

Void 1021

Chapter 1021 Tunnels [1]

The amphitheater had 16 entrances.

Damien and Pandora split up and moved in opposite directions, approaching the walls to begin scouting these tunnels.

They were ancient, that much was for certain.

The rock that made up their walls was weathered extremely, and the signs of ancient writings present on them were so long worn that they looked like nothing more than the scratches of madmen.

But as the duo sent their awarenesses into these tunnels, they only developed more questions.

'The restriction spans as far as my awareness can reach, and it doesn't seem to stop anywhere nearby.'

'The walls are also so thick. It's difficult for my awareness to pass through them.'

Damien ran his fingers along the walls as he moved between the tunnels and investigated each one separately.

'It would be nice if we could just explore every tunnel, but not only is there a bit of a time crunch, we also can't be sure if there are any traps waiting for us.'

Dealing with traps would waste their energy needlessly, and Damien was sure the traps present in a place protected by such a powerful restriction wouldn't be light.

He eventually left the wall and returned to the center of the amphitheater to meet Pandora.

"Any clues?"

"None at all."

Pandora responded sighingly. To say she wasn't used to danger would be a lie, but she'd never really had to explore uncharted territory on her own, so she wasn't aware of the procedures or to-dos of the task. It was annoying, especially since she was trapped with an untrustworthy man like Damien.

"Let's just pick a random tunnel and go for it. It would be much easier to understand how the rest of them work if we've explored one."

Damien glanced around the area while Pandora did the same, and while they tried to make a decision...

Rumble!

The ground rumbled and the walls of the amphitheater began to move. The entire structure rotated around the duo, the 16 tunnels disappearing behind walls of rock as a new set of tunnels revealed themselves.

Damien's eyes sharpened.

"Be careful. This isn't a good thing," he said, provoking a nod from Pandora.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

Like the marching of armies, footsteps echoed through the new tunnels. Large shadowy figures appeared in the darkness, moving closer into the light and revealing their forms.

"Golems."

Pandora's eyes narrowed as she held up her weapon, a ribbon-like object that thrashed in the air like it was alive.

She never expected to see golems here, because, in her knowledge, golems were protectors of ancient civilizations.

It was rare to use golems in the recent era due to multiple factors, such as the rise of soul-controlling techniques as well as the threat of the Marionette Lord taking control of them, however, in the eras of civilization before the Forgotten War, golems were an extremely popular method of protection.

And these golems weren't weak.

Their bodies were largely humanoid aside from their size, which was more like Giants. Their exteriors looked wooden, but the sturdy aura they gave off made it obvious they weren't so simple.

Each one had a specific gem in its head. Each gem came in a set, with each golem holding the same gem standing on opposite sides of the amphitheater.

Damien's eyes scanned all 16 of the golems that exited their respective tunnels and stood in front of them like guards.

'Their strength is relatively the same, around the 1st or 2nd revolution...or at least, on the surface.'

The All-Seeing Eyed activated, causing Damien's irises to swirl mystically.

His gaze turned to two specific golems with onyx gems in their heads that stood on opposite sides of the amphitheater.

'They're both strong.'

It wasn't a perfect method to find out where to go, but since their strength was supposed to remain deeply hidden, their presence should've held significance, right?

That was Damien's reasoning, and without hesitating any further, he moved.

"Pandora, take the one on the opposite side with the onyx in its head. If the rest attack, ignore them until you've eliminated your target!"

By the time she made up her mind to respond, he was already gone.

Boom!

An explosion signified his advent into battle, and Pandora could only grit her teeth in frustration.

'I am a Holy Land genius...I am the Prismatic Sun Saintess...stay calm...stay collected...'

The way Damien casually started giving orders as if she was less than him was extremely annoying, but what could she do?

He truly was better than her!

'This rogue...if Master didn't want him...!'

Pandora could only scream her grievances in her head as she begrudgingly followed his order, launching an attack against the Onyx golem.

Bang!

Her ribbon shot out like a whip, cracking in the air as it slapped the golem's torso. The air exploded and the golden was thrown back into its tunnel, but there was no visible damage on its body.

'Strong!' Pandora exclaimed immediately.

Perhaps the hit wasn't too hard, but she still used a portion of her force combined with a God-rank artifact. It was rare to find beings who could survive such an attack unharmed!

Pandora frowned as she watched the golem return to its place in front of the door.

Despite her actions, it didn't attack.

'Hmm...is it perhaps...'

Bang!

Pandora took a quick step back to avoid the extremely fast fist that almost struck her.

However, she faced no second attack after she evaded it.

'I was correct. These golems only respond if the attacker is within a certain range. Perhaps I should tell—
,

BOOOOM!

Pandora abruptly shifted her head to the side, narrowly dodging the wooden head that shot past her like a speeding bullet.

BANG!

The head collided with the torso of the golden she was fighting and tore through the wood-like material, revealing its mechanical insides.

Flash!

A shadow appeared behind it. An arm dug into the hole and ripped apart the circuitry within, forcing the golem to fall to the floor, ineffective.

Damien wiped a bead of sweat off his forehead and nodded.

"Nice. The confusion is terrible when you use mana, but it's pretty easy to overcome if you rely on physical strength."

He kicked the golem parts on the floor in front of him and looked back up at Pandora.

"I thought this would be a fun all-out brawl, but these guys are individual protectors, not an army. What a shame..."

Pandora's brows furrowed as she watched the man tap his foot against the ground like a city dweller late to work and scan the amphitheater like he was waiting for his dealer to show up.

She suddenly got the feeling that something bad was going to happen.

"What are you—"

"Let's just go for it."

Damien muttered to himself and vanished, leaving a trail of afterimages behind as he used pure physical strength to shoot through the amphitheater.

BOOM!

BOOM!

BOOM!

One by one, the heads of the golems exploded. There was no specific order in which gems were destroyed, but Damien made sure to destroy each pair before moving on to the next one.

He had figured it out.

The answer to this amphitheater's question wasn't any one of the answers it provided, but all of them together!

Chapter 1022 Tunnels [2]

Damien systematically destroyed all 16 golems in the span of a minute. These regular 1st and 2nd revolution golems, with the restrictions placed on their attacking ability, were nothing in front of him.

After blasting open the last one, he jumped back and made his way to the center of the amphitheater once more.

"Come over," he said to Pandora, who was still watching from her original position.

She responded instinctually and joined him in the center before she even realized what she was doing, and before she could find a chance to complain, the floor shook once more.

Rumble!

The amphitheater floor rotated like a dial in the opposite direction of the wall rotation that took place previously.

Dust flew through the air as the cavern trembled. The walls changed again, and the stone floor changed as if sand was being sifted off of it, revealing the intricately beautiful picture below.

A single tunnel appeared at the end of the rotation.

Damien and Pandora jumped up and landed on its surface, gazing into its darkness with narrowed eyes.

They didn't have other options, so there was no need to think about it too much.

Nodding at each other, they took their first steps into the darkness.

But they wouldn't be alone in their search.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

A group of bodies fell through the open roof of the amphitheater, having entered the same sinkhole as Damien and Pandora.

They raised off the ground as if their injuries didn't exist, and within seconds, their injuries truly ceased to exist.

They all had stark ashen grey skin and the sharp features of Nox beings.

And in fact, a few of them were.

The Nox had found ways to evade the realm laws. This didn't just translate to their ability to kill in the mystic realm, it also meant the level and age restrictions others faced meant nothing to them.

At their head stood a man, roughly seven feet tall and with a body like he'd never stopped training for thousands of years.

On his hip was a large sword dyed red in blood, and to his back was a group of four Nox with features similar to his.

"Let us go. It seems we are not the first to come here."

His eyes went to the singular tunnel present in the amphitheater.

This was the second stage of the mechanism, something that couldn't be activated easily.

It could only mean the enemy was strong enough to pay attention to,

'We must succeed this time. Otherwise...'

He glanced at his companions for a moment before turning back to his target, jumping up to the tunnel.

Their goal was hidden behind several dozen riddles that weren't solvable through ordinary means, and despite the strength of the enemy, it wasn't certain they'd reach first.

But haste was to be made, for any variable had to be eliminated before they had a chance to interfere with the plan.

The man and his group moved into the tunnel, following the steps left by Damien and Pandora just minutes before.

Would the situation become a rat race, or would the two groups have to fight until one no longer existed?

Perhaps the most likely situation would be both at once!

The tunnel system was truly like a labyrinth filled with deadly traps meant to slaughter any who dared enter its halls, but Damien and Pandora didn't encounter much trouble while traversing it.

As a man who held the All-Seeing Eyes in his grasp, it would be embarrassing if Damien couldn't see and avoid these traps.

Now that he knew the general direction he was supposed to be moving in, navigating was almost too easy.

He led Pandora through many weaving corridors, a few staircases that both ascended and descended and eventually came across the mouth of a cave.

They walked in, silent and wary, not even letting their awareness out too far in fear of giving away their presence.

It was extremely dark in the cave, but Damien could feel through his natural spatial perception its general layout.

There were three ways to go from here.

The first was straight, which would continue into a new tunnel system.

The second was upward, along the path of a trickling underwater stream.

And the last...

'I mean, when an option like that exists, you just have to take it, right?' Damien thought with a grin.

He grabbed Pandora's arm, causing her to jerk, but she relaxed when she felt him leading her through the cave.

Unlike him, the darkness was truly blinding for her.

It obviously wasn't natural darkness, and when this unnervingly pregnant feeling was combined with the intermittent strange echoes of sound that resounded through the cave, it was an environment that put one's danger senses to the test.

Pandora didn't want to continue from here, as she realized that her power couldn't get her past this point, but she decided to accept Damien's lead.

Only because he had proven his scouting abilities far better than hers.

The duo walked about ten steps forward and three steps to the left. They zig-zagged to the right and continued moving forward for 6 more steps before Damien suddenly stopped.

'Is it perhaps a pattern? There must be a trap on the floor.'

Pandora sent her awareness into the ground, just in time to witness Damien's foot sinking into an unknown mechanism.

"...!"

It was already too late to do anything about it.

Before she knew it, the stationary abyss around her started moving.

No, she began to fall through it!

The path Damien chose was neither forward nor up, but straight down at the fastest speed possible!

'Prisons are usually kept near World Cores for maximum security, and treasures should follow the same pattern!'

His reasoning was simple yet effective!

The duo fell for almost a full minute before the narrow trench that could barely fit their two bodies widened massively into a huge cavern.

They floated to a stop, allowing themselves to be displaced as they landed on the ground and spread their awarenesses.

Damien frowned.

'That's strange. This world has no World Core. Where do the realm laws come from?'

At their current depth, they should've already been able to sense its powerful fluctuations.

'Actually, isn't this cavern exactly where it should be?'

Damien immediately activated his Celestial Authority and felt the breath of the world itself, the frown on his face deepening with every passing second.

'There is something acting like a World Core, and it is present in this cavern. However, the World Core itself...'

It had been too long for Damien to know whether it had disappeared or it never existed in the first place.

His attention turned to the center of the cavern.

There was a massive stalagmite that reached halfway up the cavern's height, its gait like a mountain in the otherwise flat landscape.

Damien walked up to it and raised his head, peering at its peak.

His previous reasoning turned out to be...far more accurate than expected.

Because not only did he sense the mystical aura of treasure, he saw clearly the being crucified on this stalagmite.

'Holy Light Star, huh...just what the fuck is this place?'

Damien's frown finally traveled to the rest of his face, his expression turning extremely solemn as his ears pricked up.

The sound of approaching footsteps.

The feeling of that murky aura that he'd never forget.

The enemy was already here.

Chapter 1023 Intention [1]

Five people entered the cavern under Damien and Pandora's watch.

The two groups gazed at each other from their respective places, neither moving prematurely.

Damien's solemn expression persisted as he used All-Seeing Eyes to inspect the enemies.

'Damn...'

A High Commander and four 2nd and 3rd class Nox, this group was far beyond what the realm should've allowed.

And tracing their eyes, their goal was also clear.

'That man must be...'

Damien suddenly got flashbacks to the situation he experienced in the 3000 Beast Mountain Range.

A sealed Demigod that was close to breaking free from his shackles, a catastrophe caused by the collision of such world-breaking forces that killed hundreds of millions of beings.

"You are talented humans to make it here," the man at the head of the Nox group started, his gaze landing on Damien.

"Do not needlessly waste your lives here."

He spoke as if it was a foregone conclusion that the two of them would die in combat against his group.

And he wasn't necessarily wrong. With Damien's combat strength, he could at most take on the underlings. Their leader was far out of his capacity.

And Pandora...Damien didn't have many chances to see her strength, but he didn't think she was stronger than him.

"You tell us not to waste our lives, but aren't you just going to kill us anyway? What's the point of talking?" He said cautiously, entertaining the idea of escape.

The Nox High Commander scrutinized him before speaking again.

"There is a way to survive. Join us. Do not place your fates in the hands of this doomed universe."

"Pfft...!"

Damien scoffed unwittingly, and even Pandora turned her head to the side in amusement.

"Do you think anyone who can make it to this stage would join you? The only ones you could possibly convince are those rabble with the mentality of bratty children."

The one who quipped back wasn't Damien, but Pandora!

At the same time, a mental transmission entered Damien's ear.

'We have to take care of these trashes before they can accomplish anything. Do you have a plan?'

Damien's eyes widened as he looked over with no idea whether or not he was hearing things.

Was this the same stale and petty person he'd been dealing with thus far?!

He immediately regained composure and responded.

'Not really. That guy is a High Commander, and neither of us has the strength to deal with him. If he gets to the being sealed on the spire, it'll be over for us.'

'That person is alive?'

'Alive but sealed. He should be a Nox Demigod.'

'I see. Then we should kill him as well.'

Damien almost couldn't hide his blank stare.

What was this attitude? It was like she was saying "It's just killing Demigods, right? What's the big deal?"

But she wasn't talking to someone ordinary either, so her words weren't as nonsensical as they normally would've been.

'I can take care of a sealed Demigod, but you'd have to hold off the High Commander.' Damien finally responded, only half serious.

However, Pandora didn't seem to notice his sarcasm.

'High Commander...it can be done. When you move, I shall move as well.'

Damien couldn't stop the smile forming on his face.

What a daring individual! In front of the Nox, Pandora's entire demeanor changed into that of a true Holy Land Saintess.

And Damien...

'This is too fun of a gamble to resist.'

He was confident in saving himself at the very least, and if Pandora wanted to risk herself, why should he interfere?

The exchange between the two took place in a split second, and with the way their expressions changed, it looked more like they were laughing at Pandora's quip rather than formulating a plan.

And unlike the two of them, the Nox were not amused in the slightest by the situation.

"All you geniuses choose death. It is a shame to see." The High Commander sighed.

"Very well, if that is your wish, I shall grant you deaths befitting of warriors. The name of your killer is Malak. Remember it well."

The High Commander, Malak, took a single step forward.

And Damien moved instantly.

"Good luck!" He shouted as he exploded with strength and jumped into the air, climbing up the spire.

"Hmph!"

Pandora responded with a snort and moved to stand between the Nox group and Damien.

She clapped her hands together and maintained a praying position. The artifacts on her body began to shine with magisterial light.

"Master, please aid your child."

She whispered the words, and as her prayer floated into the air, her garments changed into mystical smoke that coalesced over her head.

Pandora's form was revealed wearing the beautiful top disciple robes of the Prismatic Sun Holy Land. Long locks of her navy blue hair swam in the air like an ocean, and while her piercing eyes and sharp jaw made her face look extremely serious, her beauty was also truly unparalleled.

It made sense for her to wear garments that hid this appearance, lest it destroy worlds!

In the star-filled orange mana that encased her body, this beauty was even more enunciated.

Only, it was shadowed soon after by the being that formed from the smoke atop her head.

"Disciple, why have you summoned me? Don't tell me that little assembly was too much for you?"

A heavenly voice oozed out of the mystical beauty in the smoke, filling the entire cavern in a contrastingly dominant way.

Malak didn't take his second step once that being appeared.

"You are..."

"Hm?"

The figure's eyes turned to the Nox High Commander scornfully.

"I see. So such a thing truly happened."

Her words were simple, but the power behind her voice increased severalfold.

"Disciple, lend me your body."

"Yes, Master."

Pandora closed her eyes and allowed the smoke to descend into her, and when her eyes reopened, they shone with a rainbow light that completely differed from their regular color.

"Beast, you actually dared to bully my disciple. It shouldn't be a problem for me to return her suffering to you, no?"

The woman in Pandora's body, no, the Prismatic Sun Holy Master, stepped forward and without a hint of hesitation, dragged the Nox group into battle.

Damien watched the entire situation pan out from the very tip of the spire, a smile forming on his face.

'So this is your trump card. Mm, I guess when you have a Demigod's Avatar supporting you, there's no reason to fear a High Commander.'

He didn't expect to meet the Prismatic Sun Holy Master so soon, but if he wanted to converse with her, it'd have to wait until the current situation ended.

'This time, the Nox's attack is just plain stupid. This is the gathering place of the universe's experts, and they were destined for failure from the start. There is absolutely no reason for them to throw suicide troops into this realm unless...'

Either this Demigod was incredibly important, or the treasure aura on his body was linked to something the Nox valued deeply.

BANG!

An explosion of rainbow light kicked up large clouds of dust in the cavern, bringing Damien out of his thoughts.

'Well then, I guess I should get to work too.'

Chapter 1024 Intention [2]

In fact, Damien was more than happy to take on this sealed Demigod.

Entering the man's mind was something he wanted to do on his own, and if he was truly a Nox Demigod, killing him was par for course.

All Damien knew at this moment was that this man was strange.

His Nox Aura was definitely present, but it wasn't the same as the aura carried by the Saint Emperor or Marionette Lord, Nox Demigods Damien had personally met.

Who was he? Why was he sealed? The only way to answer these questions was to enter his mind.

And perhaps, some of the questions Damien had been pondering for so long would be answered too.

Pah!

Damien slapped himself in the face. Without knowing how long the Prismatic Sun Holy Master could maintain her presence, he couldn't be wasting time thinking meaninglessly like this.

He jumped and stomped his foot into the tip of the spire, breaking it down and flattening it until it was a surface he could sit on. Once he finished, he reached down and placed his finger on the top of the crucified man's head.

A strand of the Breath of Nothingness swam into his spiritual world, and Damien's vision blurred into a new world.

"Hm, a guest?"

He was greeted by an ancient voice that boomed through the space and struck his ears like symbols crashing centimeters away.

Damien gritted his teeth and shook off the pain, looking around to find the source of the voice.

"Don't bother," the voice came again.

"After the passing of so many years, I no longer have the strength to form a spiritual avatar."

"Who are you?" Damien asked.

"You came here for this, no?" The man said.

"This Emperor has been slumbering for so many years, it seems the time has finally come to die."

A frown formed on Damien's face as he listened to the man's strange words, but before he could respond...

"I will show you what you wish to see. How you choose to proceed afterward shall decide my fate."

The man's attitude completely contradicted what Damien expected, and not even a second after he finished processing the current events, the scene around him shifted again.

'These are...his memories.' Damien realized as he looked at the river that appeared before him.

It was massive, like an ocean of its own, but the water was murky and brown as if it had been polluted for countless decades.

'It is indeed what I came for, but why do I feel like something's wrong?'

Damien once again reminded himself.

He was in the mind of a Demigod. Anything could happen.

After stabilizing his ego and making a few preliminary preparations to keep himself safe, he went to the River bank and slowly submerged himself in its waters.

A story began to paint itself in his mind.

The situation outside, as Damien expected, wasn't as apocalyptic as it could've been.

Su Ren was a blessing upon Holy Light Star.

His banner attracted countless geniuses who followed him and acted together to counter the Nox Worshippers, and his mysterious grey mana was perfect for eliminating the bloody environment and correcting the world's laws.

The latter mission was a difficult one. No matter how Su Ren moved, he found that he could only destroy the bloody forests on a surface level, and the seeds for their regrowth simply couldn't be extinguished.

And more than the Nox, the vitality calamity caused severe damage to his forces.

What they found after a few hours of facing its wrath was that the corruption of the world evaded the realm laws just like the Nox, and those who fell to it would truly die.

The most imperative task was to find a way to counter it.

The answer didn't come from inside, but from Luxurion.

There were multiple things that made the Nox's current attack counterintuitive. One of the greatest was that, while the experts present were already strong, there were even more strong experts and forces arriving in the Sky Castle by the hour, which meant an endless stream of geniuses was entering the mystic realm!

Not all of these geniuses were loyal to the universe, but since the forces arriving in the current days were usually those with respect and status in the universe, the majority were those who would put their lives on the line for their homeland.

Among them were the geniuses from Medicine Emperor Holy Land, the very geniuses Su Ren had been searching for.

They entered the realm and immediately took their stand as an apothecary that provided pills and elixirs that could counter the vitality suction.

They were aided by geniuses from Primordial Light Holy Land, who used their purification abilities to help those affected regain some of their lost energy.

Though, this effect was still temporary. If these geniuses wanted to regain what was stolen, they needed to defeat the world itself!

The universe's geniuses were able to rapidly form a united front that allowed them to combat the Nox Worshippers without losing too many forces, and meanwhile, the experts that backed them made it known why they had their acclaim.

A line of more than a hundred experts kneeled in front of the portal to Holy Light Star in the second banquet hall.

Their arms and legs were bound by rope that radiated with the aura of Divinity, and their faces were black with shame.

They weren't killed, they were sat in front of their previous comrades and humiliated.

It was like they had four massive letters written on their foreheads.

FOOL!

Fools who dared to betray the universe, fools who let power get to their heads, how could such fools be given easy deaths?!

No, they were sat in front of everyone and forced to watch as their geniuses were slaughtered meaninglessly due to their idiocy.

And they were sat waiting for the torture that was sure to come.

To attack in Luxurion was the stupidest thing they could've done.

This Sky Castle was the lifeblood of the Heavenly Clan. It was built with so much specification that it was impossible for traitors to infiltrate it.

Hell, they couldn't even kill themselves due to the restrictions!

Whether it was a Supreme or a Demigod, a small sect master or the Holy Master of a massive Holy Land, none of them were given treatment better than dogs.

Including the Holy Master of Flame Heavens Holy Land, the master of Huo Xuan and Huo Dong who were killed by Damien and Su Ren.

He wasn't stupid enough to participate in this raid.

How could he be?

He was an exalted personage who was fully aware of the universe's power. He knew from the beginning that this was a suicide mission.

However, he didn't have a choice.

The moment he chose to submit to the Nox, unresigned to the impossibility of ascending from the Demigod level to True Godhood, he became a slave whose opinion no longer mattered.

All it brought him was humiliation and loss.

The bleakness of the fates of these traitors only made the question on everyone's minds all the more pronounced.

Why?

Just why would the Nox plan such an attack?

Chapter 1025 Intention [3]

The world was dark.

Didn't all these stories start that way?

A boy was born into this dark world, his fate bound to slavery from the beginning.

His mother was killed for giving birth to him, as it was rumored his father was a powerful man who cheated on his wife with her, and he was sent across worlds to become the slave of a certain family that had prominence in the universe.

They were cruel people.

Even as a child, he viewed himself as nothing more than a dog. As he grew and learned more about the world and his status, his desires and the slave mentality bred into him fought each other, this fight worsening as he suffered more and more abuse from his masters.

One day, the masters decided to take a trip to a different star. Through the whispers of the servants, he heard it had something to do with a massive business opportunity.

However, karma would always punish those she disliked. The family's starship experienced a fatal malfunction and was attacked by raiders.

The women were taken away, while the men were left in the starship as it was destroyed.

The starship exploded, killing almost everyone left on board.

The boy, a teenager at this point, miraculously survived.

His body drifted through the void, unaffected by the turbulence of the starry sky, and landed on the surface of a dead star.

He remained in a coma for almost 2 years before awakening and realizing his situation.

This dead star was nothing more than a burial ground for most.

But it was there where he found his talent.

He had the ability to set world laws.

He couldn't interfere with the operations of a World Core, but if he was put on a dead star, he could truly turn it into his own world.

However, there were limits to this power. Each world he set the laws of would be tied to him in mind and fate, and he would feel every change they experienced tenfold.

He first realized just how double-sided the coin of his talent was when one of the dead stars he bound was hit by an extinction-level meteorite.

For 7 days and 7 nights, he experienced the worst pain imaginable to man, as if he was being burned alive and drowned at the same time.

He was hardly sane when he came out the other end, and he immediately broke his connection with every star, accepting the loss of power wholeheartedly.

He retired to a secluded cabin in a relatively small world hidden somewhere deep in the universe, hiding his existence from enemies and allies alike.

He finally gave himself a name, the first one he'd ever had in his life: Hassan.

However, he wasn't able to live in peace for more than a few years. Somehow, the Nox found out about his talent and send a squad filled with Supremes to kidnap him.

They took him to one of their worlds and tortured him brutally. They left him near death without even the ability to scream or cry in pain. Once again, he nearly lost his sanity.

That was the moment the Nox had been waiting for. They entered his cell and shoved a parasite into his mouth, forcing him to swallow it. The parasite spread its influence through his body and soon enough, he realized that he no longer had control over his actions.

This was the beginning of his life as a slave to the Nox.

His captors dragged him across the universe to bind several worlds, a total of 37, 36 of which were transformed into Infected Source Worlds.

The 37th was Holy Light Star, or rather, Hathur, the world that existed before the Angels claimed its ruins.

Once the task was completed, the Nox ran out of use for him. After seeing how his state deteriorated every time he bound a new world, they sealed him in the middle of a temple on Hathur and switched his human heart for a God-rank artifact, the Glass Lake Heart.

The Glass Lake Heart had a single purpose. It allowed its bearer to keep their mind clear from corruption under any circumstances, regardless of the danger level.

This treasure was originally meant for good, but it was instead used to keep Hassan's mind from collapsing under perpetual torture and force him to maintain the world laws of the Infected Source Worlds

These world laws were set by the Nox according to their whims. Hassan became an accessory to the creation of true plagues that claimed the lives of billions upon billions of innocents, and at the same time, he had no choice but to maintain the corrupted laws of Holy Light Star that made it impossible for anyone to find his existence.

He was Holy Light Star's World Core, and as the Nox already controlled him, wasn't it simple for them to bypass the laws set through him?

Damien sighed as he reached the current day in Hassan's memories and made his way out of the river that contained them.

His spiritual avatar was dyed in murky black ink, corruption that infected him from the river itself.

Damien allowed the forces of his own body to clear this corruption, sending the Nox mana elsewhere.

And he peered into Hassan's spiritual world, hoping to see a glimmer of his appearance.

Unlike Damien's expectation, the man had no ulterior motive for being so cooperative.

He was in limbo in a near-death state due to the destruction of many Infected Source Worlds, and he had been waiting for someone to come and kill him for many years.

Until now, the Nox never interfered with his existence, but now that they'd made a move, a path to him had opened for the first time in over 100,000 years.

It wasn't a coincidence that Damien and Pandora managed to find their way into the cavern.

'The Nox sure are cruel. The world laws they set are not only so corrupted, they use their corruption to keep Hassan just barely alive.'

Damien felt true pity for the man, because the memories he so graciously allowed Damien to peruse also served a purpose in solving his own doubts.

Mainly, one curious fact.

There were only 9 Infected Source Worlds in the current era, of which the ones in the Elven Domain, Human Domain, and Calypto had been destroyed.

However, at the start, there were 36 Infected Source Worlds.

Hassan's era was 100,000 years ago. His imprisonment took place during the Forgotten War.

When these facts were put together...

'The universe used to be much bigger than it currently is.'

...only one conclusion could be reached.

Damien felt his understanding of the universe and its history deepening, and as he gazed into the unnervingly serene spiritual world around him, he realized he had a decision to make.

He either killed Hassan, or found a way to save the man.

The man had lived a life of sin, but not because he wanted to.

The blood on his hands was painted on by the Nox.

Hassan himself had lived a brutal life, an extremely unfortunate life where he saw no good.

Did this man deserve to die?

Absolutely not.

But if he lived, would he be able to find redemption?

Damien truly didn't know.

The only way to earn redemption was to desire it and work towards it, but with how broken Hassan's mind was, he didn't know if the man would be able to formulate that desire.

The only way to know was to ask.

And frankly, Damien wasn't excited to hear the answer.

Chapter 1026 Intention [4]

"You understand what I want to ask, right?" He said, addressing Hassan's formless voice.

"I do," Hassan responded succinctly.

"Then...?"

Damien didn't get a response for a long time.

It wasn't an easy decision to make, after all.

Did he want to give up, or did he want to try again?

Hassan was unsure whether or not the man before him could grant him the redemption he still wished for in the bottom of his heart, but it was true that Damien was the only individual who had been able to enter his spiritual world and survive the tumultuous journey of his memories.

Yet, even if Damien truly could give him a chance at redemption, did he want it?

He wasn't good for anything. He couldn't grow his power without binding worlds, but he couldn't bind worlds without experiencing torture.

He was tired of torture.

Hassan had lived his entire life, over 100,000 years, being tortured.

What else could he contribute?

Did the world even need him anymore?

It was a new era, and in this new era, there were geniuses like Damien and the girl who came with him who could fight with such determination against the terrifying threat posed by the Nox.

How could he help them?

Hassan had lived most of his life in solitude, alone in this quiet realm with nothing but his thoughts to entertain him.

His mind was much more rational than one expected from someone who found themselves in this situation.

This was mostly due to the influence of the Clear Lake Heart, but it still stood that he didn't allow his emotions to control his decisions.

He thought about it rationally.

If he couldn't provide any benefit to the universe and the innocents he'd hurt so terribly, there was no point in living. The best way to atone for his sins would be to suffer in the afterlife and in his next life.

In the end, he could only sigh.

"I can only offer two things: my talent and the Clear Lake Heart. However, neither of these things can be given to others," he finally said.

Damien raised his brow. "What do you mean?"

"The Clear Lake Heart can only ever recognize one owner. If it is removed from my body, it will fade back into the universe and be reborn as a new treasure," Hassan explained.

Damien frowned.

'With this attitude, it's clear there's no way for me to convince him to continue living. But it seems he's not willing to leave if he can't contribute anything.'

Damien decided to follow his usual style and be completely honest.

"I can work around both of these issues. I can inherit your talent, and if you'd like, I can bestow the Clear Lake Heart on someone worthy of its power."

"Is this possible?" Hassan asked incredulously.

"Maybe not for other people, but it is for me. The only question is: are you truly willing to die?"

"..."

"...I am."

Hassan made his stance clear.

Damien sighed.

This was the third.

The experts of the olden era were never willing to live in this new generation, and Damien couldn't blame them.

Everyone and everything they knew was gone, and as strangers in this new world, their only purpose would be to be used as tools of war.

Nobody wanted to live such a dire fate.

Damien could only acknowledge their existences and carry their stories within him, so their legacies never died out.

"Whenever you're ready, I can start the process. Do not worry. You will not feel any pain," Damien said firmly.

And Hassan...even though his spiritual form was incorporeal, Hassan smiled radiantly.

"Very well. Do what you must."

Damien gently allowed Void Mana into Hassan's spiritual world. With the latter providing not a single hint of resistance, it was an incredibly smooth process.

And when he finally gathered enough mana, he uttered that sacred word.

"Devour."

Hassan closed his incorporeal eyes.

The Clear Lake Heart kept his mind lucid at all times, which meant pain could never inhibit his thoughts.

Rather, he felt the pain much more clearly due to the heart's influence.

Yet, in this moment, even though he could feel his life force and spiritual world being sucked away in a vacuum of mysterious force...

...he didn't feel any pain.

The feeling of death slowly encroaching upon him, the feeling of drowsiness that lulled him into the eternal sleep he'd been longing for, he cherished it to its fullest, finally free from the torture that life had been.

Eventually, Hassan's body wilted into a soulless husk, and his spiritual world became nothing more than an empty plane lacking any ego.

Damien felt his body changing. That pleasantly painful feeling of the Void Physique altering his body overcame him, and the trait, [Law Controller] manifested itself on his status window.

When the process ended, he opened his eyes and swept his palms through the air.

Shing!

Shing!

Shing!

Shing!

The chains stabbed through Hassan's arms and legs were cut away, and his body disappeared into the Sanctuary.

Perhaps to Damien, this was just another encounter with an unfortunate senior.

Perhaps to Damien, this interaction would be nothing more than one of many Legends that led to his eventual ascension.

However, to the universe, it was something much greater.

Hassan was dead, which meant his influence on the universe would begin to fizzle out.

Those 6 remaining Infected Source Worlds wouldn't feel the effects for a few months due to the solidity of the laws established on them, but Holy Light Star felt the influence of his passing almost instantly.

And Damien himself...

...soon realized that Hassan's gift to him had propelled him into his 2nd revolution of the extreme peak.

The Prismatic Sun Holy Master's mana held the same rainbow color as her eyes, and its effects were equally mystical.

As she fought against Malak and his group, she displayed prowess far surpassing Pandora's level, utilizing a Law that held such profundity it could be compared to Damien's Spacetime Laws in pure aura fluctuations.

However, despite the strength she held as an individual, she was still confined to Pandora's body.

Unless she wanted to turn her disciple into a waste by overexerting her body and promoting her strength too much, she had to conform to several restrictions.

The problem was that Malak had his full strength, so the best the Holy Master could do was fight him evenly.

Their battle had gone on for several minutes already, and Pandora's body was reaching its limits.

If there wasn't a change soon—!

It was like the gods listened to her wishes.

Voom!

The entire Holy Light Star shook. There was no massive mana pulse or other catastrophe that accompanied this shaking, but "something" changed.

Holy Light Star...became a dead star.

With no World Core, with no world laws, there was no longer a means to maintain the calamity cycle, nor was there such thing as a restriction remaining in the realm.

The Nox lost their advantage, and the vitality stolen by the realm itself was returned to the air and reabsorbed by those it was stolen from.

With Damien's pyrrhic "victory" against Hassan, there was nothing left to be said.

This battle was already won by the Grand Heavens Boundary.

Chapter 1027 Proceedings [1]

BANG!

Rumble!

The underground cavern rumbled heavily as the Nox High Commander Malak's body shot across it and crashed through the opposing wall.

In that instant he lost his advantage, the jarring shock of the realm laws disappearing disoriented him for a second and left him open to the Prismatic Sun Holy Master's brutal attacks.

As he crawled out of the wall and saw his comrades being suppressed by the Holy Master, a deep frown formed on his face.

It was an expression of helplessness that manifested after he realized the current situation.

They'd lost so easily?

He knew it was a suicide mission from the beginning. If it was anything else, he and his comrades wouldn't have been dispatched.

Malak's story was a bit complicated. In simple terms, he'd offended someone very powerful, and his status had been reduced to nothing more than a hunting dog.

In his most rational opinion, the only one who could save him from his predicament would be a Nox Emperor, but how could he have the capabilities to contact them?

He and his team were forced into this mission and many others so they could die in battle after being used to their fullest capability, but they managed to survive until this point.

Their survival ability gave them relatively widespread acclaim, but their strength wasn't as impressive.

However, it shouldn't have ended so quickly, right?

He was appalled by the strength displayed by the duo he had the misfortune of encountering and he was even more unable to accept the rapid response of the majority of geniuses that cut off the Nox's chance for success.

Malak already knew he was going to die, but he didn't want to die meaninglessly.

If he had no other choice, he at least wanted to leave an impression of himself in the hearts of his allies and enemies before he disappeared.

With this thought in mind, Malak crawled out of the wall and stood back up, wiping the black blood from his mouth and taking his first steps back into battle.

However, a figure appeared in his path before he could make it too far.

"Hey, having fun?"

The man among the genius duo smiled at him somewhat teasingly, a frustrating expression.

Malak raised his fist to attack, not bothering with conversation.

But Damien had other plans. Today, he wasn't trying to fight any further.

"Relax. If I could offer you a way out, would you take it?"

Damien's words made Malak's eyes widen in surprise. He finally earlier.

Yet, he still entertained it.

understood how they felt when he said the same words to them earlier.

Yet, he still entertained it.

Why? Even he didn't know.

"What is it you want, human?" He pressed frustratedly, glancing at the state of his allies.

It seemed the Holy Master's onslaught had slowed considerably. She didn't look like she was trying to kill, but trying to suppress instead.

Malak turned his eyes back to Damien strangely as he began to talk.

"Here's the thing..."

What Damien wanted to say was both simple and complicated at the same time.

Even he felt a bit strange as he allowed the words to flow out of his mouth.

The crux of his proposition was just as simple as it had always been. He wanted Malak and his comrades to move to the Sanctuary!

The complicated part was the reasoning behind it, as well as his stance on the Nox themselves.

Other than the universe's previous forms, what Damien saw most in Hassan's memories was the nature of the Nox.

They were...

Well, the universe's perception of them came from a point of truth.

For the most part, those in their race were belligerent and power-hungry, those who had succumbed to their vices and allowed those vices to consume them and drive their actions.

The Nox thrived on destruction and death. The force of their natural racial mana was just as corrupted, as if they were fated for evil since birth.

However, just like all races, the Nox weren't a people who could be painted in black and white.

Hassan experienced the most brutal years of his life enslaved under the Nox, but he also met many good people, people who pitied him and gave him the strength to live another day.

Perhaps that strength was wasted in his circumstances, but the thought behind their actions was what mattered.

Even Nox beings who worked common custodial jobs and whatnot on their starships and war vehicles had to be 4th class since those under this level were frenzied and unintelligent.

In Damien's expectation, these people would use prisoners as torture subjects to relieve stress and utilize a bit of their neglected power.

This wasn't an uncommon approach, but there were a select few among those staffers who offered the prisoners food, occasionally dressed their wounds, and even had healthy conversations without them, ignoring the boundaries that separated them.

Since when was it common for a Nox to show kindness?

Unless it was a being like Zara who was a Nox being but wasn't raised as a Nox being, Damien couldn't picture it.

In fact, while Damien didn't know it, there was another Nox being who exhibited qualities similar to what he'd just seen.

That man was named Thaddeus Church, and though he had the mercilessness and ruthlessness of a Nox being instilled in him, he also had a natural curiosity that led him to accompany his Plant Race companion, Aaliyah, on an expedition across the universe.

Thaddeus' personality had gone through severe changes in the period of time he'd spent with that woman. He was living proof that the Nox couldn't be defined so one-dimensionally.

And while Damien had yet to meet him, he had personally witnessed too many cases in Hassan's memories to allow his prejudice to guide his actions.

"...so come with me. I can guarantee you absolute protection for at least a year or two. The only condition is that you work for me after that period ends."

Damien finally finished his words and stepped back.

"I have some stuff to talk to the Holy Master about, so I'll leave you to your thoughts. If you agree, just stay here until I come back. If you don't, leave on your own. I won't stop you, nor will she."

Damien walked over to the other side of the cave, attracting the Holy Master's attention.

As she went over to him, Malak's comrades were freed from her barrage and given time to rest, time which they used to regroup with him.

Malak watched this take place incredulously.

Did Damien forget that he and the Holy Master were still not as strong as their group? At most, they would be evenly matched.

However, Malak soon understood where Damien's confidence came from.

'Right, the control center has been destroyed.'

Without the realm laws in place, there was nothing maintaining the strength and age barriers that the universe's forces abided by until this point.

Any second now, experts would flood into the realm, and even Malak would become a tiny existence surrounded by Supremes and Demigods who could easily slap him to death.

As he passed some black pills to his companions and sat down with them to heal, he genuinely considered Damien's proposal.

Working for a human...

Well, it would certainly be a new experience.

Whether or not it was worth the risk...?

Malak sighed.

'This is quite the troublesome decision.'

Chapter 1028 Proceedings [2]

Damien told Malak he wanted to have a talk with the Prismatic Sun Holy Master, but it ended up as a small exchange of words, as that was all that could take place before her avatar dispersed.

It couldn't be helped. With the way she was fighting, it was already surprising that she was able to stay present in the current situation for so long.

Pandora's body definitely sustained damage due to her overstaying, but luckily it wasn't too bad.

Once she left, Pandora directly collapsed, and Damien caught her, casting [Heal] immediately to solve her injuries.

'Prismatic Sun Holy Master...what an unfathomable person.' Damien thought to himself as he healed Pandora.

They'd only spoken a few words of greeting at most, with the Holy Master telling him she looked forward to his presence after the Grand Assembly, referring to the so-called ceremony, but there was something about her gaze...

'It was almost like she knew me.'

It was the kind of gaze that made one shudder. The Prismatic Sun Holy Master was like the physical manifestation of the concept known as "the unknown."

Nevertheless, with her gone, it could be said that the situation truly came to a close.

'And I can't avoid this ceremony nonsense. I'll have to meet the Holy Master in person if I want to talk to her about the more important topics.'

Damien heaved Pandora over his shoulder, allowing her to rest for a bit as he carried her back to the surface.

As for Malak and his group...

It was best to say they died, for their existence wouldn't be seen in the Real Plane again for a very long time.

This Nox attack, while short, opened Damien's world to a variety of new possibilities.

And more than anything else, it placed a sense of urgency in the hearts of all those present.

The Grand Assembly was sure to change in the coming days.

It wasn't suspenseful once Hassan's influence died down.

Experts flooded Holy Light Star once its anomaly was understood and aided their pupils in eliminating the threats that were too hard for them to handle.

Meanwhile, the rest of the Nox Worshipers were essentially funneled and caged so they could become practice dummies for the geniuses, providing them with real combat experience and giving them the chance to face the power of the Nox head first.

While those who needed this training took the opportunity, people like Su Ren, most of the Holy Land geniuses, and the Human Domain group made their way out of the secret realm instead.

They didn't need this opportunity and allowed their weaker counterparts to utilize it in full while they rested their bodies and digested their gains from the mystic realm.

At this time, with everything settling down, Luciel made an important announcement.

The universal conference that was set to take place around a week later would be moved up. In three days, the Grand Assembly would begin moving towards its originally intended purpose.

In the wake of this, the forces that had yet to arrive at Luxurion made haste, and one by one, they touched down on its grounds.

Blood Asura Holy Land finally made its appearance, with Immortal Blood Asura bringing some of his strongest elders as well as a few of his sons with him in an incredibly powerful lineup.

Following their group were the Golden Dragon Clan, Supreme Soul Palace, Blacksmith Association, Heaven's Army Officials, and many more.

The largest players in the universe finally gathered in full, and while the experts among them took the three days before the conference to network and form alliances, the geniuses had other plans.

For those who didn't have Damien or Su Ren's power level, the Holy Light Star was an eye-opening experience that taught them the insignificance of their existence.

They were motivated to train even harder, and Luxurion's training facilities became extremely crowded, with the arenas being the most visited place.

Among these geniuses was Atticus. After his altercation with Damien at the beginning of the convention, he hadn't been himself. He cruised by in Holy Light Star and only made some minor achievements, laying low in the background for the rest of the time.

And now that he was back, he was finally able to start getting back on his feet again, following Damien's advice to get rid of the stubborn insecurity within him.

It was in this environment that Damien brought Pandora out of the mystic realm.

He had made sure to cover her exposed skin with some nondescript robes he had laying around in the Sanctuary to protect her dignity, and without spending too much time on her, he dropped her off with the Prismatic Sun Holy Land group and left them to their own devices.

Damien mindlessly wandered the halls as he submerged himself in thought.

This time, his concerns weren't so grand and far-reaching.

'Blood Asura Holy Land...'

Their arrival time was suspicious on its own, but Damien remembered what he'd heard from Elena during their brief reunion in the secret realm.

She had been targeted by several beings who tried to kill her, following a bounty set on her and Damien's heads.

This wasn't too surprising considering how Damien had been moving, but the fact of the matter was that these forces had a method to circumvent the realm laws.

With his new knowledge of Hassan and Holy Light Star, Damien would be brainless if he didn't become suspicious about Immortal Blood Asura.

'His son succumbed to Nox's temptation quite easily, and he seems like the type of guy to do anything for power. I wouldn't be surprised if he has some connection to them.' He thought solemnly.

'I need to be even more careful until the assembly ends. I can't allow any opportunities to that man.'

Damien sighed. The universe was riddled with too many internal scourges. If this was their definition of unity, was victory ever a possibility?

'I should start making my own plans. The Sanctuary's army needs to be grown with intention, and I can use Malak to study the Nox and finally get a true understanding of how they function.'

The opportunity to dissect a Nox was impossible to come across due to their nature of turning into ink when they died.

Now that Damien had a live subject in his control, there was no way he'd waste the chance.

'No, I shouldn't think about it like that. That's a High Commander, after all. If I treat him properly, I'll gain an invaluable asset on the battlefield.'

Damien smiled wryly as he thought about just how unorthodox the forces under him were, but he shrugged it off.

What was the problem with it?

In all honesty, he actually liked this hodgepodge group filled with talents from all walks of life far better than an organization like Heaven's Army.

"Hm?"

Damien suddenly looked up, broken out of his thoughts.

Before he realized it, his aimless wandering had led him to Elena's room.

With a small smile on his face, he knocked on the door.

And at that very moment...

Thump!

Something in his heart spiked.

Beyond that door...

He could sense their presence.

The presence of not one woman, but three.A

Chapter 1029 Unity [1]

Damien stood with his hand hovering in front of the door, frozen.

He'd nearly forgotten about it after being swept up in Hassan's memories. By the time he left the underground cavern, the Human Domain group had already left and his memory had no chance to be refreshed.

'...why now?' Damien moaned inwardly in dread.

He wished he had time to prepare, but there was absolutely no chance of that happening now.

Because just as he'd felt her, Ruyue had felt him.

The door swung open on its own, revealing his awkward figure to those within the room.

Three pairs of eyes met with one.

And Damien felt his heart beating out of his chest.

Wasn't it funny?

He worried so deeply about his indifference affecting his personal life. He was afraid of this moment of reunion because he didn't know what he would feel when he saw them.

But now, standing before them, he couldn't even open his mouth.

His chest felt stuffy, his heart pumped faster than light, and contrary to his own wishes...

His eyes began to water.

'Huu...'

Damien used an imperceptible trace of mana to protect his eyes and make sure no tears could form, and took a nervous step into the room.

"..."

He looked between the three girls without a word.

Because if he opened his mouth, he'd definitely choke on his words and embarrass himself.

While he struggled to figure out what to do next...

Rose and Elena could no longer hold their laughter.

"Pfft...!"

"Hehe~!"

They raised their hands over their mouths as they giggled, as if that would stop Damien from noticing.

And as he looked at them in shock, Rose finally spoke up.

"See? I told you this would happen," she said happily.

"Tch. I still can't beat the first wife," Elena snapped back in unwillingness.

"If you could beat me, what would be the point of the first wife title?" Rose quipped teasingly.

"Haa, fine, fine, I concede. I'm fine with knowing you'll never beat me in a fight."

"Just wait on it. I'll catch up soon enough."

Elena rolled her eyes and handed a space ring over to Rose, and Damien stood there dumbly with no idea what to say.

He looked to Ruyue for help, only for her to hit him with a helpless smile and a shrug.

"Ahh, what's going on?!" He finally said, unable to take it.

"Hm? Oh, right. We just placed a few bets, nothing much," Elena said, still a bit grouchy over her loss.

Damien raised his brow incredulously. "Bets about what?"

This time, it was Rose who spoke up.

She glanced at Damien in a way that made his heart skip a beat and smiled.

"It was a bet about how you'd react when you saw us. Little sister here thought you'd immediately embrace us, but how could the husband I know who has no clue how to express his emotions do something like that? Naturally, I bet that you'd stand there dumbly and pretend to be unfazed!"

"..."

Damien had no idea what to say to that.

As Elena said, nobody could beat the first wife! She knew him better than the back of her hand!

And just like it was in the past and would be in the future, Damien felt incredibly thankful for Rose. Because of her, the awkwardness in the atmosphere completely disappeared.

Damien walked up to the bed where the three of them sat without a single hint of hesitation in his heart and wrapped his arms around them, pulling them into his chest.

As he felt their arms wrap around his waist, he closed his eyes.

"I truly, truly missed you," he finally said.

Rose was right. He had no idea how to express himself, and he had no idea how to show love.

He could only say these words and hope they could understand the feelings that stood behind them.

The feeling of security they gave him, the feeling of longing that had been suppressed deep in his heart ever since he made his first advent into the Divine Realm on Dawn World, the feeling of tranquility that he could only ever experience when he was with them, he wanted them to know how much those feelings meant to him.

They were his only safe haven in the universe that he'd cherish for eternity.

The embrace of the four became that of three after a minute or so as Elena quietly left the room and gave Rose and Ruyue their time.

After all, she'd had plenty of time alone with Damien before the Grand Assembly. Now wasn't the time to be selfish.

'Last time, I left on a bad note. I'm not going to act so selfishly anymore.'

She had a true bond with the two women she called sisters, and just as much as Damien, she felt the weight of it when she reunited with them.

They were family, and there was no need to be selfish around family.

Even after Elena left, the embrace of the three didn't end for a very long time.

They sat in silence and enjoyed each others' presence, a pleasure they'd long forgotten.

And at a certain point, Damien felt the side of his chest getting wet.

'Take some time and be alone with her. Come see me once you're sure she's happy.'

Damien's eyes widened as he heard the voice that entered his head.

He looked down with furrowed brows, but shook his head with a smile in the end.

He left a soft kiss on Rose's head, and in the next moment, he and Ruyue vanished from the Real Plane.

Rose was left on her own, but the expression on her face showed nothing but pure happiness.

The growth she'd experienced in the past two years allowed her to overcome many of her insecurities. The misconceptions she had about her "duty" as a first wife or her "status" among the harem disappeared entirely as she got closer to Ruyue, and she realized that all her previous worries were meaningless.

In a sense, she reached the same conclusion as Elena.

What need was there to bring things like status or position into matters of family?

That was precisely what led her father's harem to ruin.

Her husband, the man she loved, and her sisters, the women who would stand by her until the ends of time, were the most important people in the world to her.

In front of them, there was no need for pretenses.

Coincidentally enough, the dynamic that would bring harmony to their family wasn't formed through time together, it was created through individual birth.

As they grew more powerful and obtained a greater understanding of the universe's truths and reality, they also began to understand the value of relationships.

Wasn't Blood Asura Holy Land the perfect example of what happened if one let them go?

A future where they cared for nobody but themselves, where they were willing to sell their souls for power, was not a future any of them wished to see.

Therefore, each and every one of them threw away their personal grievances, their selfishness, and their greed.

From this point forth, they would be a symbol of unity.

Chapter 1030 Unity [2]

The setting was an area similar to a one-bedroom apartment hidden somewhere in the Sanctuary's many dimensions.

Two people arrived in this place, embraced in each other's arms.

Ruyue lost control by the time they arrived.

Silent tears streamed down her face and dampened Damien's shirt as she dug her face into his chest and hugged him tighter.

Damien responded in kind, touching his forehead to hers.

He didn't say anything yet. He noticed when they were in Elena's room earlier that she was being extremely quiet and was just as concerned about her as Rose.

He understood what Ruyue was going through more clearly than anyone else.

After all, he held a piece of her soul.

As Ruyue became closer and closer to the natural force of Yin, her demeanor also experienced a change, becoming far colder and less expressive, almost like how she was before she met Damien.

However, the change wasn't a negative, it merely meant her immersion with her Laws was far higher than the average person, a testament to her talent.

Ruyue was someone who didn't expose her feelings to anyone.

Rose could read her thoughts through her expressionless facade due to their closeness, but even she couldn't bring Ruyue to emote like a normal human.

Ruyue as a person mirrored ice, yet, her love burned powerfully within her heart,

That was where she put all her emotions.

When she saw Damien again, she wanted to let it all out, but in her core, she wasn't someone who could show emotion in front of other people.

When she and Damien were finally alone, the dam blocking those emotions broke into millions of tiny pieces, and everything Ruyue had been holding since their separation was poured out in full.

Damien brushed his hands through her hair gently as she cried.

Even he was forced to reinforce the mana protection in his eyes to make sure he didn't cry.

His emotions were connected to hers, but he didn't know how to calm her agitated state.

As he thought of various ways to cheer her up, Ruyue pulled away from his chest and lightly grabbed his collar.

She was a tall woman, standing at 5 feet 10 inches, and she only slightly needed to tilt her head to look directly into his eyes.

Yet, the subtlety of her movement made it all the more mesmerizing.

Damien stared into those beautiful golden eyes, slightly puffy from crying, and immediately got trapped in them.

He stood there in a daze, admiring Ruyue's beauty until she finally spoke up.

"You..." she said, her voice barely over a whisper.

"You still owe me."

Damien raised his brow at her unexpected words.

"I owe you? From when?"

"You don't remember?"

Ruyue made an extremely cute pouting expression as she spoke, something Damien never expected to see on her face.

His smile was warmer than a spring breeze.

"How could I remember? I let you win so often back then I forgot what the score was."

"Stupid..."

Ruyue pounded his chest lightly with a harrumph, turning her eyes back to his soon after.

"No more hiding. I want to make it official," she finally said after a moment of hesitation.

"Make it offi...you don't mean...?" Damien's eyes widened at the surprising request.

Ruyue turned her head away, a rosy blush rising up her cheeks.

"You did it with the two of them, but we were never able to take the final step..."

Her words were almost imperceptibly soft, but Damien was someone who could perceive even what was truly imperceptible.

His smile turned teasing.

It looked like Ruyue was experiencing a bit of jealousy because of this matter.

Plus, in the Cloud Plane, the meaning of such an act was far more sacred and significant than it was in other places.

To someone who represented the Laws of Yin, the moment of connection was practically a supreme ritual that was equivalent to giving the other party their everything, no holds barred, for all eternity.

For Ruyue to bring it up first, and so quickly...

"What did I do with the two of them...?"

Damien couldn't stop the urge to tease her a bit, but before he could get a single glimpse of the expected response...

Damien's eyes widened.

Ruyue pulled him by his collar and firmly planted her lips on his, deeply kissing him.

Damien rapidly adapted to the change of pace, bringing his hands up to Ruyue's face and pulling her deeper into him.

He gently picked her up and walked over to the bed, gently laying her down and climbing on top of her in a single motion.

Ruyue was always the less dominant party in their relationship, but for some reason, in these most important moments, she was always the one who took the lead.

Since she had such determination, Damien couldn't disappoint her, could he?

He knew it too. He and Ruyue had grown out of their most difficult times together, and though they'd both long held the desire to become one, neither of them was sure if they were ready for it.

It was mainly Ruyue's issue, since she'd long known what it meant to give herself to a man.

There was a reason why even her own father had lusted after her at one point.

All of their plots had been thwarted by those who cared for her, but the scars left by their words and gazes needed time to heal.

In fact, she'd wanted to take the final step before they left for Niflheim, but time and the situation with Elena and Rose didn't allow it.

Now, she laid on the bed, staring up into the eyes of the man she loved. She reached out her hands and caressed his face, assuring herself that this moment was real.

She really couldn't be saved.

She wanted all of him, and she wanted it for eternity.

She couldn't stop herself from wrapping her arms around his neck and pulling herself up to taste his lips again.

Damien's movements became more daring as their kiss deepened. He ran his hands along her body, exploring its curves and gently removing the barriers that separated his skin from hers.

Their clothes were gone soon enough, and Damien finally pulled away from their kiss, taking the opportunity to see Ruyue's body in full for the first time ever.

She was as enchanting as a starry night sky.

Her hair, whiter than snow, spread across the bed under and behind her and painted a hypnotic backdrop that perfectly framed her beautiful face.

Her eyes were slightly watery and filled with love and arousal, forming an extremely alluring picture that almost made it impossible for Damien to focus on the rest of her body.

But he was glad he managed to tear his gaze away.

Ruyue had the body of a goddess. Her breasts were large, perky, and perfectly shaped, and her slim waist curved into scrumptious hips and incredibly plump buns.

Her legs were long, her skin was smooth and fair...did her perfection need more explanation?

Damien finished admiring her god-given gifts and gave her one more deep kiss before he cupped her large breasts in his hand, lowering his lips to the rosy pink cherries that decorated their peaks.

His other hand snaked down her waist and found its way to a sacred garden that had never been witnessed by anyone else.

Ruyue moaned sounds of heavenly bliss as she experienced pleasure she never knew existed, pleasure provided by the only man who would ever enter her sight.

Damien gave her his everything. He explored every inch of his body with his hands, his mouth, and finally...

He gently placed his dragon at the entrance of the cave it so deeply desired to enter.

In this hidden place away from any eyes, two lovers finally united as one.

A unity that wouldn't be broken for many, many hours to come.