'

It was like his when he was at her level.

With the blessing she just received, her body was raised to the 4th class level, but she had yet to define her Law and undergo Baptism to actually reach that level.

'That sounds good on the surface, but as someone who's personally experienced it, it's not a positive thing at all in the long run.'

Getting Xue'er past that boundary became the most important task, and as Damien glanced at the outside situation...

'The Life Laws of this world are fluctuating. If I'm reading it right, something major is going to happen. How the hell do they expect these geniuses to survive?'

He frowned as he became more and more sure of his feeling.

The environment of the entire world was destroyed in the first calamity, which drew the beasts from the subterranean world to the surface in the second.

Now that the world had gone through its cycles of destruction, the next step was to start revitalization.

The problem was, this world was also a secret realm, and its methods were...severe, to say the least.

'In the next few days, it'll start. The earth will cry, and then the vitality existing everywhere else...'

His eyes hardened solemnly.

'...will be consumed.'

Chapter 1010 Tide [4]

'But at the same time, isn't that the best opportunity?'

From the time he'd spent with Xue'er in the past few weeks, he affirmed his notion that struggle was the foundation of strength.

Astoria grew rapidly because he forced her out of comfort, Elena was able to progress through 4th class in no time at all because she suffered and survived.

And Damien, regardless of the help he had from the Void Physique, regardless of his talent, would've never reached his level without suffering.

Suffering that turned him into a masochist built character, built strength, and built fortitude. Even if he was granted the chance to go back and do it again, he wouldn't try to lessen his suffering.

In fact, he'd try harder and suffer harder so he could grow even faster than he did in the present timeline.

'It should happen in another day.'

His mind cleared. "Emotion" no longer ruled his decisions.

He wanted to do what was best for Xue'er and respect her determination for strength.

So this time, he once again wouldn't help her.

"Xue'er, let's go," he said.

"There are still a small number of beasts outside, but they've lessened their hostility so the actual combat taking place has almost completely died down. It's a good time to test your power."

Xue'er nodded immediately.

"Good! I feel a lot more powerful, but it feels weird. I want to know how to fix it," she responded.

Damien turned away from her and began walking towards the exit of the central region, hiding his smile.

'Did she figure out the problem so fast?'

He couldn't help but be proud.

Xue'er giggled to herself as she saw the arcing of his lips from the side, but she didn't say anything, happily following him as he led her out of the tomb with ease.

The duo saw the light of day once more, but the Holy Light Star in front of them was not the same one they came from.

"Big brother...what happened here?!" Xue'er exclaimed with widened eyes.

Damien shrugged. "Calamity happened. Twice, at that. Anyway, it has nothing to do with us. Let's go find you some prey."

"Hm?" Xue'er once again found herself confused, but she kept her mouth shut.

Damien had a habit of saying things she couldn't understand, after all.

Unaware of her thoughts, Damien wrapped her in his mana and flew into the air, scanning the world with his awareness.

"Okay, I found a good spot. And coincidentally..."

He smiled as he teleported, being cautious to not overload Xue'er's senses too much, and arrived at the location in a few minutes.

There were several beast tribes on the ground below, seemingly regrouping after facing mass defeat in the previous tides.

And nearby, the distinct signature of a single woman was fast approaching.

Damien took Xue'er with him and landed on the ground between that figure and the beast tide.

"Xue'er, go fight. If you're going to die, I'll save you."

"H-huh?! That fast?!"

"Isn't that what you wanted?"

"T-true...okay, fine! I'll just do it!"

Xue'er moved somewhat hesitantly towards the beasts, and the approaching aura also calmed significantly.

Xue'er's eyes narrowed. Her arms rose into a boxing position, and a pair of gauntlets appeared, covering her forearms and hands in shining armor.

And then, she charged into the crowd.

"Hiyaaah!" She shouted as she punched into the skull of the nearest beast.

Boom!

A blaze pulsed from her fist and exploded the beast's skin, revealing its thick skull.

ROOOAAAAAR!

The beast finally got the chance to roar in pain, alerting its nearby fellows to Xue'er's attack.

"Hmph! Not so fast!" She said, spinning around and sending an axe kick into the creature's skull.

Crack!

The skull cracked under her pressure, and the beast collapsed to the ground.

Bang!

Xue'er sent a final fist slamming through the beast's skull, thoroughly killing it.

At the same time, reinforcements arrived.

A group of twenty beasts from the same tribe as the one she just killed, a group of bear-like creatures, stood on their hind legs and roared into the sky, their rage evident.

παΠdasNovel Xue'er's eyes shook as she backed away, when suddenly...

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The three massive bears at the front of the crowd exploded into bits of flesh and blood.

"Xue'er, don't worry about anything and just fight! You think I'd let those stronger guys bully you?"

Damien's shout came from behind, causing a smile to spread on her face.

"Mm!" She happily uttered, jumping into battle before the bears could recover from the deaths of their leaders.

Before Damien's eyes, she finally began to showcase what she learned from Elvira.

And he wasn't alone in witnessing it.

"So this is the fabled little sister, eh? What a first impression," the individual who just arrived said with a smile.

Damien turned to her with the same expression. "Right? She's pretty cool, if I do say so myself."

Elena walked up next to him and leaned against his shoulder, and like a couple watching their child, they happily enjoyed the show Xue'er presented them.

Bang!

Another head exploded.

Xue'er's method of fighting was a strange mix between barbaric and beautiful.

On her own, she was truly brutal. She used her body as a weapon, slamming her tiny fists out with enough power to burst the environment with pure air pressure.

However, around her swirled a mystical grouping of natural spirits that emerged from all around when they sensed her presence.

They were mostly spirits of earth and air, and upon Xue'er's prompting, they emitted furious bursts of elemental power that dispersed the crowds of beasts and crippled the weaker ones.

It was a true surprise that Xue'er had a relatively established fighting style already.

Or rather, it turned out Damien had been severely underestimating the Sanctuary.

It couldn't be helped.

He'd been dealing with Demigods and Supremes so often in recent days that anything under the Holy Land level looked the same to him, but when it came to training geniuses, the likes of Elvira and Bai Longxuan were more than capable.

'Speaking of, I wonder how those guys are doing? It's been a while since they've come out.'

Damien hadn't paid attention to their power levels in a while, and he suddenly got curious.

But now wasn't the time.

Now, the stage was Xue'er's...

...and she was making full use of it.

"What the hell was that?!"

A voice boomed through the first banquet hall.

It belonged to an elder from Flame Heaven Holy Land, directed at Luciel, who stood calmly at the front of the hall.

"What are you referring to?" He asked, not losing his calm at all.

"What do you think I'm talking about?! This secret realm is bullshit! How dare you expel my geniuses so easily?!" The elder roared.

He'd been utterly humiliated. Within a few days of their entrance, the geniuses of his Holy Land were obliterated by powerful beasts, and—

"—there was even a True Dragon among them! Say, is the Heavenly Clan trying to provoke my Flame Heaven Holy Land?!"

Luciel raised his brow.

"Hm? How could that be possible? Our Heavenly Clan was chosen to host this assembly because the people trust our integrity. Have you not thought that, perhaps, your geniuses were just too weak?"

"You...!"

"Elder, that's enough!"

The Holy Master of the sect appeared and pulled the elder back.

"I apologize for his behavior," he said to Luciel, retreating without another word.

Luciel's eyes glimmered with a mysterious light as he watched them leave.

'It seems...they've begun to show themselves.'