

Void 1321

Chapter 1321 Avatar [2]

He got beat up.

He confronted his parents and told them about his ambitions, and as a result, his father made absolutely sure he understood the weight of his decision.

Still, it was a gesture of concern.

It was a show of concern, because no matter how unaware they were about the world outside of their village, they were more than aware of how cruel it could be.

They didn't want their innocent son to be corrupted by that world. They didn't want him to disappear and never be heard from again. They didn't want him to become a sacrifice for those people who regarded human life as nothing.

But Alexander was determined.

The look in his eyes was proof enough that his mind wouldn't waver, and with no other choice, they accepted their son's dreams.

For the next three days, he spent time with them without wasting a single second. He made sure to enjoy every last moment of this comfort, so he could leave his parents in this life without any worries.

He even had a little sister who was born roughly a decade after him. She was still a child, and didn't truly understand what was happening, but she felt the sadness hanging in the air and instinctually clung to him for his last few days in the village.

It was a novel feeling.

For a man who didn't know much about familial love like this, the kind that came directly and was so outwardly manifested, this kind of lifestyle was something he appreciated greatly.

He loved his main body's mother, and he had respect for Dante Void, but when was he able to experience a life like this?

Once Dante left, it was simply impossible for Claire to provide him this experience while supporting them.

So Damien took his time. He received their love and gave his in return, cherishing those three days until they finally came to an end.

And on the fourth day, amidst a grand farewell celebration, he took his leave.

The time had come for a new adventure!

Once he left the village, Damien, or was it Alexander now...?...finally made his advent on this world.

He rushed through the environment with a wide smile on his face.

'This takes me back to the old days.'

It felt like his days in Apeiron, traveling with no real aim or idea of what was going on, only seeking fun and happiness.

'I still know nothing about this world. It'd be nice if I could use my main body's awareness, but something like that isn't possible.'

It could be considered the only real problem with making a separated Avatar.

Since he was technically an existence of his own, Alexander wouldn't be able to use any of Damien's power until he reached a certain level, which he was nowhere near at the moment.

'Then again, the journey would be boring if I could do everything so easily.'

The first thing he needed to do was find out about this world.

All he knew was the Brilliant Flame Empire, and even then, he had no idea where the capital was.

'I did hear there was an academy there. If it's anything like Apeiron's Zenith Academy, it'll be a good place for me to gather strength as fast as possible.'

Even the village knew the kind of power the Brilliant Flame Empire had.

Most secret realms and dungeons were under the control of the empire itself, so unless one had a verifiable identity, it was almost impossible to enter them.

'On top of that, I don't know what affinities this body has. An academy or sect would be the best way to get a real handle on how I should grow this Avatar.'

Damien had a relatively set path he wanted to follow, and all he had to do was follow it.

The first step, as mentioned countless times already, was information.

Damien stopped by every relatively large town and city he came across for that purpose.

He didn't have much money, but beast corpses were a great way to make it anywhere, so he naturally killed a few on his way.

And over the course of a few months of traveling like this, he was able to gain a good understanding of the world.

'So this is the Brilliant Flame Empire of Heiron. Luckily, this is a single-continent world, so the problem of having too much to do disappears pretty fast.'

The Sacred Continent had two great empires, the Brilliant Flame Empire and the Crystal Moon Empire. They split the continent almost perfectly in half with their influence, and they both had great power.

The continent itself was quite interesting. It was split into two extreme environments that the two empires were named after.

The southern half of the continent was cold and covered in snow, while the northern half was usually mild and had consistently hot weather.

Heiron was a decent world in its own right. Its greatest experts were late-stage 4th class experts, those on the cusp of the nine revolutions.

'There are most likely a few weak 1st or 2nd revolution masters in seclusion as well, but I won't be here long enough to concern myself with them.'

The Brilliant Flame Empire didn't permit the organization of separate forces like sects. They trained their geniuses in several academies, and after graduation, the people could either choose guilds under the jurisdiction of the Adventurer's Guild or become soldiers of the Empire.

There was also the path of a mercenary or rogue, but most didn't choose this route that wasn't very profitable.

Nevertheless, the Imperial Academy in the capital, which was directly managed by the Imperial Family and had access to almost every secret realm, dungeon, and prime resource in the world, was Damien's current goal.

'I shouldn't encounter many problems. The Emperor is relatively sane, so things like class segregation in the academy aren't too prevalent. Discrimination is pretty much impossible to avoid, but as long as commoners have the opportunity to enter the academy, I don't have to worry about anything else.'

Damien smiled to himself.

He was quite amused imagining himself getting into altercations with kids who were several decades younger than him.

'If they really have the ability to piss me off, that's a skill they should be proud of.'

Nevertheless, he didn't have much else to think about.

His current strength was around the same as an entry-level 3rd class, and from the experiments he performed during his journey, his growth potential was far greater than anyone else he'd seen.

The journey to the Imperial Academy would take another few months, but he had half a year left before the admissions period began.

'Since I have time to waste, I might as well explore what my soul was up to before I gained consciousness.'

He had trained as a hunter along with the men in his village. He had fighting techniques ingrained in his bones, and a unique method of mana utilization that was both primal and somewhat refined at the same time.

Damien was interested in all these mundane things, because it had been a long, long time since he was able to experience the mundane himself.

In a sense, these days at the beginning of his story as Alexander were a vacation for him.

And Damien, as a man who learned to cherish vacation days during his time on Earth, had absolutely no plans to waste it!

Chapter 1322 Avatar [3]

Alexander's days at the academy could be considered...lackluster.

Damien wasn't planning to attract attention to his Avatar. There would come a time when it needed to hide away from the universe until the time was right, and for that to be done properly, he couldn't be someone with a great reputation or impact.

The timeline was also something to be worried about.

Seeing just how many branching timelines existed in the painting of reality, Damien realized the dangers of influencing time before he was completely free of its grasp.

Therefore, he made sure to keep a low profile.

He didn't have many connections among the students, nor did the teachers particularly favor him.

He took part in the secret realm expeditions and dungeon clearings just like any other student, however, the results he got were nothing more than average.

That was the facade he put up.

Though, a facade was just that.

Anything Damien did solo, he did to the best of his capabilities, achieving results that were impossible for even the instructors.

And, as he grew more powerful, his connection to his main body grew as well. Slowly but surely, the prowess Damien possessed was reflected in Alexander, exponentially enhancing his growth speed.

After spending four years abusing the academy's resources and reaching the middle stages of 3rd class, he took his adventures to the rest of Heiron.

He explored the Volcanic Sea beyond the Brilliant Flame Empire and discovered the hidden society below, he killed the Magma Giant that controlled the massive volcanic ring below the sea and caused it to erupt so frequently, and even formed an accidental relationship with the Imperial Family when he ended up saving a few of their princes and princesses during one of his expeditions.

Once he felt there was nothing left for him in the Brilliant Flame Empire, he went south to the Crystalline Moon Empire and thoroughly reaped the rewards present all over the Sacred Continent.

It was amazing. The Hidden Moon Realm in the southern empire was majestic and contained a power of stars Damien didn't expect to feel in this body. Just as the north had the Magma Giant, the south had an Ice Phoenix that was the cause of the drastic weather difference and snowfall that covered the southern half of the continent.

However, Damien didn't kill that Ice Phoenix. Since he had a strong relationship with the 3000 Beast Mountain Range Ice Phoenix Clan, he instead spent 5 years with the beast, earning its trust and teaching it techniques so it could become a protector of the continent that raised this body.

And, as if it was fate, he naturally made acquaintances with the Crystalline Moon Imperial Family as well.

He was truly a princess magnet, but with his attitude, even the Emperors were aware their daughters had no chance.

It was a great time. He spent roughly two decades afterward refining his techniques and protecting the continent from dangers.

Both internal and external threats were quelled as the citizens of Heiron learned of the existence of the greater universe, but the identity of their hidden protector was a closely guarded secret known to only a select few.

Damien enjoyed the time. He wanted to stay in Heiron for a while longer and see how much he could accomplish without leaving this world, but as expected, that didn't suit his personality at all.

After another decade of pure training, he'd reached a level equivalent to the peak of 3rd class, just short of a Universe Baptism.

As for why it took him so long to reach that level, well the reasons were plentiful.

First off, Heiron didn't have a high mana concentration to support his training nor did it have a large beast population to promote growth.

Secondly, the talent of people in this era was extremely muted compared to Damien's generation. It was hard to see this speed as fast when so many reached 4th class below the age of 30 in the current era, but one had to remember how old the nine revolutions masters and Demigods of the universe were.

Even for those powerful characters, it took thousands of years to reach Divinity.

Rather, the current generation was the outlier. The war times and unique circumstances surrounding the universe during their era forced the universe to birth talents that were godly in comparison to their predecessors.

And finally, the third reason it took Alexander almost 50 years to reach the peak of 3rd class, and the simplest reason...

He didn't train in a law.

His body didn't have any law affinities, because his soul was not his own. He used all his mana to enhance his muscles and body, so his internal systems were practically god-like in comparison to any other practitioner:

However, because he was using mana to exclusively bring his physical state to the level he desired to be, it took a very long time to train.

It wasn't a problem. Damien gave himself more than enough leeway, and more than anything, once Alexander could use everything the main body possessed, there was no need for him to have a law specialization of his own.

Instead, it was more beneficial for his body to become monstrous.

With all that in mind, Damien practiced and did everything he could until his desires became too big to control.

It was time to leave Heiron and seek greater horizons.

He'd been living in his home village ever since he finished exploring the continent, and though the villagers and his parents knew there was a lot he was hiding from them, they accepted him wholeheartedly.

To train in this environment was a blessing Damien couldn't be more thankful for.

He had to leave, but he wasn't planning to leave this life's parents behind.

The only question was how they'd react, whether it be to the idea of thousands of years of life or the truth behind his identity.

Therefore, Damien hid the latter for now and decided to have that conversation at a later date, if ever.

He focused on the former, and after convincing them to take the Elixirs he'd prepared for this very purpose, he left on another journey.

He told them he was going to explore the world again, but that was just a lie to calm their hearts.

That day, he left the world altogether and began his advent in Grand Heavens Boundary.

He grew more and more powerful and had more and more experiences. He met more and more people until he became someone that quite a few would remember, to his chagrin.

Universe Baptism was, naturally, not available to him, but his strength continued to soar, and among those at his same level, he was indomitable.

Decades became centuries, and change became the norm.

Heiron disappeared from the Divine Realm one day as it was placed in the Sanctuary, and Alexander's parents were finally told the truth of his existence.

Unexpectedly, they reacted quite well.

Maybe it was because Alexander always treated them as real parents, or maybe it was because Alexander lacked a soul from the start and Damien's intervention was precisely what gave him life.

No matter what his true identity was, whether he was god or demon, he was the only son they had from start to finish, so they accepted him with open arms and listened to his story in wonder and worry.

Damien felt quite relieved when that matter was taken care of, and after making sure Alexander's parents wouldn't die until they wanted to, he went back to his usual activities in the universe, rising and rising.

It was a mundane existence, really. It was a far simpler life than what Damien led, and he realized why it was so difficult for regular practitioners to build their Legend and progress through the nine revolutions.

After all, even after all this time, he was still only in the late stages of fourth class.

And as he continued living this common life, preparing for the future...

...an unexpected encounter took place.

In a nameless secret realm somewhere in the Divine Realm, Damien met a group of men adventuring together with the same goal as everyone else, power.

However, these men...

'...haha, I never expected to see this.'

Luciel, Lucifer, Alucard, Commander Huo, and some others Damien didn't know.

They were young, nothing like the versions of them Damien had grown used to.

He smiled as he watched them from afar.

'Shall I take a little break...?' He thought to himself.

He knew he had a lot to do, but...

...he couldn't help but be curious about the stories of these people who would become great existences in the future.

Chapter 1323 Avatar [4]

The group composition was a bit strange.

Luciel, Lucifer, and the other two whom Damien didn't recognize were around his level, while Commander Huo and Alucard were already at the Supreme level, making one wonder why they were traveling together.

It was obvious Commander Huo and Alucard were caretakers for the rest, but the question was, "Why?"

All of them were of different races, sectors, and influences, so logically speaking, there was no reason for them to be traveling together.

However, they were, and that made Damien curious.

'I'll just follow them for now.'

He didn't want to attract too much attention as Alexander right now.

He was powerful, yes, but this power belonging to someone unknown would be even more suspicious to people like Luciel or Alucard who had high positions.

He definitely wanted to know what they were doing in a secret realm like this, but he didn't approach them needlessly.

After all, this was a labyrinth.

It was a place that constantly changed its shape and structure, filled with traps and beasts with great power, and an amount of treasure that was equivalent to the risk.

Even Alexander didn't know what lay at its center. Damien's spatial abilities didn't nearly manifest to the extent that he could ignore the restrictions of this place and perceive its entirety.

'The treasures I've found from just walking around randomly are already enough to create a small sect for myself. Why didn't a place like this exist in my era?'

He shrugged. He could probably guess why, but it didn't matter.

All the treasures he gained from his expedition thus far were sent to the Sanctuary, so they were probably being put to proper use.

'Speaking of, how does that even work?'

He began to wonder about it when he took Heiron. It was a world in a completely different time and space, and it wasn't something Damien should've ever had access to by logic.

He pondered how the Sanctuary truly functioned for a bit, but even this doubt was easy to clear from his main body's current position.

The Sanctuary was built in the Void. It was its own existence separated in every way from the main universe.

In fact, the only reason its time flowed at the same rate as the main universe was because it was tethered to Damien and used his soul as a basis.

With Damien's main body in the Void, outside the bounds of time and space, where was it supposed to root itself?

Naturally, it was still Damien's soul.

However, his strange circumstance provided the Sanctuary with a unique position.

It was now tethered to both the current era and the past, while being disconnected from both.

This allowed it to be unaffected by the laws of causality that prevented Damien from interfering too much in the past.

Maybe it was because Heiron never had much significance in the universe from the start, but the act of binding a world in the past and integrating it into a completely different spacetime didn't trigger the negatives Damien was expecting, and ever since then, he'd been testing the limits of his ability to interfere.

'To put it simply, it matters more about how much value the other party holds than what I do.'

If he saved an entire world fated for destruction, but none of its people had grand fates, the impact he left on the timeline wasn't enough for it to be considered interference.

The butterfly effect definitely existed, but on a universal scale, the butterfly of such a minor event, as long as it was truly a minor event, didn't mean anything.

Nevertheless, to interfere with the fates of those like Luciel, who would become integral to the universe in the future, was much more difficult.

'At most, I have a few tens of chances. I can't use them unnecessarily.'

Damien had no way of knowing what would happen when he used up all his "interference chances," but he didn't want to find out before he didn't need them anymore.

With that in mind, he kept following Lucile's group.

As he listened to their conversations, he learned more about their purpose, and funnily enough...

'...giving me this level of dirt for free should be criminal.'

He had a wide grin on his face.

Frankly, their personalities weren't much different from what he knew. They were much, much younger than their current selves, but they were still a few thousand years old at the very least.

Though, they were much more open than their wizened selves.

Damien, as an observer, learned some, with no better word to describe it, devious information about the few of them that would be of great use in the future.

It was fun.

Alucard and Commander Huo were practically at the end of their growth potential, so they were still the exact same, but seeing Luciel and Lucifer act freer, like true brothers without the problems of leadership plaguing them, was more than just entertaining.

They were also quite talented.

Damien realized he hadn't seen any of them really fight, even Alucard since he was undergoing Cosmic Rebirth during the great battle beyond the barrier of law.

This was a time when they could freely exert their strength when necessary, and he had to say...

'...the urge to fight them is crazy.'

At the end of the day, Alexander was still him. The experiences Alexander had before his memories awoke were Damien's experiences, experienced by his soul, not by any other.

Therefore, even the unaware Alexander possessed traits he did when he was young.

He was a battle maniac, an instinct that was still somewhat present, especially since he used his physical strength rather than laws.

Whenever a strong opponent appeared, Damien felt the rush of fighting them that he'd been lacking in his main body for a very long time.

Because unlike him, the current Alexander didn't have any responsibilities on his shoulders.

Even this labyrinth he'd entered for the sake of battle. It was quite notorious in the outside world for its powerful beasts, and for good reason.

The most common of them were 4th class, and they only got stronger as one went deeper.

Alucard and Luciel's group was approaching a point of no return already.

In earthen terms, they were nearing the "boss battle."

They fought and claimed treasures, laughed and protected each other's backs, and finally, they reached a set of massive stone doors separating this area from the rest of the labyrinth.

"This is a first," Luciel said, brushing his fingers across the etchings on the doors.

"Indeed, the rest of the labyrinth didn't have anything like doors. It was quite annoying, but if this is here, doesn't that mean we are nearing the end?" Lucifer continued.

The two of them looked to Alucard for answers, and he nodded to satisfy their curiosity.

"The owner of this labyrinth, or someone associated with him, should be beyond this door. Once you defeat them, you will attain 'that thing.'"

"...once we defeat him? You're not helping?" Lucifer asked again.

"Hahaha, us? Helping? Lucifer, weren't you planning to rid your clan of their reputation of being dull?" Commander Huo replied, laughing boisterously.

"Tch, it was worth trying."

Lucifer clicked his tongue, sulking somewhat as the others joined in and teased him.

They conversed for a few more minutes, making guesses as to what they were going to see and what kind of strategies they would use, before finally pushing open the door.

In the shadows behind them, Damien's eyes sparkled.

"This..."

He wasn't expecting to see one here.

Just like his first experience in a secret realm, all the way back on Apeiron, it was chained there, sealed beyond countless layers of debilitating barriers.

'...a Nox.'

Chapter 1324 Avatar [5]

"..."

The group was silent as they stared at it.

Unlike the weak Lesser Nox Damien and Rose faced back then, this one was a fully grown 4th class that had at least entered the nine revolutions at some point.

"I thought we drove them all out?" Luciel said icily.

"We did, but not all of them could be driven away," Alucard answered.

"The reason our party was put together like this was for the very purpose of hunting this Nox. Why are you still surprised?"

Luciel frowned.

"Regardless, this is strange. We had sufficient forces to push them back completely, so why is there one sealed here? It cannot be as simple as he needed to be sealed."

There was only a single Nox in a room large enough to be called an amphitheater.

He had the same ashen-grey skin as the rest, but his body was covered in strange archaic tattoos, concentric in design as if they were made for ritualistic purposes.

"We do not have much information on this being, however, it is certain he is not as simple as the ones we faced. He might even have connections to an Emperor."

"An Emperor?!"

The exclamation was shared by the entire younger half of the group.

Some of them had experienced the war while others were born near or after its end, but none of them had ever met an Emperor.

The Nox Emperors were elusive figures like that. While their identities were known, they never showed their faces, not even the Inhuman Emperor who was said to have an incredible thirst for blood.

"Regardless, all we need to do is kill, right? Funnily enough, that's my specialty."

Lucifer brought the atmosphere back to normal.

Right, they only came here to kill.

They didn't need to know why this Nox was sealed as long as they could kill him before the seal was released.

And so, they started moving for that purpose.

The two men who remained nameless to this moment stayed back to guard the entrance, Commander Huo stood on the other side of the room to prepare for any unforeseen circumstances, and with

Alucard's help, Luciel and Lucifer were able to get through the barriers and approach the Nox being directly.

'Hmm...'

Alexander watched their process with scrutinizing eyes.

At the end of the day, he was an Avatar, not an individual.

He acted autonomously outside the main body's direct control most of the time, but he was still Damien.

He had Damien's soul, he had Damien's memories, and he acted on Damien's orders.

So even in this era, there really wasn't anyone who had more experience with the Nox than he did, especially after his main body absorbed the memories of countless Lords and two Emperors.

The problem was that even he didn't know anything about the tattoos on this Nox's skin.

'The Nox were never a ritualistic people. No matter how I think about it, tattoos like that shouldn't be on the body of a Nox, at least not by their own volition.'

It was strange no matter how he thought about it.

'Especially considering the environment. This labyrinth, this room, the prospective existence of an "owner" that isn't this Nox...'

Alexander's expression hardened.

'It's not that the Nox is sealed here, it's that he was being used as a test subject.'

It was a trap.

BOOOOOOOOOOM!

As if it was waiting for that realization, a bloody explosion erupted from the Nox being and blanketed everything around it.

"Heuk...!"

"Kah!"

Lucifer and Luciel retreated rapidly under Alucard's protection and put their guards up, but they were already taken by surprise.

A claw ripped through the dust cloud and slashed Lucifer's chest.

A foot slammed into the ground, crushing it and sending a shockwave through the room that threw everyone back several steps at the very least.

"Finally...FINALLY!"

The Nox being's roar was booming to the extent of shattering glass. His eyes were red like blood as absolute hatred radiated from every bone in his body.

It had been several thousand years. He had been trapped here and tortured ruthlessly for all that time, and even in the current day, the experiments hadn't ended.

"Damn humans..."

That man, the one who captured him, was a maniac.

He never even made his goals clear. All he did was act as the perfect picture of brutality. He gained ecstasy from every moment of every day.

However, he didn't seem like one of those who fought against them.

Rather, he seemed like a traitor who had turned to their side.

An absolute psychopath like him was the perfect picture of a Nox despite being a human, and after enduring it for so long, how could this Nox being not feel seething rage towards anything and everything?

He didn't care about circumstances, he didn't care about the war or his people. All he wanted to do was kill.

And now, the perfect targets had come to him.

"All of you, become my sustenance, so when 'he' returns, I can return unto him what was done to me!"

Alucard stared at the being with narrowed eyes.

This power wasn't like a Nox. The mana radiating from that being's body wasn't the same inky black substance that the rest of his race used.

And his power...

'...they cannot handle him.'

Alucard stepped up personally to fight, and as his movements attracted the Nox's attention, Commander Huo moved as well.

BANG!

He attacked with a massive hammer disproportionate to the size of his body, slamming it down on the Nox's back.

However...

There was no movement.

The Nox didn't collapse or even seem to register the pain.

Instead, he merely turned around to look at the one who struck him.

"Too many pests..."

His mana raged, forcing Commander Huo to distance himself.

Unfortunately, that was the wrong decision.

In that single instant of freedom, the Nox being split his body into six clones.

Each of them had the same aura as he did and similar power, and without hesitation or any sense of reason in their eyes, they split and charged at each member of the party.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The battle began fiercely.

As Commander Huo and Alucard were forced to deal with two Nox copies each, the remaining two rushed at the weaker members and dominated combat against them.

Regardless of the power people like Lucifer or Luciel had, they weren't strong enough to cross the gap between a regular 4th class and the extreme peak.

It was difficult for them to even keep their lives.

They fought together as the other two did the same, and as they did their best to survive and hold off until one of their Supremes could come to their aid...

BOOM!

"AAAAAGH!"

An explosion rang out from behind them, followed by a guttural scream.

One of the two others was missing the entire lower half of his body, while the other was clutching the stump that remained in the place where his arm once was.

The mission already went wrong.

The Nox was supposed to be sealed and, more than anything else, this was supposed to be a learning experience for the younger experts who would one day stand at the head of the universe.

But looking at the current situation, those same younger experts weren't going to live past today.

Alucard and Commander Huo wouldn't be able to defeat their enemies fast enough to save them all.

No, perhaps even Luciel or Lucifer would be crippled terribly.

Alexander, who was watching from afar, frowned to himself.

'So, in the end, do I need to step in?'

He definitely didn't want to stand out, but...

His presence in this moment would definitely be less impactful on the timeline than the deaths or crippling of those two great figures!

Chapter 1325 Avatar [6]

It was partially Alexander's fault.

In the original timeline, Alexander didn't exist at all. In this labyrinth, those two unnamed men were meant to die, and while Luciel and Lucifer would experience loss and injury, they weren't supposed to get anywhere near a fatal wound.

This was because Alucard and Commander Huo had more than enough time to save the two of them after killing the clones that attacked them.

The two who died would have died regardless. They couldn't hold out for more than a minute against their opponent, so no matter who tried to save them, their fate was set in stone.

Even in a situation where Alexander stepped in and killed the enemy, they would have died in the near future due to some unavoidable circumstance or another.

Some people's fates were set in stone like that. Those kinds of fates were precisely what the Saint Emperor fought to change, but not even Damien's main body had the power to do so yet.

Still, in the original timeline, they should have lasted at least long enough for Luciel and Lucifer to find an opening to exploit and make distance, giving them a means of survival.

However, Alexander came to the labyrinth.

He hid his presence from them, but the so-called "owner of the labyrinth," who had full control over its every faculty, was more than aware of his presence.

He was an unknown variable, and to account for it, when the group arrived at the final room, he forcefully injected substances into the Nox being's body to raise his strength to an unprecedented level, making it so not just the younger experts, but also Alucard and Commander Huo had trouble dealing with him.

This wasn't a trial that could be overcome with just the help of fate, therefore, Alexander didn't waste any time jumping in and providing aid.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Lucifer and Luciel were holding out surprisingly well. Their combination of light and darkness was similar to when Ruyue and Elena combined Yin and Yang. The effects of their conjoined attack were far better than anything they could produce on their own.

They were handling the singular clone in front of them well enough to survive, but the problem was that another one was approaching from behind.

"Dammit!"

Lucifer yelled in frustration as he constructed a barrier behind them.

"How long can you hold?!"

"Not long. We're screwed," Luciel responded simply.

However, he still fought to his greatest capacity.

"Aaargh, whatever! If we die, we die fighting!"

They weren't kids with weak mentalities. Their characters might've been much less mysterious than they were in the current era, but they were bona fide experts in their own right.

So they fought.

Believing in the barrier Lucifer set up, they put all their attention on the clone before them, hoping to kill it before its twin arrived from the rear.

Unbeknownst to them, said clone would never arrive at all.

'A barrier, huh...isn't that better for me?'

Alexander grinned from the shadows as he realized his actions would be somewhat covered.

Before the second clone could make its move towards new targets once it finished the two unnamed men, he jumped out, his fist charged with extreme power as he punched out.

BOOOOOOOOOOM!

Shockwaves spread throughout the room. The floor cracked under the pressure of his feet as he pivoted and pushed even more force into his flying fist.

The Nox clone was struck directly on the jaw. His head snapped to the side with a "CRACK!" as his bones were shattered, and the rest of his body was forced to follow.

'It's troublesome. This guy has a crazy regenerative ability.'

Alexander watched it happen in real-time. The tattoos on the clone's body lit up, and the bloody red aura he possessed dug into his skin to heal him.

'It's a good thing he's split. If this is the regeneration of a clone, the true body would've been an absolute nightmare to kill.

Nevertheless, for Alexander, healing abilities were the least threatening thing in the world.

After all, he'd been practicing to negate exactly that.

Damien saw the future from the Void. He knew what stood at the end of Alexander's growth path, and to prepare for the day he could directly shatter Divinity, he first practiced shattering similar concepts like regeneration, or rather, immortality itself.

Since it was an Authority he himself possessed, he could study the concepts with his main body and transmit the knowledge to his Avatar to help with comprehension.

The lack of space and time in the Void made this incredibly convenient.

"Bastard, you think you've won, don't you?" Alexander said arrogantly.

The Nox clone was currently grinning with a haughty expression, as if begging Alexander to hit him again and see what happened.

Naturally, Alexander obliged.

"Allow me to show you something more terrifying than the guy who gave you these abilities."

He grabbed the Nox clone by both sides of his head and injected mana into his skull.

Through that mana, he showed the clone a vision.

It was an incomprehensible sight.

It was the sight of reality from outside the bounds of existence, precisely what his main body was currently looking at.lightsnovel

That sight...

Perhaps only Damien, and maybe the deceased Saint Emperor, were the only ones who could look at it and keep their minds intact.

The clone had no idea what he'd seen, but even trying to rationalize it a little bit was too much. His mind shattered into a million pieces, and the sentience he possessed was torn to shreds.

"Now then, I think you deserve a little beating."

A mindless Nox was far easier to deal with than an intelligent one.

With Alexander's fists, this kind of creature didn't stand any chance, no matter what its strength level was.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Fist after fist, kick after kick, struck that Nox being from every side. His body was thrown around like a rag doll as every single one of his bones was broken from head to toe.

The tattoos on his body flared up as they tried to heal him, however, Alexander's mana property suppressed that power and disallowed its existence.

"Regeneration" was not possible under his jurisdiction.

BOOM!

"How does that feel?"

Alexander grinned as he slammed the Nox clone's broken body into the ground.

"Well, I guess you wouldn't be able to answer regardless, so it's pointless to ask."

He raised his leg into the air and stomped down ferociously.

BOOOOOOM!

His foot crushed the Nox being's head and splattered black ink across the ground. The remaining force dug into the labyrinth itself and further cracked the already broken floor into dust.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

With a few more punches, the Nox being's body was completely obliterated.

'That's the only problem with prioritizing physical abilities.'

When it came to the Nox, he had to do a lot more work than a normal person to prevent their complete regeneration.

'Maybe I should train a law too. Considering this body's origins...maybe fire would be good?'

He shrugged and looked around.

'Ah, right, there was that situation.'

Alucard and Commander Huo were right about finished with their clones, however, Lucifer and Luciel were on their last leg.

'How annoying.'

If the two Supremes were just a second faster, they would've been able to equalize the situation, but that wasn't reality.

So Alexander, beyond any desire of his own, would have to truly show his presence.

Luciel and Lucifer's Nox clone slashed its claw out, breaking through every barrier they'd made thus far. bender

It continued forward uninhibited by their attacks as its tattoos healed every wound they left on its body, and as its blade-like fingers swept towards Lucifer, Luciel jumped in the way.

"LUCIEL!" Lucifer yelled anxiously.

"GAH!"

Luciel roared in pain as his skin was torn.

He was thrown back into his friend by the force, but even that was lucky.

If the claw touched Lucifer, who'd already taken a wound, he would have died. And if it was even an inch deeper into Luciel's chest, he would have died as well.

'Haa...'

Alexander sighed.

The timing was too coincidental, but he couldn't help it.

He stepped into the ground and pushed off. His body turned into a rocket, and his fist was propelled with absolute speed.

Before the Nox clone could reach the duo again, a flaming red man was in front of them.

"I really didn't want to interfere, so you better give me a proper reward for saving you."

With words that sounded more like those of a common street thug than a hero, he let loose the force in his arm.

And the Nox...

Well, it didn't need to be said what happened to him.

Chapter 1326 Avatar [7]

BOOOOOOOOOM!

As Alexander said before, the timing was perfect.

Perfectly against everything he wanted.

He stepped in and slammed into the Nox, throwing him back towards Alucard and Commander Huo.

At the same time, those two men finished off the Nox clones they were facing and turned around to rush towards the younger group to save them.

However, what they found was a Nox clone conveniently flying at their faces for them to kill!

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

The origin of those sounds didn't need to be mentioned.

Once the two of them understood the situation, they saved the questioning for later and directly destroyed the Nox clone with their combined strength, not giving it a single opportunity to counterattack.

And that was how the battle ended.

The four original members of the party regrouped, while Alexander stayed with his back leaned against the entrance wall.

It was clear they needed to mourn the loss of those two men who died, and while he wanted to use this moment to run away, Damien was clear on the personalities of these four.

The second he put on a mysterious facade, they'd use their information networks to dig up every tidbit recorded about him throughout the universe.

If people of their status took actions like that, those watching them would also become aware of Alexander's presence, and it would blow up into something beyond his control.

So he waited for them to finish dealing with personal matters and greet him.

Eventually, they did, with Alucard at the head.

"First and foremost, I am Alucard, an instructor from Hidden Death Valley. We sincerely thank you for your aid in this matter."

Alucard stepped up and gave a formal bow of respect towards a man he considered at his same level, suppressing his curiosity for now.

"Hmm..."

Alexander looked at each of them before turning his eyes back to Alucard.

In their eyes, he was scrutinizing them arrogantly, but in his mind...

'Wow...instructor, huh? Did this guy grow into his position insanely fast, or is he lying to me right now?'

According to what he knew, Alucard had been the leader of Hidden Death Valley for far longer than what he claimed, but that was beside the point.

'Oooh, wait...maybe he's here as an Avatar?'

Logically, it made much more sense.

"Ah, right. You can call me Alexander, and it's not a problem. I was just passing by."

His words were a bit strained, mainly due to the embarrassment of realizing he had sunken into thought while they were waiting for his response, but again, that was beside the point.

"Alexander...? I apologize if I come off as rude, but I haven't heard your name before. Are you perhaps from a different domain?"

As expected, Alucard was suspicious of his origins and strength.

The fact that he didn't show any reaction to the words "Hidden Death Valley" was also quite suspicious, since the reputation of their academy more than just preceded them.

"Considering your status, even if I was from a different domain, you would know me, no?" Alexander said with a slight smile.

"I understand your reason for probing me, but it isn't what you're thinking. I just prefer to keep my name hidden. Maybe you've heard the name Long Chen?"

As always, Damien used the name of his trusty friend who he hadn't seen for so long as cover!

He couldn't avoid the Dimensional Leaderboard. If he wanted to get stronger faster, its Mystic Realms and Challenge Gates were the perfect opportunity.

It was entirely possible for one to be registered on the leaderboard as a title instead of their true name, just as the Saint King was, but 99.99% of people didn't do this.

For one, the Dimensional Leaderboard was a way to get one's name recognized on a universal scale, which, in most cases, would give way to many paths that would otherwise be impossible to someone without status or reputation.

Secondly, there was no way to verify if one's accomplishments were truly theirs if they were registered under a false name, since the Dimensional Leaderboard didn't possess any sort of "account" system.

And thirdly, the most amusing reason, was that giving oneself a title was quite embarrassing.lightsnovel

To come to fame with a title one created personally and be forced to endure the shame of that act once one was known wasn't something anyone was willing to do.

One could imagine if Damien had to introduce himself to every new person as "Heaven's Wrath" or "Demon God" because that was how he presented himself when he was unknown to understand just an inkling of that embarrassment.

For Alexander, however, it was a matter of convenience. He didn't use something embarrassing like a title, but instead chose a pseudonym he could pass off as his own name.

This way, while he steadily climbed the rankings at a pace that didn't make him stand out, he had a way to back his identity in the case of a situation like this one.

Such was the benefit of being able to see the future!

Nevertheless, once "Long Chen" was mentioned, Alucard understood Alexander's intent and immediately checked the Dimensional Leaderboard ranking, reacting in surprise the next moment.

"To think there was someone of your caliber who went unnoticed for this long!" He exclaimed.

"It was intentional, so it's not that surprising," Alexander responded in a dull tone.

"Regardless, it is a ranking in the top 1000! If it wasn't for you being over the age restriction, I'm sure several people would have been searching for this 'Long Chen' by now."

Alexander smiled.

Yes, that was the perfect plan he came up with.

He steadily raided Mystic Realms and reaped rewards, but right before he reached a point where eyes would be directed at him, he went over the age of 500!

His name was etched into the Legacy Board, but it was barely visible amidst the countless names around the same position.

"I truly hope we can become friends, however, it seems you do not feel the same," Alucard continued with a wry smile.

"Indeed, I've been trying my best to hide myself, you know? If it wasn't for this extraneous situation, you wouldn't have seen a hint of me for a couple thousand more years."

"That is...oddly specific."

"Consider it a hint."

"A hint at...?"

"If I told you that, it wouldn't be a hint anymore, would it?"

As the two conversed, Luciel and Lucifer kept their eyes peeled as if they were trying to discover every little piece of information about this strange man that they could.

In reality, they were older than their strength gave them credit for.

They'd been alive since the previous Great War, and had even participated in it.

However, because of suspicions about the Nox's potential return, they purposefully suppressed their strength and chose not to increase their levels.

Because if the Nox truly came back, there needed to be strong people who could still fight on the frontlines, unlike the Demigods who were forced to sit still and watch as chaos ensued.

It was incredibly fascinating for them to find an existence like Alexander who they couldn't read, and Damien knew that as well.

To drive their curiosity just a bit more, to give them some motivation to become the figures he expected them to become, he intentionally veiled his aura in just the right amount of mystery.

Yet again, he was acting for the sake of his amusement.

But his conversation with Alucard still continued productively.

He managed to gain their favor, as well as a promise that his identity wouldn't be revealed or investigated.

And afterward, he agreed to join them on the rest of their expedition.

After all, while the Nox being was destroyed, his presence hinted at a far grander scheme.

Not just concerning the owner of the labyrinth, but also a potential experimental Nox force being created within the universe's bounds.

No matter what, it needed to be found and destroyed.

Even Damien agreed on this much.

Though, he wasn't that concerned.

Because while this was a problem in the current era, it wasn't prevalent at all in the future...

...or was it?

Chapter 1327 Avatar [8]

When he thought about it, he did see something similar when his main body first viewed the painting of reality.

The actions of the Bloodlock Clan.

Immortal Blood Asura was gone by that point, but he'd corrupted and enslaved a majority of Blood Asura Holy Land before the forced summoning, so the plan was carried out without his presence.

The countless innocents that were sacrificed to form an artificial Nox army were eventually released, and while the universe was somewhat prepared for it due to the information they received from Elyssia Bloodlock, they severely underestimated its scale.

There were billions of them at the very least. If one took the unsuccessful transformations into account, hundreds of billions were sacrificed for their creation.

Those artificial Nox caused great problems, and they were only dealt with by the conjoined effort of several dozens of universal influences, as well as a great deal of time.

The process of their defeat was irrelevant, since Alexander would eventually interfere in the future to minimize the damage they caused, but the research itself...

Wouldn't it have begun with something like this?

First, they needed to thoroughly understand the anatomy, physical qualities, ethereal qualities, and traits of the Nox. The next step was to do countless experiments to transfer those qualities to humans, such as what was being done in the Human Domain and Eden, and once they found some success in their formula, they could take it out of the concept phase and use it like they did in Blood Asura Holy Land.

If this was the first step of that process, if the notes of this researcher and many others just happened to survive through the extermination that was currently being carried out and were found by others who wished to succeed their cause...

Wouldn't obliterating those findings now crush the plan before it even started?

That was Damien's thought as he watched Alexander travel with the Alucard group to find and kill the owner of the labyrinth.

It was quite the interesting journey, and Alexander played a decently large role in the subjugation, which awarded him more favor from those in the group, however...

'I can't do much.'

The consequences were too severe.

The butterfly effect of something like that wouldn't just slightly change the future, but completely alter its trajectory.

Even Damien's journey would be inhibited, and if he altered events that gave him his current strength, it would harm the big picture.

It was a strange feeling, an unsettling one.

He had to sacrifice countless trillions of lives or more for the sake of saving a greater number in the future.

It gave him an understanding of what the Saint Emperor went through.

Because no matter how righteous he felt at this moment, no matter how much he wanted to take just the slightest action and save all those lives in the process, he couldn't.

It wasn't just planning for an ideal future, it was a matter of responsibility.

Damien had an oath to uphold, an oath that he would bring an end to the suffering future generations would have to endure.

Until he could wholly guarantee that this goal wouldn't be jeopardized by his actions, he couldn't do anything that could affect it.

So despite knowing that their subjugation didn't eradicate the root of the problem, he didn't say anything.

He bid farewell to the group after taking their communication talismans as a show of respect and left to move towards the ending that surpassed any one person.

'Should I calm my interference?'

It was a good idea. Unless he saw an event that would totally alter the course of the future he was planning for, Damien wouldn't move.

At least, for the most part.

There was one more thing he wanted to do before that, though.

Secretly, in the veil of the shadows, he traveled the universe for one purpose.

And that...

Well, it was a selfish one.

'I thought I could overlook it, but as I thought, it's annoying.'

He was currently in an era where Iris was being suppressed by countless things and targeted by lustful demons in human skin.lightsnovel

He didn't really care if she knew what he was doing, since he didn't do it for recognition in the first place.

He just wanted to blow off some steam by beating up those bastards who didn't know their place.

Several years were spent on that task. Alexander targeted specifically those who were plotting against her to promote their lustful intentions and made sure they'd never speak a word about him or even have thoughts about Iris in the future.

The rest, the ones who thought they were above using lowly schemes to grab her attention, were all Demigods already, so he didn't have the capacity to go after them, which was both fortunate and unfortunate at the same time.

But it was fine. His steps felt light as he finished up his minor revenge on those unsuspecting victims, and without any sort of heavy heart whatsoever, he hid himself away from the universe, somewhere in a secluded corner of the Divine Realm on a Dead Star nobody cared about.

bender

Alexander spent the next several thousand years like this.

He only occasionally left the confines of his star when the main body saw a reality-altering change in the timeline, and he helped those who needed to grow properly for the future's benefit.

He did accumulate something of a reputation due to his acts, but besides the time when he met Alucard and the rest, he never revealed his name, whether it be his true name or his alias.

Therefore, it was more the reputation of a "mysterious hidden expert" than the reputation of Alexander, Damien Void's Avatar.

Still, he had nearly 4000 years to himself after he stopped being active in the universe.

He had to find a way to spend this time, because even as Damien he'd never experienced thousands of years with his own body.

The experience of over a billion years of memories engraved in his soul, however, definitely helped.

His perception of time became blurred. Every few hundred years only felt like three or four years to him, and as he sunk into a period of constant training, his perception blurred even further.

He gained control over Fire Laws and engraved the affinity into his soul fragment, he practiced the Immortality Breaking Technique, as he called it, to perfection, and using his main body as support, studied his own convoluted Divinity until he found a way to shatter it.

It was an insane training method. What kind of sane person would ever think of experimenting on breaking their own Divinity?

But for Damien, it was the best course of action. His Divinity held a structure none could compete with. If he could break his own, didn't that mean nobody else could stand a chance?

That was the basis of his research, but he never actually found a way to shatter his own Divinity.

Or rather, he didn't have access to that method yet.

Perhaps once he truly controlled the Void, it would be possible, but at that point, would the concept of Divinity even matter?

Nevertheless, he grew and grew and grew. He reached a point where even Divinity was just a concept he had full understanding of, and subtly, while his Avatar grew in the past, his main body got closer to existence in the Void.

Alexander was now capable of exerting strength far above any Supreme despite not being a Demigod.

It was still unknown if an Avatar could pass that boundary without its own ego, but Damien still wanted to try.

Having two Divine bodies would be an absolute cheat code when he went to the Heavenly World.

But for now, it was rather inconvenient to make Alexander a Demigod, so he held off on trying.

Alexander's moment had come.

The war was in full swing, and the man known as "Damien Void" had finally entered existence.

His journey continued without any knowledge that there was a second version of himself hiding away in a distant world, and eventually, he had to go to No Return Pass, leaving the universe without its "fated hero" to make sure things didn't go horribly wrong.

The Judgement Order started their expedition in the Blood-Drenched Wilderness, and, as they activated the summoning circle in hopes of getting aid from a Demigod like Commander Huo...

"It's time."

...Alexander opened his eyes in a different world.

He harnessed the laws of space through the main body's abilities, and made his first appearance with a bang.

5000 years had passed.

It was now his turn to save the universe!

Chapter 1328 Avatar [9]

It was a shame.

Yes, it was an event where the Judgement Order was supposed to practically collapse, leaving no more than four members alive, and yes, Alexander's interference made sure a majority of them lived.

However, he couldn't save everyone.

The laws of causality didn't allow him to create a "perfect" timeline, because such a timeline would be nothing more than a dull existence without any semblance of reality.

Therefore, Alexander couldn't intervene as he pleased.

He had to wait for that signal.

That moment when Rose activated the array and summoned a helper.

The person who was originally meant to take that place wasn't reliable in the slightest. He was a member of the Angel Race named Deraphiel, someone who didn't have much presence in the universe.

He was a coward, and while he did manage to defeat Hans, he didn't do anything to the Hound Lord, which led to many more casualties within the universe before the Ancient Battlefield opened.

Deraphiel also forcefully demanded compensation for his work, which, in that atmosphere, drove a wedge between the Judgement Order and the Heavenly Clan, another detrimental move.

When considering that he was also barely able to save them and killed several of them through the collateral damage of the fight, his presence was truly a misfortune more than anything else.

So it was good that Alexander intervened, even if he couldn't save Xue Yue and the others.

The second he caught wind of that specific spatial turbulence he used the main body's abilities to connect himself to the portal.

His body manifested in Eien.

Looking around, he smiled as he saw the faces he hadn't seen in so long, but he was also well aware that, in their eyes, he wasn't "Damien Void."

He could easily see the anxiety on Rose's face. It wasn't hard to imagine what she was thinking.

"No, it's not that," he said, answering her doubts while trying his best to hide the tender emotions in his voice.

"I just took control for a bit. I don't know who your original target was, but I'm better than them anyway."

After all, that potential future no longer existed.

"WHO?!"

Hans finally reacted to his voice, snapping the Judgement Order out of their dazes.

"Who am I?" Alexander repeated.

The formation's light swirled madly and concentrated in the very center of the base camp, where the Nox's summoning formation was located.

"Didn't she just tell you?"

His shadow started to reveal itself to the crowd.

He grinned wildly, his gaze settled on Hans.

It was necessary. Because if he didn't have an expression like this, he wouldn't be able to hide the absolute rage in his eyes.

Regardless of whether he knew the details of the situation beforehand or not, he really couldn't stomach seeing his people being treated like this.

"I'm death."

He pressed his foot into the ground and shot forward with all his power.

He controlled his force so the man didn't die immediately, but even that was far greater than anything a mere Hans could understand or fight against.

BOOOOOOOOOOOM!

A terrifying rumbling resounded from several tens of kilometers away.

A dust cloud swept into the air.

"I know you have a lot of questions, but I can't really answer them, so..."

Alexander looked over towards where Hans had been thrown before turning back to the Judgement Order.

The majority of them were missing limbs. That majority was far outnumbered by the corpses on the ground.

And the blood painting all of their bodies...

His eyes turned cold.

"I'm going to make that guy experience everything he did to you."

BANG!

He was aiming to wrap things up as fast as possible, but he was absolutely going to make this Nox being suffer.

He reached Hans in a matter of nanoseconds, and within the next few of the same increment, he punched out hundreds and thousands of times, targeting every bone, muscle, and ligament in the Nox's body and crushing each and every one of them into dust.

'Ah, I should give him to them, shouldn't I...'

Revenge was great no matter how it was served, but it was far more satisfying to achieve it with one's own hands.

Within a minute, "something" crashed in the area before the Judgement Order.

When the dust cleared, that thing's identity became clear—

BANG!

—well, not so much anymore.

Alexander landed on top of Hans' crumpled body with so much force the impact dug a crater several hundred kilometers into the ground.

He and Hans disappeared into the darkness of that hole, but the sounds of their battle resounded so clearly it was a miracle they weren't projecting the sound.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

"AAAAAARGH!"

BANG!

"STOP!"

BANG!

"THIS!"

BANG!

"NOW!"

BOOOOOOOOOOM!

A black blur shot high into Eien's sky, a red one following soon after.

BANG!

Hans' body was slammed into the ground again, and Alexander once again followed.

However, this time, he didn't make such a powerful move.

He landed next to Hans and pushed his arm out.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

All four of Hans' extremities were torn from his body.

It was an injury even Nox regeneration couldn't heal.

He practiced just for this moment, you know?

"So...?"

Alexander looked around the Judgement Order group.

"Didn't you want revenge?"

They were immediately spurred into action by his words. As Alexander and a few of the others watched on, the majority of the Judgement Order went to torture Hans and give him the slowest, cruelest death imaginable.

"It's not over yet," Rose said, snapping Alexander out of his thoughts.

"We came here for him."

Her eyes went to the tent at the very back of the camp, the only area left standing after the previous clash.

"Ah, that guy?" He said.

"Don't you think there's a reason he never left his tent?"

He didn't grin due to the severity of the situation, but the amusement in his eyes couldn't be hidden.

"Come here."

He beckoned with his finger, and a figure came flying out of the tent.

"Introduce yourself."

He held a man by his throat. The man had the head of a dog and the strong bronze body of a pharaoh.

The aura of Divinity could be sensed obviously from him, but...

Why did he look so weak?

"What...are you?"

The Hound Lord, whose reputation preceded him in terrifying the masses, asked in an almost whimpering tone.

"Who am I?" Alexander said again, taking full control over the opportunity to look cool...

'...never mind. If I do that, the second they find out Alexander is my Avatar, it'll be over for me.'

"I don't feel like repeating myself, but you get the point. Just shut up and die."

"YOU CAN'T!"

"Oh, but I can."

Alexander gripped his fist, a motion mirroring Hans from a few moments ago.

CRASH!

The sound that echoed through the camp was not an expected one.

It was like glass shattering.

After 4000 years of training, not just regeneration or Immortality, but the very essence of Divinity could be shredded by his power.

"This is quite the useful skill," Alexander said nonchalantly.

"Ah, you must be curious..."

"Well, it's nothing much. I just shattered his Divinity."

...in the end, he couldn't stop himself from trying to act cool.

Hans was not dead, but he might as well have been. His death was only a matter of when the Judgement Order was finished enacting their revenge.

As for the Hound Lord, his body wrinkled and shrunk. He looked like someone who hadn't had a proper meal in decades.

Alexander had done his job splendidly, and the time to make a stunning exit had come.

The Judgement Order still had plenty of doubts against him, and while seeing his wives question him so suspiciously was definitely painful, it couldn't be helped.

He couldn't reveal his identity just yet.

So as they tried to understand his intentions, he could only say one thing.

"Well, let's just say the Judgement Order's biggest fan sends their regards."

He grinned, and before anyone could ask another question, he vanished.

There was still much more to do!

Chapter 1329 Avatar [10]

As the war continued, Alexander continued to show himself at the most critical moments.

He appeared on Beast Emperor Star to save the Judgement Order once again, used his power over Existence to heal Tian Yang and the Golden Dragon Emperor's Divinities, and much more.

He couldn't just concern himself with the Judgement Order.

He saved Fallen Star Holy Land, and saved Atticus and Aishia in the same event.

He went to the center of the Divine Realm and aided in the defense of Luxurion, taking care of most of the major threats that caused it to fall.

He saved the Judgement Order three more times, and while none of their main players were in trouble, he did manage to save a large number of their lower-level members.

In the process, he found out something interesting.

There was a man named "Beast" among them. He always wore a mask, and while he gained the trust of his teammates over time, he was still someone none of them knew the identity of.

But when Alexander saved him, it was a situation where that mask was torn off.

What lay underneath it was a mutilated and almost disgusting face that had endured countless tortures and horrors.

Yet, it was still a face Damien recognized, a face from the deepest recesses of his mind.

It was Ethan, the first friend he made on Apeiron.

After reading his memories, he saw just how tragic Ethan's life was after Damien left. His thirst for power led him to leave Apeiron behind and seek greater horizons, and while he was growing properly for almost a decade, he ran into great misfortune and was kidnapped by an evil sect.

There, he endured treatment worse than a slave, treatment that could only be compared to how the Nox handled Hassan for far too many years before the sect was eradicated by an enemy force.

When he escaped from that circumstance, he was forced to travel the universe alone, slowly regaining his humanity as the war got fiercer.

And when the Judgement Order was created as a Sanctuary for members of the younger generation, he joined without hesitation, feeling even more at home when he saw those familiar faces among them.

It was a tragic story, but luckily, he had found his way home.

It would only get better from here, especially now that Damien knew his identity.

Naturally, Damien healed the scars and wounds on Ethan's face before sending him to safety, and as he awaited the day they'd meet again face to face, he returned to his duties.

He participated in the subjugation of the artificial Nox force Blood Asura Holy Land created and the eradication of the Holy Land itself which followed, freed Qing Tan and Huo Fang from their imprisonment and led them to Yong An, and continued helping the universe continue on the right path.

Even Tephit's death was prevented, and he and Bai Yuxuan were returned to the Sanctuary to heal.

However, Damien wasn't a god. He couldn't save everyone.

Lucifer still died.

Just as Luciel sacrificed himself to protect him all those years back on the labyrinth, Lucifer stood in front of him this time and took the attack that would have killed him.

He lost his life for the sake of someone he considered far better than him, and while Damien wanted to change that fate, he found that even Alexander's interference couldn't do anything about it.

It was the same with Priscilla Adelaide.

According to the truths learned during her last moments, she and Rose were indeed of the same bloodline, and the Demon Sealing Pantheon was always meant to be passed onto the blood successor.

It was just assumed that there were no blood successors left in this world.

For the sake of the continuation of the pantheon and the event fate deemed monumental for Rose's growth, Alexander's interference was banned.

Quite literally as well.

As if to prevent his interference in any way, shape, or form, fate forced the events of the artificial Nox extermination to occur at the same time as that event, and he couldn't take his attention away from that raid, since it was far more integral in the grand scheme of things.

Pontius still died, and while nobody else was paying attention to them, another person died in the war.

His name was Thaddeus Church.

He was the Plague Lord's son, but he was different from his father. After traveling the universe with Aaliyah for over a decade, he found himself feeling things he didn't even know existed.

He loved that woman, an impossible love between enemies that couldn't be allowed to exist.

And fate seemed to oppose them as well.

They were constantly targeted by the Nox due to Thaddeus' betrayal, and during one of those attacks, he was forced to sacrifice himself for the sake of the woman he loved.

It was a tragic story, a story of a love that could never be realized. It was a story that was mirrored in countless relationships all across the universe, and while it went unnoticed by most, it would always be remembered by the only person who mattered.

War was not a good thing.

It was an obvious fact, but it had to be mentioned. In a place where honor and achievements were praised and war was seen as a place to gain these things quickly, it often went unnoticed how much suffering was hidden behind the rose-tinted goggles warriors viewed the concept through.

The common people went through hell, and on an individual scale, suffering was far more prevalent than honor.

One could talk about lives saved or righteousness, but it could never outweigh the tragedy.

Damien also knew that.

It was the burden he bore.

And he didn't shy away from it.

Even though nobody else saw Thaddeus' death, he did.

He led Aaliyah to the Judgement Order so she could hopefully find warmth to keep her sane.

He watched the common people's suffering from his place beyond reality, he watched the warriors who struggled and survived with all their strength to protect their families behind them, and he watched all the sights nobody else would ever see, so those who suffered would at least be remembered by one person.

Just as he told the Ancient Sovereign in days past, this was the duty of an observer.

To record their stories, so no matter how insignificant their existences seemed, they would never truly fade.

He didn't interfere too much using Alexander. He showed himself where he was necessary, but he didn't try to change things that shouldn't be changed.

Therefore, as the universal war was guided to the most realistic conclusion, he was left with only three things left to do.

The first of which being a meeting with an old friend.

He went to the Abyss for that purpose. He followed the guidance of his main body who could see all of reality from an outside perspective and reached a place no man had ever been able to reach without an invitation.

There, he met that man.

He didn't even have to explain himself.

The second Alexander appeared in the vicinity, he was greeted by the one he came to see.

Yong An stood there with a wide smile on his face and proclaimed as if he'd been waiting for this moment...

"I knew you didn't die."

Chapter 1330 Avatar [11]

"You knew?"

Alexander's eyes widened in surprise. It was less about Yong An's belief that he was alive, since most of his other associates felt the same, but how did he know Alexander was Damien?

"How could I not know? Did you forget where we are?"

"That..."

Damien smiled. The Abyss was definitely a fantastical force. If Yong An could read the nature of his soul fragment within Alexander's body, it meant he'd reached an unreal level.

"It seems you've gotten much stronger since the last time we met."

"That is natural, however, my growth cannot compare to yours in the slightest. Was death so beneficial?"

"Surprisingly, yes, but I'd prefer we don't joke about it."

Damien responded wryly. He was glad his friend could still act this sarcastic about a serious topic like that, but still, he didn't want to remember it more than he had to.

"Putting that aside," Yong An continued, noticing Alexander's awkward expression, "you must have a reason for visiting me this time, no?"

"Of course."

He did want to make personal visits, but there was a time and place for that.

The war would be over soon enough, and when that happened, he could take all the time in the world to relax and spend time with the people he forgot to cherish.

"I know you've already made contact with the Judgement Order, but I'm not here to talk about that this time."

Yong An's eyes widened. That was unexpected.

He didn't know what else Damien could possibly be talking about, but...

"The Saint Emperor is dead."

His heart skipped a beat.

"What did you just say?"

"I said the Saint Emperor is dead. I killed him."

"Wha—"

"I know it's confusing, but it's the truth."

Damien didn't explain anything about the battle.

By the current timeline, it hadn't happened yet, but because the Ancient Battlefield was disconnected from the lower universe, he could still talk about it.

The causality wouldn't be touched by something like that, since his actions here couldn't impact the Ancient Battlefield.

Yong An naturally had a load of questions about the event, but Damien did his best to avoid the ones he could while answering the ones he couldn't.

He had gained respect for the Saint Emperor, because he understood the Saint Emperor's actions.

However, Yong An was his friend.

Yong An was someone whose life was ruined by the Saint Emperor.

He was raised as a sacrifice so Damien could grow, so the plot could progress, and while the Saint Emperor might've had a just cause for doing so, his actions weren't just in the slightest.

Yong An's family had been destroyed, and his life was a torturous hell from childhood until the moment he faced Damien for the second time.

So no matter how Damien felt about the Saint Emperor, he couldn't let it be known.

The Saint Emperor had to be remembered as a villain.

That was the only way his desires could be realized.

It made Damien feel uncomfortable. He had all of the Saint Emperor's memories, so he was well aware of how the man felt while he took actions like he did with Yong An, but what did that matter?

No matter what he said, no matter how he tried to justify it, there was no way to redeem the Saint Emperor in the eyes of Yong An and the rest who suffered by his hand.

That conversation was difficult to have with all these complicated emotions filling his mind, but Damien eventually got to the end of it.

And when he did, he was finally able to get to the main point.

"Do you remember that day you told me about the 'curse' your race suffers from?" He said.

Yong An nodded. He remembered very well, and he was still suffering under its influence now.

"I can remove it."

Those were Damien's words.

"I can remove that curse and grant you freedom, so please use that freedom for me. I will take you and your people to the Heavenly World with me, and together, we can fight against the true cause of your race's misfortune."

This was his goal.

The Nox were an enemy force for the most part, but at this point, Yong An had gathered every one of them who was willing to change their ways.

His followers were people who could be redeemed, and Damien was absolutely willing to aid them in said redemption.

Yong An was naturally surprised by his suggestion, but...

Damien was his savior.

Damien was the one who offered him a chance at redemption in the first place, and it could be said that everything he had now stemmed from this man.

So was there even a question?

He held his hand out with a smile as if it was a foregone conclusion.

"I'm looking forward to our future cooperation."

Damien looked down at that hand with the same smile as he shook it.

"As am I."

Damien spent a decent amount of time with Yong An.

The two of them talked about many things, and Damien had a chance to explain what happened to him after the events of Al'Katra.

His story was mystifying, practically a thing of imagination, but the fact that it was all true made it even more unbelievable.

Even Yong An, who had developed a practically fanatic faith in Damien's strength after everything that happened, was baffled as their conversation continued.

"Are you not going to meet them?"

Yong An eventually addressed the elephant in the room, but Damien shook his head.

"Not in this body. I'm afraid I won't be able to hold myself back when I see them, and I'd rather have that reunion face to face."

It was a matter of selfishness more than anything else, but it was also for safety.

Causality was a complicated concept that couldn't be understood easily. Damien didn't know how his presence, his true presence, in their lives right now would affect them.

And more than anything else, because of how pivotal they were in the war effort, he couldn't influence their actions in a direction outside what they were naturally experiencing.

Yong An somewhat understood it. Well, he understood as much as he needed to.

"So, basically, you're going to use me to tell them."

"I'm glad you catch on quickly."

"Haa, this is going to be really annoying. You know they won't trust me easily, right?"

"Hmm..."

He wasn't wrong. His wives would already be skeptical since Yong An was a Nox, but they would be even more skeptical if he started saying things like "Damien is alive" without any sort of proof or evidence.

Too many Nox had tried to manipulate the universe's people for them to trust their race easily, even if they were the good kind like Yong An.

"Ah, how about this," he said.

His face turned redder than his hair.

Something only the girls would know, something that should have never seen the light of day ever again...

Damien definitely hesitated to say it, but it was the only way to show them he was truly back, even if he couldn't see them personally.

Because the only way for Yong An to know was if either they told him personally, or if Damien told him himself.

He took a deep breath and opened his mouth to speak.

"Next time you see them, tell them this..."

As Damien said what he wanted to say, Yong An's eyes widened into saucers.

He had a feeling.

He definitely...just heard something he was never supposed to hear.