

Void 1771

Chapter 1771 Return [3]

His body was moving before his mind finished processing it.

The surrounding environment changed and turned into an open field perfect for battle, and Damien's fist arrived in front of Dante Void.

BOOOOOOOOOOOM!

A huge outpouring of energy razed the realm, immediately turning it into a wasteland. It was a punch that guaranteed the death of the person it was aimed at.

Well, as long as that person was not Dante Void.

"Not the nicest way to greet your father, is it?"

Dante smiled wryly from the sky.

"My bad. A younger me would never forgive me if I didn't do this."

"Fair enough. Let's get it out of your system then."

The razed environment changed again. Rather than land, the two of them stood in the folds of space surrounded by the starry sky.

"I've also been wanting to see what level you've reached."

Damien grinned.

Frankly, he didn't have any hard feelings for his dad anymore. The grudges he held had been dispelled from the moment he learned that everything his father did was forced. Hell, how was Damien going to be mad at him for leaving when he ended up in a prison made by the Dark God himself to protect his family?

Obviously, Damien's rational mind won over the childish desire he had already lost.

Just...

After saying that he'd punch this guy for so many years, he couldn't just go back on it, could he?

This battle was just a way for them to break the ice between them so they could interact properly as father and son. With both of them being so hard-headed, it was the best method available.

Dante said he wanted to see what Damien could do, but that didn't mean he was going to stand still.

He instantly recognized that his son had moved them into an imaginary space and took control of it to make it best suit his abilities.

In the starry sky, Damien also once saw his abilities continuously enhanced. However, he didn't have that sort of benefit anymore. No matter where he was, his power would be the equal.

Equally dominating.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Damien immediately went to work attacking. He formed several suns and stars that collided with each other and created massive explosions of light and heat that rocked the framework of the simulated universe.

A wave of pure energy struck at Dante like lightning. In response, he merely smiled.

He raised his hand in the air and swished it in both directions.

The entire space changed. Several layers of dimension sublimated through the starry sky and isolated the energy wave from reality.

Damien found himself in a mirror dimension that was a far more sophisticated version of the mirror realm he once used as a domain.

Every inch of reality was a different dimension. If Damien tried to move, then he would be sucked into one after the other until his entire body was separated into multiple different realities.

Spatial cracks tore through the void, opening a path to a land between. Those were once objects that provoked great fear in those who came in contact with them. Their force was enough to rip anyone to shreds no matter what their skill level.

This kind of mechanism remained somewhat true in the Heavenly World as well. Normal spatial cracks couldn't inhibit Divinities, but a spatial practitioner with enough strength could create one that touched upon the barrier to the Void itself. It didn't need to be said why that was deadly.

Damien's mobility would have been effectively limited to a range of only a few meters if he were any other expert. However, he was not just any other expert.

He merely took a breath. When he exhaled, the imaginary space transformed and the effects of Dante's attack were completely dispelled.

"That's just unfair!" Dante complained with a smile.

"If that's what you feel, then do something about it."

"I already am."

The quip came surprisingly fast. Dante opened his hand and Damien immediately sensed the change in space. Once again, several rifts appeared, but they themselves were not an offensive maneuver.

Damien's eyes widened slightly.

'That's possible?'

What he saw coming out of those rifts was an interpolated form of his own energy. The energy he used to "create" through the laws of Existence had been repurposed.

Seeing Damien's expression change for the first time, Dante's grin widened.

"It's obvious that you've reached that place. Your strength has definitely surpassed mine. However, I saw it too, you know?"

Dante formed a ball of mana in his hand. At first glance, it looked like the same spatial mana that characterized Dante's power, but there was an entire universe contained within.

"It may be a little less than what you can do, but don't look down on me too much."

Dante accepted that his son had surpassed him from the moment he learned that Damien was the one who saved him from the Celestial Prison. Having several months after he awakened to cope with that and learn to be proud rather than ashamed was helpful. Now, Dante didn't mind being the weaker of them. He only wanted to be a good father to the child he was forced to abandon.

If the first step of that was to fight, then he wasn't going to hold back. He also wanted to show his son why he was once considered the strongest person in the cosmos.

The universe in Dante's hand expanded until it took the place of the imaginary world. Both he and Damien were enveloped by it, where life and light meant completely different things.

Damien marveled at the ability. Sure, he could do it too. That wasn't the point, though, was it?

Damien had always been a person who could never see others display the kind of talent he had.

He was always the one with the extremely powerful and esoteric abilities that left others unable to compete. These kinds of scenes were just normal if they came from him.

It was a completely separate matter if they came from someone else. He knew that Dante was strong. He acknowledged his father's talent long ago when he realized that Dante had also touched upon the peak of the Unrecorded.

But this...

'This isn't just touching upon it.'

Dante was able to "create" to an extreme level. For Damien to feel vitality from this universe meant that it was entirely possible for this place to exist on its own in reality.

This level of skill could only be displayed by a person who had done a great deal of research into the concepts of Existence.

'Only...'

Life could potentially exist in this universe, but it didn't.

It was as if Dante knew exactly what he needed to do to progress further, but there was something blocking his path.

Whatever the case, Damien would find out in detail soon enough.

After all, this fight wasn't close to over yet.

Dante summoned the universe to showcase his power, but in a sense, it was an attack in its own right.

Damien felt the pressure it put on him. This was the weight of an "Existence" controlled by someone else.

He had only ever felt this from the Dark God before. So, to encounter it in a non-hostile environment...

This was the best possible greeting that Damien could have ever hoped for.

Chapter 1772 Answers [1]

Dante and Damien both showcased the strength of the Existence they controlled, but the main fight took place in close combat.

Damie's young fantasy was not surpassing him or making him proud. It was the sole desire to put a fist to his face just one time. Damien could learn how to fight another user of his esoteric abilities from Dante as much as he wanted in the future. For now, he just wanted to satisfy that urge.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

They went blow for blow, fighting a fast battle that was also relatively slow.

They charged at each other, threw punches, and flew back as they received each other's force.

They were both trying considerably hard, but without killing intent, neither of them could really do any damage to the other.

Their bodies were both evolved to a level beyond what ordinary people were capable of. If their mana didn't passively regulate it, both of them would have weighed as much as stars.

It was looking like their battle would continue infinitely since they were in this imaginary world where they were relatively unreachable, but that was incorrect.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Damien's eyes widened as he peered through the energy around him. Dante's power really was like the starry sky. His energy was purely spatial, however, its ferocity mimicked the properties of so many other elements.

He was able to mimic all factors inside the universe, as he had understood how to create one himself.

Even for Damien, this kind of power was difficult to deal with.

Now, that didn't mean that Dante had a chance of winning here. However, unless Damien used cheap tactics by abusing Existence, this battle wasn't one he could easily win.

If Dante's goal was to say that he wasn't soft just because Damien was stronger, then he'd done more than succeed.

The grin on Damien's face, the pure spirit of battle flowing through his veins, wasn't something that could be roused so easily anymore.

That feeling of pride Damien had when he learned of who his father truly was back then, he was feeling it again.

Dante Void.

The man who had once united the entire Heavenly World, the man who reached Existence without any sort of external aid, and the man who made even the Dark God wary as he sensed the threat of that being before anyone else.

To be the father who sired a genius as amazing as Damien, he had to be substantially amazing himself.

The two of them were enjoying themselves in the moment. The battle turned into something of an exhibition of skill instead, where both of them tried to do something cooler than the other just for the sake of it.

In the first place, it was a meaningless battle. They gave it the meaning that they thought fit it best, and as they continued to trade blow after blow, the ice that separated them as estranged father and son who hadn't met for over a hundred years was shattered.

They both had smiles on their faces, and the lack of injuries on their bodies was quite telling. Both of them were of the mind to continue this for a few more hours so they could thoroughly enjoy it. Just the few minutes they'd been fighting already weren't enough. Unfortunately, their battle wouldn't be able to continue for too long.

After all, there was an invader in their imaginary world.

In this cosmos, there was only a single person who could walk through both Dante and Damien's power without fear.

"What do you two think you're doing?"

A voice cut through the simulated universe.

Dante and Damien were just about to clash again, but they both froze when they heard it. Their mana subconsciously reined itself in and every offensive force in the entire space was dispersed.

The two of them turned their heads to the source of that voice like robots.

There stood a woman there, glaring at them with eyes of death.

Two sound transmissions flitted between the two men as they resigned to fate.

"How did she get here?"

"I don't know, but we're fucked."

"Stop talking in your heads and come down here. Now."

"Yes, ma'am."

They both landed on the ground at the same time with their heads bowed. The imaginary space faded and they were returned to the family room.

Standing there with the power to somehow interfere with Existence itself despite not even knowing that it was a controllable force was Claire Ellowyn, the only person in the world who could make both of them quiet down in a single instant.

"Let me ask you again. What do you two think you're doing?"

The two of them glanced at each other, speaking with their eyes.

They needed to find a way out of this situation.

It hardly ever happened, but Claire was also someone who could get mad. She hid it well behind her calm exterior, but if she was given a reason, then she turned into a monster.

Neither of them wanted to face an angry Claire. But, neither of them wanted to be the one to calm her down.

"You say something!"

"No, you say something!"

...was the very logical conversation they had with their eyes, but Dante was the one who lost.

Damien hit him with a critical, "You're her husband. It's your job," which put the final nail in his coffin.

"Um..." Dante said, scratching his head.

"Father-son bonding?"

"Father-son bonding, huh. Are you going to say the same thing?"

'Me too?!'

Damien sighed wryly as he was forced to share the blame with his father.

"I mean, that's just how we are...?"

It was the wrong answer.

"Exactly! That's the problem!"

Claire stomped forward and grabbed their ears, pulling them out of the room with her.

"Why do you always have to be so bullheaded? Sit down at the table and have a conversation like normal people, you idiots!"

Dante just smiled wryly as if this was something he was used to.

Damien, on the other hand, was flabbergasted.

He had seen his mother angry before, but she never spoke like this. Her tone of voice was always somewhat bleak, which made him feel guilty for making her mad in the first place.

Her current method of chastising was filled with life. She was furious, sure, but there was an underlying happiness there that allowed her to speak freely in a way that Damien had never experienced.

'She's happy.'

Her husband was finally back, and her son was back as well. Her daughter was healthy and growing up well. Her broken family was whole again.

Claire was now happier than she'd ever been, so even as she nagged at Dante, she had a smile on her face.

It made Damien smile too.

'Yeah, this is why.'

His mother had only been able to recently gain a smile like that.

He wasn't fighting the Dark God for his own sake or just for something as vague as saving the world.

A smile like that, the smiles on his father's face, his mother's face, and his family's faces...

...they could only now be expressed so clearly.

And Damien wanted to do everything he could to protect them.

Chapter 1773 Answers [2]

Claire was really just going to find Dante since dinner was ready.

Dinner was something they were doing now that Dante was back. It started as a way for him to get closer to the family he had been taken from, but it had become a tradition that kept them all grounded in times of war.

Finding herself arriving in a random universe when she followed his presence to the family room was strange, but seeing Damien there was even stranger.

At first, she wanted to let them resolve their differences in whatever way they wanted. As long as they didn't actually harm each other, it was okay.

But they were taking too damn long!

Dinner was ready and everyone else had gathered. She couldn't let them hold everyone else up, could she?

They could talk it out like real men later.

She only acted mad because she knew how to exploit her advantages. Since they were both afraid of her, wasn't it the best way to bring them together? She almost wanted to smile when she saw them interacting, but she was forced to hold it in at least until they returned to the table.

Like that, Dante and Damien joined Serena, Hestia, Rose, and Claire for their dinner. Unfortunately, the rest of their family wasn't present, but most of them were already on their way back.

Damien had a short mental conversation with Rose where they greeted each other, but they could talk more later. Even Rose knew that Dante came first at a moment like this.

Still...

"I saw what you did in Arulion. It was pretty amazing to watch."

...that line caught her off-guard.

Right, Damien was operating there when she was.

Right...

'...I saw a certain name that I ignored because I thought it was a coincidence.'

Her eyes turned a shade colder for a second, but she hid it behind a wide smile.

'What did I do this time?'

Damien shivered.

'What did I do this time?'

Well, he would have to find out later.

But he got the sudden feeling that his life would become another degree harder quite soon.

Nevertheless, Damien heard about everything that was happening in the Heavenly World again through his family and told them that Arulion would also participate in the war effort.

There were a few hours of banter and food that was honestly better than he'd ever tasted. Granted, Damien hadn't had food in quite a long time.

When the dinner ended, Damien followed Dante to another room so they could finally talk.

"You said something about the Heavenly God Plane, right? What is that event?" Damien asked, starting the conversation.

He definitely wanted to start with something deeper than this. He wanted to know Dante's story and the answers to the questions about his father that he'd had for so long.

But, it was better to get current events out of the way first so they could spend more time on matters that needed to be focused on.

Dante nodded, understanding.

"It is mostly just as I said. The Heavenly God Plane will become corporeal in the coming days. Only Divinities are eligible to enter, but that is all Divinities who have access to this realm, which includes the Dark God's forces."

"They can enter it too? I thought they didn't have access to that plane."

"They don't. And, since you definitely killed them all when you got back, it seems even more improbable for them to be able to reach that place, right?" Dante said.

Damien nodded. That was indeed what he thought. "Unfortunately, that's not the case. Since they have a connection to our realm, it will invite them as well. It is an unbiased system, after all. As long as one is a Divinity, one has the opportunity to chase its benefits."

"Most people will immediately rush towards treasures. It is a chaotic event, but not one to be worried about. The main issue now that the Foreign Races are invited is the potential massacre of our strongest forces."

The Heavenly God Plane opening was really no different from any other secret realm opening. However, in the current situation, too many Gods and Demigods couldn't die. They were the most essential fighting force against the Dark God's armies, after all.

"You said that the energy there helps with ascension as well, right?"

Dante nodded in affirmation.

"If you stay there for a long enough period of time, then you will inevitably ascend. There is no doubt about it."

Damien didn't have much interest in secret realms anymore, but this case was special.

It could be so easily forgotten since he was already Unrecorded, but the universe still regarded him as a Demigod.

It was funny, right?

All of that about Edicts and ascension was inconsequential to him because Existence already brought him past it.

However, Damien encountered something odd.

He already had the keys to Nonexistence, but for some reason he couldn't use them.

As he looked at his soul, he found out why.

He still had the soul of a Demigod, but his Void Soul allowed him to carry the weight of Existence regardless.

If he wanted to add Nonexistence as well, however, then he needed to ascend to True Godhood and expand his soul space.

It wasn't like it would be hard for him to do so. Only, having the right environment was always important. A few months of effort could be transformed into only days, especially if the environment was as good as the Heavenly God Plane.

"I guess I have to participate too. When does it start?"

"Hmm...judging by the spatial chaos, anywhere between today and three days from now?" Dante responded.

"That's perfect."

Damien could get it out of the way before anything serious happened and focus on comprehending Nonexistence once he had properly unlocked the door. His fight with the Dark God was fated to take place when he achieved a level where both concepts were equal.

After all, the Dark God wanted to fight him when they were at the same level.

'It won't be a waste since I can also take care of the idiots he sends. Rather than taking measures so that the fewest number possible die, I can preserve all of our Divine forces in a single move and instill some more loyalty in them while I'm at it.'

There was no reason for him to miss it.

Letting others chase treasures and gain the benefits of that realm also meant that the Heavenly World's fighting power would increase.

'Huu...'

Damien closed his eyes for a moment.

He could see the end of this road already.

All he needed to do was walk it.

And with that knowledge in his mind, he put aside the Heavenly God Plane's matters to focus on something he actually had an interest in.

The mood changed a little, so Dante also seemed to know what was coming.

Damien asked without hesitation. He knew that his father wanted to tell him the story just as much as he wanted to hear it.

"What happened to you?"

Dante Void, a tragic hero.

His tale was one that truly deserved to go down in history.

Chapter 1774 Answers [3]

Most of it had already been said.

Dante was born in the Heavenly World and fought it in order to gain talent and become great. He eventually did, establishing Void Palace and becoming one of the strongest people in the world.

When he was at his best, his enemies targeted him and his family and forced him to run.

Well, that was what others thought. Otherwise, there wasn't a way for him to find a way to the lower universe to bring Damien into existence.

"I died back then."

Damien raised an eyebrow. It was something that would floor anyone else, but Damien had also died so it didn't hit him as hard.

"Damien, have you heard of the Firmament Board?"

Damien shook his head. This was obviously not going to be a story about Dante's life, but he was going to let his father speak anyway.

"One day, you will sense it. For the rest of us, it was the moment when we truly became Unrecorded, but as you have attained that level before Godhood, you must not have felt its call yet."

Another mechanic of the universe?

Damien didn't think there was anything else he didn't know about the world. As he had even scanned it with his Existence when he returned, he thought that everything was within his expectations.

Even the matter of the Heavenly God Plane was something he already knew about. Dante's explanation merely gave him more information on it. However, clearly, the Firmament Board was something different.

It was something that was beyond "Existence" alone.

Dante summoned another energy. Only two other people in this world knew that it existed, and that number had now become three.

"The Firmament Board is the reason why I have lived until today. In essence, it is nothing more than another form of the universe's acknowledgement. If you can gain its attention and carve your name onto its surface, then you will officially surpass the bounds of the known power scale. It is what gave me the ability to sense Existence, and more importantly, it granted me a gift."

Dante summoned another energy. Only two other people in this world knew that it existed, and that number had now become three.

"This is the energy of Boundless Samsara."

Damien's eyes widened in true surprise when he sensed the contents of that energy.

It was perfect. It was an exact representation of life and death. Damien felt clearly from that energy the same thing he felt when he was facing the Wheel of Samsara itself.

"This physique is not something that should be possible," Dante said, his eyes hardening.

"It is a physique that makes me immortal."

True immortality was not possible for anyone. Damien did not have a lifespan anymore, as he controlled Existence. Hypothetically, as long as the True Void Universe existed, he could constantly return his existence into being. However, nobody else was truly immortal. Gods could be killed, and if they weren't killed, then they'd eventually die even if it took trillions of years.

Damien was a unique case. He never worried about immortality as a curse, but it was indeed his curse if it was something he had to possess alone.

It had always been his goal to make everyone he loved immortal as well. As he always said, he didn't want to stand at the peak alone.

To find out that Dante was also immortal...

He was a little happy, but mainly just confused.

"If you're immortal, how did you die?"

It was an easy question to answer when the previously shown energy was taken into account, but Damien asked regardless.

"You're funny," Dante responded with a smile.

"It's as you think. If I ever die, then I will be reincarnated. I live with only an instinct to train until 4th class and then regain my memories of the past. I died thirty-nine times in the Heavenly World before I

was reborn in Grand Heavens Boundary. There, I spent almost the same amount of time as the Saint Emperor you know." A mention of the Saint Emperor at this time was not something Damien expected.

"That means...you were in Grand Heavens Boundary near the inception of the Nox?"

Dante nodded.

"They were created to hunt me, in the first place. Their goal only changed after I was located and the Gods of the Straea Clan found me."

"Wow..."

None of the memories Damien consumed said anything about that.

'That means it was like that only at the very beginning of the universe's timeline.'

At a time when even the universe itself did not have memories, Dante was there, struggling.

"It was around that time when Earth existed."

"Sorry?"

"Oh, I guess there's no way for you to know. The Earth you were born on was just a copy. I made that to mimic the world I was reborn on."

"Wha..."

"I mean, come on. Earth was a pretty normal place where people didn't even know that mana existed. It had a good run for a few billion years, but it was swallowed by its own sun a long time before you were born."

"I recreated the world later when I realized that your mother's soul had followed me to the lower universe. There, she was reborn and I was able to meet her again, and there, you were born."

Damien certainly didn't think he'd hear answers to questions he'd forgotten by now. The mysteries surrounding Earth, which was a far more mystical planet than it was ever meant to be, were all the doings of Dante Void.

As he continued to speak, Damien learned that the original Earth was pretty much the exact same as the new one. The only difference was, the legendary heroes of the Earth that Damien knew were all different faces of Dante.

The myths in their history were Dante's creations, made to resemble figures and places that existed in the Heavenly World and the greater Grand Heavens Boundary.

It was a place that was almost specifically made so that Damien could be born.

Obviously, the timeline didn't line up. It was caused by the same time difference that allowed Damien to have a younger sibling despite his father being captured eons ago.

The Heavenly World was a place where the time flow was never stable between regions until Serena aligned the time flows for the sake of her array. The lower universe, as a much smaller body that had an even more chaotic time flow, could never align with it.

As time passed, their flows separated further and further until a million years could be equated to only a few thousand.

How long was Dante's struggle? He moved from one to the other and back, experiencing millions upon millions of years in both places.

He was only focusing on the important parts, but beneath it all, Damien found a struggle even greater than his own, one that provoked immense respect.

The Heavenly God Battlefield, the Firmament Board, the secrets of the lower universe; Dante had spilled many secrets since he started talking.

But...

The latter two topics were left unfinished.

There was still more left to be said. Dante hadn't even told him why he brought up the Firmament Board yet.

The two matters had to be connected somehow.

And once Damien learned of that, his quest to reach the absolute peak would resume.

The key to everything was Dante Void.

So, for many reasons among which this one was just a small piece, Damien was very happy that his father was back.

Chapter 1775 Heavenly God Plane [1]

Dante continued to talk, expanding on what he had said before. However, his main point came back to one thing.

"Damien, the Firmament Board is your chance. As far as I have seen, it is entirely unique to our True Void Universe. I was only able to etch my family name onto its surface, which gave everyone related to that name a boost in talent. If you can put your full true name on there, you will attain something that the Dark God never can."

He mentioned it solely so Damien could prepare for its arrival. It would absolutely approach him soon, especially since he was already stronger than Dante.

When it did, if he could gain the most possible benefits, then his path would be secured.

The lower universe was no more. Damien couldn't access it, so it was a shame that its benefits couldn't be reaped by him.

Still, Dante didn't just talk about the lower universe so he could tell his story and explain how the Boundless Samsara Physique tied together his broken timeline.

He mentioned it because Damien didn't understand just how many legacies Dante had left there.

Many of them were for Damien's sake, but many more were there because he wanted to leave a remembrance from each life in the folds of reality.

If those legacy sites were properly utilized, then one could become a God within the lower universe before even ascending. It was a monstrous level of resources, techniques, and plenty of other things that could easily turn an ordinary person into a Divine.

However, as Dante knew how dangerous it was to leave such legacies in open places for anyone to find, they were all hidden in the deepest recesses of the universe.

Grand Heavens Boundary was gone. It had been destroyed by the tests of time. Damien could only save the worlds within and have his Sanctuary's Universal Core devour the one that wanted to die.

He couldn't save the universe itself.

When he told Dante this, he thought it would elicit disappointment, as all of his hard work had been destroyed.

But Dante didn't respond like that at all.

"Do you think I didn't prepare for such a situation? Every legacy of mine is connected directly to the Universal Core. If it is as you say and your own Universal Core devoured that one, then they will all be present in your personal Sanctuary as I left them."

It was a bit nonsensical to be so thorough, but only when the universe one lived in wasn't always on the verge of destruction.

Grand Heavens Boundary was the last part of the lower universe that still existed. It was the literal boundary between the lower universe and the Heavenly World. If Dante existed there since it was still a part of a larger universe, then he would have been aware of its eventual fate from long ago.

Damien didn't ask him why he didn't do anything about it. Even back then, Dante had lived for a period of time that would turn anyone else insane. He wasn't of the mind to solve other people's problems. He was too busy preparing for a return to the Heavenly World and creating a path for his son to walk.

How was he supposed to know that the Dark God had prepared for him?

It truly was unfortunate. If things went a little differently for Dante, then he would be standing in the position that Damien currently held.

He didn't mind, since it was his son who surpassed him, but it was still a shame.

Nevertheless, Damien could sense Dante's subtle desire to live vicariously through him.

He wasn't put off by it. Rather, from his childhood, he always wanted to make his father proud.

That emotion turned into a burning desire to surpass him when it was tainted by malice. Now that he and Dante had made up, it was able to return to its original form.

Damien wanted to show Dante the future that was robbed of him.

'The Heavenly God Plane comes first, and the Firmament Board comes second.'

It was enough to be a clear game plan. Damien spoke with his father for a while longer. They went from serious topics into more casual conversation as they closed the gap of a hundred years that stood between them.

They didn't have a hard time at all. Dante and Damien were already pretty similar people. Damien grew up to be the spitting image of his father. Without hostility and with joint effort they connected over many things.

When Damien left that room, he had a smile on his face.

He understood why his mother looked so happy. The feeling of having a complete family after years and years of being apart or separated by circumstances was unreal. Even Damien, who was becoming more indifferent to his humanity, was reveling in its warmth.

He was definitely glad to be home. He was even more excited for August to visit.

'Speaking of... I guess the Holy Dragons became fodder.'

It was a bit unfortunate, but if they followed Rose to the palace, then that was their only fate.

After all, this was a place that was ruled by an Unrecorded. No matter how Supreme they were, what could they do against Dante?

If he pulled out a universe like the one he showed Damien, then they had to have died in a single instant. That kind of pressure couldn't be resisted unless one had control over one's own "Existence."

There was a bit of disappointment in Damien's mind when he realized that they'd just vanished, but what could he do about it?

They died when August was still fighting for the crown. They died with their existences wiped from this world, so the news didn't even reach the clans they supported.

'Well, it was going to happen anyway. The Fate in Arulion was recaptured by the crown when the artifacts were taken out of the realm, so their lifespans were doomed to end.'

That was why Damien knew they would chase the artifacts to the palace despite the risks.

They chased life with such ferocity that they ran right into the jaws of death.

The only disappointing thing was that August wouldn't have any Holy Dragons to use as training dummies, but Damien could find a solution to that problem if he needed to.

Putting all of that aside, Damien returned to his own abode where Rose was waiting for him with her arms crossed.

"So, August Void, huh."

Those were the first words he heard.

He smiled wryly.

Right, there was that.

His wives didn't know that he now had a son.

As for how he would explain it...

...well, it was simple, right?

It was, but it took a lot of time.

Damien wasn't the same young guy anymore. He was more than content with what he had, so the chance of him coming back with a new wife was nonexistent at this point.

Rose didn't doubt him. She knew it well. Just...it was definitely something she needed to know, wasn't it?

She sat Damien down and heard the whole story about what happened in Arulion.

She definitely nagged him about August, but rather than criticism, it was more along the lines of...

"Why didn't you bring him home? Are you telling me he doesn't even know that you're married?!"

Damien did mention his wives to his son, but it was always in passing so...

'...I don't really know if August knows they exist?'

Rose was certainly pissed about that specific aspect.

But, it seemed like most of her feelings were directed elsewhere.

By the time they finished talking, she was already staring at him intently.

"...what is it?" Damien asked as he sensed something off.

"No more delaying," Rose responded without giving him a chance to say anything else.

"We're making a baby."

Chapter 1776 Heavenly God Plane [2]

It hadn't been that long since Damien last saw his wives when looked at from their perspective.

Sure, he spent ten years raising August and whatnot, but in the original time flow, only a little bit of time had passed since Damien and his family took a break from the world to enjoy their time together.

However, when it came to having a child, Damien was always hesitant.

There were several factors influencing his decision to wait.

First off, the state of the world.

It was too chaotic on a large scale to selfishly bring a child into this world. To be raised in an era of chaos could be a boon for some, but Damien wanted his children to experience peace.

Secondly, his own state.

As he was too busy dealing with the fate of the world, he barely even had time to spend with his wives. They were all pursuing their own ambitions at the moment, so he couldn't even see them when he returned.

If any of them had a child, then the rest would obviously want the same. Not only would this put a halt to the things they worked so hard on, but wouldn't it leave his children with an absentee father?

He wanted to be in their lives supporting them. He didn't want to be a father that they only saw every few months or years.

He could go on to a third, fourth, or even fifth reason, but they didn't matter. These two were enough to solidify his decision to wait and have children after everything had been solved.

It was definitely respectable. Rose wasn't going to force him into having a child that he couldn't also enjoy raising.

However, he had to think about it from her perspective as well.

She had been with him for over a hundred years at this point. All that time, she stood by his side and loved him without wanting anything in return.

Obviously, he loved her back just the same, but she was often the one who had to respect his wishes and put her own to the side as he was dealing with such important matters.

She understood his concern. She knew exactly why he was holding back.

But, she at least wanted him to consider it.

Gods took much longer than humans to give birth, as the baby needed to be supplied with mana and talent as well as the foundational elements of life. By the time that child was born, wouldn't Damien already have the time?

In the situation where that child never gained sentience, then wasn't it the same whether they had one or not?

Regardless, if Damien lost, the True Void Universe would turn to ash and that child would never have to suffer the pain of losing its existence.

Rose wanted to carry that child. It was something she'd been dreaming about for a very long time.

Unlike the others, she only trained for the sake of it. Her real dream in life was ordinary. She wanted to stay at home, raise her kids, and live a life like the people she saw when she went to Earth for the first time.

Their small mundane lives were ideal to her. They were filled with a kind of beauty that she was never able to experience as the child of a royal clan.

Rose did take Damien hostage for the next few nights. Her urge to have a child wasn't the only one that went unsatisfied over all these years, after all.

However, she left the decision to him. She only wanted to put the thought in the head for him to seriously consider now that he was already experienced in fatherhood.

In essence, Rose was jealous. She wanted her and Damien's first parenting experience to happen together. More than that, she wanted his first child to be hers.

Obviously, when it came to biology, she could still hold that title. But she never wanted to exclude August, who was her son by default, from their family.

That held true even though she'd never actually met him before.

Damien was hoping that the Heavenly God Plane would open sooner rather than later, but as he sensed the changes in the world, he realized that it was still several days away.

As such, he spent the rest of his time with Rose. She told him about what Elena, Ruyue, and Iris were up to these days. She also let him know where they were so he could visit them when he was free.

It seemed that all of them were making unbelievable progress.

Iris had raised an influence with similar strength to a great clan in a matter of a decade.

Elena had chased her lineage to its core truths and was currently working on rebuilding the foundation of the Valkyrie Race in the Heavenly World.

Ruyue hadn't yet conquered her quest to find her emotions, but she had already started to see a miraculous change that she didn't think was possible. Slowly but surely, she found herself experiencing sensation in a different way than she had ever since she ascended to Divinity.

It had been ten years, so her progress didn't seem that great, but she was fighting against a binding vow of heaven. It wasn't an easy task to regain the emotions she sacrificed for power.

Damien wanted to see them all immediately, but he refrained. He only went to see Iris and spent a day with her.

As for Elena and Ruyue, he was planning to visit them after the Heavenly God Plane's matters. He didn't want to take their attention away from what they were doing quite yet.

After all, he was back now, and his Existence was affecting the Heavenly World.

He purely and utterly wished for their good fortune, so he knew the universe would respond and give them a fulfilling gift.

Damien learned a lot about Existence from Dante. Though he had a higher comprehension of the concept itself, Dante had been using it for longer so he knew some tips and tricks that helped Damien learn to experiment properly with the power he had.

The three nights were spent with Rose, but the daytime was occupied by Dante. He and Damien sparred, talked, and spent time together. They, who had always wanted to be a part of each other's lives, were making the most of this little respite.

Damien learned a lot about Existence from Dante. Though he had a higher comprehension of the concept itself, Dante had been using it for longer so he knew some tips and tricks that helped Damien learn to experiment properly with the power he had.

Basically, he fully prepared himself to ascend to Godhood in these three days, raising all of his abilities to their peak states.

The opening of the Heavenly God Plane was a big moment for the cosmos. It was rare for a secret realm to be specifically geared towards Divinities. When an opportunity like this appeared, all of them were rushing to take a hold of it.

There wasn't an "opening," per se. The Heavenly God Plane was a realm entirely disconnected from the plane that the cosmos resided on.

Instead, when that moment came, the Divinities in the True Void Universe and the Divinities in the Sacred Abyss that was connected at its hip received a sort of message.

It appeared in their minds, shining in golden light and sparkling as if it was made with fairy dust.

"Do you wish to enter the Heavenly God Plane?"

All they had to do was answer yes. Every single person who answered "Yes" to the prompt was promptly transported out of the Heavenly World.

Including our very own beloved protagonist, Damien Void.

Chapter 1777 Heavenly God Plane [3]

This event actually meant something to everyone except Damien, so it was beneficial to view it from their point of view as they raced and desperately chased treasures.

Unfortunately, since Damien was present, this event was going to be a short and uneventful one.

What was the Heavenly God Plane supposed to look like?

In its ethereal state, it more or less replicated the environment of the outside world. People who entered in different places could meet, but since it was harder to travel the further one got from one's soul, even Gods were limited to a specific area.

It was usually assumed that the world was generated depending on how large it needed to be. Unless one attempted to move away from one's physical body in that plane, it would remain a dark nothingness.

When the Divinities of the world found themselves in that place, they thought they would encounter an empty version of the Heavenly World, a sort of shadow of their home.

However, they were led wrong from the start. After all, the Heavenly God Plane was its own realm. It only mimicked the environment so Gods could battle in the place they decided as their battleground.

The Heavenly God Plane's appearance was important as it was a one-in-a-million chance to see this realm in its true form. And it lived up to every possible expectation.

It was a land where the air itself was a color of gold. It shined in a way that made everyone believe that it was truly Heavenly, and its scenery helped to further support that belief.

Huge, lush mountains floated in the sky, connected by bridges of vines and trees, a ground made of pure white clouds populated by creatures just as pure. There was an ocean as well, somehow. It flowed through the sky, twisting in the air as it separated into thousands of sky rivers that flowed into a waterfall that crashed off of the edge of the plane and into the great beyond.

It was a large area where even the great number of summoned Divinities didn't meet each other immediately. And, aside from its beautiful nature, there stood many remnants of a society that clearly didn't exist anymore. Perhaps through the traces they left in this realm, something about their story would be revealed.

Or, if that was too hard, just using Existence and scanning the place was enough.

'Wow, so someone really connected this place to the True Void Universe randomly.'

Damien raised a brow as he looked around.

He appeared at the top of the highest mountain, floating in the sky above everything else. As it turned out, this place was its own cosmos at some point. It met a natural end long ago, and some passing individual decided that it should be connected to this world.

'That should be a more surprising revelation.'

Though, Damien didn't feel that it was too crazy. After seeing someone like the Dark God who could use his cosmos as a vessel to invade others, he didn't think much about it.

Obviously, that man's intentions were curious, but if this had been a system for so long and nothing had happened, then did he have intentions at all?

Damien was more than familiar with the whims of an Unrecorded. He himself had spared and saved the 4 Evils who once served Straea because of the same kind of whim.

As such, he didn't remain curious about it for very long. In the end, his actions benefited the cosmos, so it didn't matter why he chose to act.

The society that lived here was an extremely magical one. It developed without studying the scientific aspects of the world and instead fully indulged in producing the same effects through magic alone.

They thrived for a very long time and fell as they were eventually fated to. If it wasn't for the individual that connected this realm with the True Void Universe, it would have experienced the same fate as Grand Heavens Boundary.

Eventually, all things would return to the Void. There was no question about that.

Damien appreciated their lives for a moment as he looked to see where everyone else had spawned.

Unfortunately, his wives weren't here, but he was planning to go see them soon anyway so he put that aside as well.

The Foreign Races and Heavenly World denizens were relatively separated at first. They appeared on two different sides of the realm as they were teleported from different places.

They would definitely clash. It was impossible for them to keep to themselves and focus on getting stronger, especially since the Foreign Races were literally mass-produced and didn't need to work to get stronger.

'I'll focus on myself first and let them use those guys as target practice. I just have to make sure they don't die, right?'

Damien could create new life, but reviving someone wasn't a possibility with his current abilities. In order to keep the Heavenly World's Divinities alive while he finished his ascension, he needed to do something a little more involved.

Damien created a clone of himself that separated from his body. It contained a portion of his consciousness and power and operated separately from his main body.

As he sat down and closed his eyes, the clone did the same. Only, while he was focusing on himself, the clone was splitting its attention and providing hidden shields for every single allied Divinity in the realm.

It wouldn't protect them from damage, nor would it protect them from injury. However, if a situation arose where they found themselves on the border of death, it would be assured that they would not die.

Such provisions allowed Damien to act freely.

He sunk into his own mind, claiming this mountaintop as his sanctuary, and began the process of ascension.

What was that process, by the way?

It had never been explicitly mentioned.

Ascending to Godhood was different from any other "rank up" that a practitioner experienced on their journey to power.

It only partially had to do with level, but after a certain point, it could be done at any time as long as one had the qualifications.

The first necessary factor was the complete control over one's element and the realization of one's Divinity.

Damien easily gained this qualification even though he had many more elements than anyone else. When he was acknowledged by Existence, all of the abilities on his status screen reached 100%.

His Divinity was that of a Hegemon God, so obviously he reached it at the same moment.

That left him with two more qualifications to fulfill.

The first was his Legend.

The ranks themselves were never clearly identified. The specific words used were determined by the individual. It was said that after five changes, one would be ready for Godhood, but Damien's Legend changed ten times before he felt that he'd attained what he needed.

His Legend was now called "Rising Sun," likely a reference to his status as a budding Emperor.

He was not far at all from becoming an Emperor above all.

The final qualification was something more vague.

It was a question.

"Are you worthy?"

Beneath its weight, no practitioner could lie or bloat their ego. They would be forced to answer honestly, not from their own standpoint, but from that of the universe itself.

This was the question that most could never answer. They could never look at the world from that perspective above the clouds and honestly say that they were worthy of more in their current state.

Eventually, they would devolve and devolve until ascension became impossible. That was the end of many people's journeys.

Damien, on the other hand, was not even questioned.

The cosmos snickered at the thought of posing that question to someone who had almost ascended it. The only reason Damien didn't have Godhood was because he never tried to get it.

Now that he was making an effort in that direction...

It came to him without question.

Within minutes of his arrival in the Heavenly God Plane, the golden energy around him started to swirl in a vortex around his body.

Really, was ascension supposed to be this easy?

Chapter 1778 Heavenly God Plane [4]

The energy in the Heavenly God Plane had been constantly enriched by the society that once called it their home. It turned golden to exemplify its purity. It became fog in the world as if to show others just how much it had grown. Their findings allowed their society to thrive in a way that many others couldn't. Death, disease, and destruction were problems they eliminated, but even then they faced extinction at some point.

The energy they left had become a ground for other practitioners to receive the final push that took them to a level they could never reach before.

In a sense, their efforts went to a good purpose.

Damien quite liked how it felt as it enveloped him. The energy was warm and inviting. It knew only peace and was never made familiar with the struggles of chaotic times, so it held an innocence that the mana Damien knew did not.

It poked at him warily like a curious animal. It sniffed him, became familiar with his aura, and lowered its guard to allow him to absorb it.

Ascension was only as grand a scene as one imagined it to be. The imagery in the world was for personal satisfaction only. It was a celebration of one's lifelong achievements, so it would naturally resemble one's personality in how it manifested.

Damien saw Godhood as something he only wanted to achieve out of necessity, so there wasn't anything like a grand scene around him. This was characteristic at this point, as even the scenes Damien created were too outside of perception to manifest in the folds of the world.

However, the internal change was massive.

His soul expanded greatly and became a universe of its own. His body shed all sense of mortality, becoming absolutely ethereal and untethered to the mortal plane.

He now truly could not die unless his existence itself was wiped from the fabric of reality along with any sort of memory or legacy of him that remained.

That set him apart from other Gods, sure, but was it really something that mattered at this point?

More importantly, as his mana changed and as his body became even purer, the empty space created in his Void Soul became a shade darker.

Nonexistence had found the space in his body to grow. It did not need to enter, as it had already placed a seed inside of him long ago.

That tiny blackness was enough. When Damien sat down with it and started actually understanding its unintelligible insanity, he would gain exactly what he hoped for.

The time for that, unfortunately, was not now.

It took over a day for Damien's ascension to end. Despite the process being quite streamlined, it took time to establish such powerful changes in the body of a single man.

He finished ascending to Godhood just as quietly as he began. The swirling energy calmed down, but it subtly clung to his body in respect.

He stood up and looked at his hands.

'I don't feel much different.'

Naturally, his power wasn't boosted. Nothing really happened at all. He just officially achieved a status that he already possessed.

The only thing of note was that there was now a place in his body to contain "Nothingness" itself.

How was he supposed to feel that?

The entire point of the concept was that it was absolutely nothing. It was the undefined. It was made up only of things that the human mind could not comprehend. Damien would need to put serious effort into comprehending it. From his rough estimate as someone who had just felt its presence in his body for the first time, he figured it would take at least some years.

When he got home, he needed to put the world's matters aside and focus on only this.

However, was that really possible?

'I'll have to find a way. The first step is obviously keeping these people safe.'

He looked upon the realm again and watched the race of greed. The Divinities already figured out that they were invincible for some reason and were using that benefit to aid them in their looting.

'It was meant to be used against the Foreign Races, but okay.'

Damien really didn't care what they did with it as long as they stood up properly for the real war.

If they didn't, then they'd die by the enemy's hands so that was also something he didn't have to worry about.

'For now...'

Damien gave another order.

And on a much smaller scale, it happened once again.

Every Foreign Being in the Heavenly God Plane was exterminated from existence.

The Heavenly World's Divinities were left to fight amongst themselves for the benefits of this realm.

'Well, that was easy.'

Damien accomplished everything he came here to do in that short period of time. Now, all that was left for him was to kick back and relax until he was sent back to his home cosmos.

And he did exactly that.

Atop that mountain where he was unreachable, he laid in the fields of energy and enjoyed the peaceful ambiance of this realm.

Things were going well. He'd reached a place where other Gods were meaningless in front of him, so he was confident in protecting the cosmos until the time came.

However...it was never that easy, was it?

There wasn't a single chance in hell that the Dark God would let Damien do whatever he wanted.

He learned that lesson once again the very moment he left the Heavenly God Plane.

It wasn't meant to be open for long in the first place. The Heavenly God Plane was technically connected to the True Void Universe to boost its fate and create a battlefield for Godly battles. Its appearance here truly was a rare and unplanned phenomenon. It was solved in a matter of days and returned from whence it came. Those who chased its benefits were thoroughly satisfied with their spoils, especially a certain Damien Void.

The next few days were spent in the same way. Damien would enjoy his life at home and occasionally wipe all of the Foreign Races off the face of the earth whenever they appeared.

But, that was bound to cause problems.

Just five days after the Heavenly God Plane closed, a... peculiar individual arrived at the palace gate.

He was dressed up nicely in the kind of tuxedo a butler would wear, and he had a monocle covering his eye as if he was some sort of old bank teller.

However, he didn't try to hide his identity as a Foreign Noble.

He was not someone Damien recognized, so he must have been created solely to make this visit.

And he didn't come with malicious intentions. Instead, the briefcase in his hand seemed to be filled with documents.

What kind of scene was this?

His appearance was definitely strange since his grey skin and exotic features were too different from the way he decided to dress. This was especially so for the people who experienced Earth, as this kind of clothing was specific to a single era of that world's history.

It must've been some kind of peace offering. An extension of a hand that wanted to seem relatable.

"I come in peace," the strange man told the gatekeepers who obviously didn't believe him.

"I would like to have a word with your Young Lord, Damien Void."

A mysterious visitor from the Sacred Abyss, one who claimed to be docile...

His arrival could never mean anything good.

Chapter 1779 Agreement [1]

He was granted entrance in the end.

Obviously, Damien was curious about what a man like him had been sent here for. The Dark God wasn't stupid. He knew that Damien could slaughter this envoy if he so chose, but the message he wanted to relay must have been something that needed to be handled with an official process like this, so it was worth listening to.

The envoy sat in an isolated meeting room in the palace reserved exclusively for untrustworthy guests. Damien sat on the chair across from him as he laid some documents on the table.

"I am presenting this to you in this manner so it is familiar to you."

The envoy spoke clearly. He made sure Damien knew that his attire and methods were only the way they were because the Dark God wanted him to know that he could read his past.

Damien wasn't fazed. Sure, it was difficult to get a read on where he had come from since Grand Heavens Boundary no longer existed in this cosmos, but it wasn't impossible.

It was a little bit concerning that the Dark God could find that kind of information in the folds of the True Void Universe's Existence, but it wouldn't be a problem anymore as long as he reached the same level and peered into the Sacred Abyss.

Damien didn't say anything, merely watching the envoy as if to tell him to continue.

A head of sweat dripped from the envoy's brow.

Frankly, he was terrified. He was created by the Dark God only recently but he had the memories of someone else who had existed for a long time. He knew clearly the threat that the man in front of him posed.

If he said a single wrong word or upset him, nothing could save him from extermination.

He looked at his position with woe, but as he was fiercely loyal to his Lord, he could not do anything but accept it silently.

"I have come with a message from our Lord. These papers are documents that you may read if you feel inclined that detail the offenses in question and the settlement we wish to reach."

The envoy forced himself to look into Damien's eyes as he spoke. It wasn't that he thought he deserved to stand equal to him, but that he had to look brave for the sake of his Lord's image.

Damien looked down at the papers for a moment before glancing back at the envoy with a bored expression on his face.

"Get to the point."

He could very well scan those documents and know exactly what the Dark God's intentions were, but he wanted to hear it from the person in front of him.

What was the point of him being here if he didn't do anything but tremble in fear?

"R-right!" The envoy said hastily.

He steeled himself again. It was hard to believe that Damien wasn't doing anything to make him feel this way, but it was the truth. The people of the Heavenly World could still look at him as the same Damien Void because they didn't know that he was the one behind the destruction of the Foreign Races.

On the other side, everyone knew him just as his people knew the Dark God. He was the terrifying force that could not be approached at any cost. Wasn't it natural for the envoy to feel such crippling fear?

Still, he was created with this sole purpose as the basis of his existence. Even under immense pressure, his core processes forced him to continue as if he were some kind of robot.

"Your mass destruction of our troops will not be tolerated. There is no point in a war like this. If you continue these rude and disgraceful actions, then we will be forced to respond in kind."

Damien raised a brow. Rude and disgraceful was surely an interesting way to phrase it. If he was fighting against actual common soldiers who had lived for years and trained for the war only to be exterminated by an untouchable entity, then he would understand,

That wasn't the case, was it? The Foreign Races that invaded the world were all just creations of the Dark God, souls that had been immortalized in his battalion.

Those who still lived, those like the Gehenna Tribe, did not fight for the Dark God. They were never given the chance to become powerful.

"Respond in kind, you say?" Damien said with a smirk.

"And how are you going to do that?"

He really was curious, but this was not a curious matter.

Suddenly, all of the envoy's fear vanished. The look in his eyes changed as his irises darkened into black blobs floating in a white void.

"I will intervene."

The voice was still the same one that Damien had been hearing thus far, but there was a familiar darkness oozing from the words.

"Can you intervene so freely in my domain?" Damien replied, his eyes now icier than the coldest parts of the world.

"That is for you to decide," the envoy replied with a sly smile.

"However, can you truly say that I cannot?"

He couldn't.

With everything the Dark God displayed until now, with all of the machinations he had in this world and the plots that spanned billions upon billions of years, Damien truly couldn't say that he didn't have the power to intervene.

If the Dark God started to respond with the same tactics Damien used, if he decided to mass exterminate each and every being that was under Damien's control...

'...then this world will also lose its soul.'

There would be nothing real left here but him.

The realization served as a reminder that the only reason the True Void Universe had a chance of survival was because of the Dark God's whims.

If he personally acted upon it from the start, then it would have been swallowed before Damien was ever born.

No matter how the situation changed, the most important thing was to keep the Dark God's attention on him, not the cosmos as a whole.

And it seemed that his actions had resulted in the opposite.

Damien frowned and crossed his arms.

"Fine, I concede."

They were words he didn't say often, but in this circumstance, he really had no other choice.

"I will keep my hands off of your people. However...!"

Damien looked the envoy, no, the Dark God directly in his eyes.

"Just as you stand behind them and control their every move, I will be allowed to do the same. I will cease my direct involvement in the war only if we both agree that we can still participate indirectly."

The Dark God raised a brow curiously.

"Oh? You wish to fight a battle of generals against me?"

His sticky smile widened as the expression on his face became convoluted.

"Very well. This will be fun, Damien Void."

The envoy's face started to melt. As his body was turned into a puddle of biological fluid, he extended his hand to the table.

The documents vanished, replaced by a single sheet of golden papyrus that outlined the terms of their contract.

Damien looked at it, paying no mind to the dying envoy.

"A battle of generals..."

As long as he signed that pact, he would not be able to directly aid his people anymore. They would once again have to struggle, but it would not be in vain for he would do everything within his means to help them get stronger and win.

The most important factor of that agreement was the same factor that had been most important from the start of this conflict.

Time.

With this, Damien could buy time.

And with that time...

'...I can win this war.'

Chapter 1780 Agreement [2]

Damien and the Dark God would both be disallowed from interfering in the war actively. This meant that other than each other, they were not allowed to fight anyone from the other side.

A binding vow to the Heavens meant nothing to either of them. The Heavens could not contain them anymore, so those vows were meant to be broken.

Between them, the pact had to be placed into the folds of both Existence and Nonexistence, ensuring that they would lose everything if they chose to disobey.

Damien didn't know why the Dark God was catering to him so much.

This was not the same as the Saint Emperor in the slightest.

That man catered to Damien first because he dreamed of taking the Void Physique for himself and later because he understood that his role was meant for Damien from the start. The Saint Emperor ended up entrusting Damien with his legacy, as he raised him for that purpose even when he himself was unaware.

The Dark God had no similarities to that man. He didn't care about the Void Physique. Hell, Damien doubted if he even knew of its Existence. It wasn't that he didn't have an interest in swallowing Damien, but it had nothing to do with his overarching plan.

Unlike the Saint Emperor, the time he put into this cosmos was inconsequential. This was just one of his many conquests that he was especially having fun with.

He was raising Damien because he wanted to see him suffer and fail. Those words he spoke when they first met made that part obvious.

Just...

The "why" of it all just didn't exist. Not from Damien's perspective, at least.

'I can't read his Existence yet.'

It was more of a problem than expected.

'But there are more important things to do now than worry about it.'

The Dark God could definitely just mass-produce Gods to wear down the Heavenly World's defenses, but he would not do that.

He wanted the entire world enveloped in war. From the common people to the Supremes, he would provide them with enemies so they could struggle for their lives.

'That doesn't mean we won't be overwhelmed by forces.'

They also needed a way to mass-produce Gods. A way that came naturally, not something like enslaving souls.

'Okay.'

Damien closed his eyes and reopened them. His mana etched itself into the piece of papyrus that proceeded to float in the air and meld into the folds of reality. The corpse liquid of the envoy vanished, and Damien stood up.

First things first, he had to inform his people about what happened.

And after that...

It was time for the general public to learn the truth about everything.

It happened just like that.

Damien informed his family about his deal with the Dark God and his exclusion from the war. Claire and Serena instantly went to work. As they were the ones who had been most involved in the palace's matters in recent times, they had also become its face.

It was better if they, Gods trusted by all as the strongest in the world, were the ones to break the news.

To learn that the world was going to end if they didn't win this war would be a fact that not many could rationalize. However, with the current state of the world and the people's loyalty to the palace, it wasn't a question if they'd rise to the occasion.

Damien entrusted such tasks to his family members. He would be there when the most important moment came, but until then, he had to focus on himself.

His personal growth was the most integral factor affecting the outcome of it all. Now that he had a sufficient opportunity, he was going to enter seclusion and train quietly.

In the meantime, he could send a clone into the world to manage the armies, allowing him to multitask efficiently.

The next few months or years would be very, very busy.

So, before everything started to spiral, Damien wanted to see his wives at least one more time.

Within the next week, Damien traveled across the world to meet his wives where they were.

He had already visited Iris and he'd been spending most of his time since coming back from Arulion with Rose. As such, he decided to visit Ruyue first.

She was the one he hadn't seen in the longest time. And, she was the one with the least definite path at the moment.

Ruyue was definitely stronger than the rest by a large margin now. But, without her emotions or feelings, she couldn't feel comfortable with herself.

Only when Damien was present did she find herself able to express anything. Being trapped in a cage of her own mind, forced to yearn for the emotions she once felt, she had suffered.

Originally, she was sent out for a different reason. Damien, knowing that she would be leaving the palace for the first time, guided her just slightly.

He convinced her to stay out, so when she finished dealing with the Straea Clan back then, she was able to go on a journey of self-discovery.

What did it lead to?

Well, there wasn't much for Ruyue to find. Her emotionless state allowed her to analyze herself more bluntly than ever before. She was able to perfectly categorize herself and gain control over her sense of self.

She was just looking for emotions.

She didn't know how. She was just experiencing life and hoping they'd return to her.

The path to fight against her curse was actually simple in the most difficult possible way.

All she had to do was become a being above the Heavens so the pact she signed with them would be nullified. Just...

Now that Ruyue also had to chase the undefined and become Unrecorded, she was lost.

She and Elena were the two who actually had a desire to reach that level. Iris was more than content with stopping as a Supreme God and Rose didn't care as long as her lifespan was secured.

Elena already had her path.

Whether she'd become Unrecorded or not depended entirely on her own effort, but if she kept moving the way she was, then with a little push from Damien she'd be able to touch upon the base of that level.

After all, Elena was an Empress now. She had found the remnants of the Valkyrie civilization from which her bloodline originated.

She found the traces of her parents, Gods of the past who did not have the same fortune as Damien's parents.

Rather, they were crippled and fell to the lower universe and had no possibility of regaining their power. They chose Earth as the appropriate world to leave their child after sensing Dante's presence there, but after exhausting their energy to do so, they lost their lives.

What they left behind was a hollow civilization. Elena had taken its mantle and was already working on reviving the Valkyrie bloodline through the gifts she attained in the ruins of the old Valkyrie world.

In the past months, she had been gathering descendants of the Valkyries and creating a kingdom of her own. Through her endeavors, she learned a lot about the administrative duties she usually left to others and the leadership ability she lacked.

She naturally became more powerful as well. Her bloodline finally had its opportunity to shine. Her advantages were less than Damien's, but having Divine parents and a strong lineage were very important factors that would contribute to her rise.

Ruyue...

Well, she wasn't alone.

Ruyue and Rose had the lowest status among Damien's wives in terms of ancestry. Rose's indifference to power made it a nonissue, but if Ruyue wanted to continue on a path to becoming Unrecorded, then she needed more than just the Xue Clan lineage and unique talent that took her this far.

Damien wanted to help not only her, but all of them on their individual paths as he once again left them for a long period.

And he knew exactly how he was going to do it.