

## Void 261

### Chapter 261 Generals [1]

The sudden change in weather naturally drew attention from those on the battlefield, and feeling the frightening destructive power contained within those clouds made even the strongest among them wary.

But not many had the leisure to watch the clouds for too long. Those normal geniuses were far too preoccupied with the mindless hoard that continued charging them without paying any heed to distractions.

As for Feng Qing'er and that mysterious girl, they weren't focused on the clouds either, rather, they were trying to find the source of the weather change.

The obvious scent of mana that riddled the storm made it clear that it wasn't formed naturally, and the color of the lightning even more so. They wanted to determine whether the attack was from friend or foe, but they didn't even have time to think before massive beams of black light fell to the ground.

With each beam, hundreds of abominations were annihilated. With tens of them striking down at the same time, the hoard of abominations was cut down to a frightening degree.

The captains surrounding Feng Qing'er and the mysterious girl were momentarily dazed. In that moment, bright orange flames lit up the otherwise dark atmosphere, descending upon the dazed captains.

Before they even had a chance to recover their wits, those 20 captains were bathed in a sea of flames. As if that wasn't enough damage already, Feng Qing'er never stopped sending out Phoenix phantoms and glimmering flame blades into the midst.

Even though these captains were bonafide 3rd class existences, how could they even show their faces in front of her? She was the Flame Queen, ranked 3rd in the entire 3000 Beast Mountain Range.

If bugs like them were qualified to even look at her feet, then she had done her reputation dirty.

The mysterious black-haired girl didn't miss the opportunity either. Sensing that the time to play around had finished, she sighed in dejection

"But I wanted 5 more minutes!" She said in an exasperated voice.

Much to the confusion of the captains who surrounded her, she lowered her blades and took a relaxed posture as if she was done fighting.

The captains moved as one, wanting to take their revenge on the girl who had been toying with them all this time, but as they moved, they felt a strange sense of incongruity with their bodies

They had moved forward, yet they didn't feel the impact of their feet hitting the ground. Looking down, they saw an odd yet terrifying sight.

Their bodies had indeed moved forward as they intended, it was just that their legs were still remaining where they once stood.

Thump!

A series of thumps soon followed as the upload bodies of those captains hit the ground. Only then did they finally realize they had been cut in half. But it was far too late to notice.

Just like that, 30 of the 50 captains present on the battlefield had been ruthlessly slain, and with the continuous effort of those geniuses as well as the support of the storm clouds above, the number of abominations had become negligible.

The once crowded battlefield had become surprisingly empty, and the atmosphere descended into silence. The citizens of Astoria could barely even fathom what was happening in front of their eyes.

All of a sudden, the trumpeting of elephants blasted away the silent atmosphere, causing everyone's attention to be drawn to the 4 palanquins that had remained silent even while their forces were being slaughtered. They were in formation, with one in the forefront and three others behind it.

From the foremost palanquin, a soft white hand brushed past the curtains, moving them to the side and revealing the scene within. And truly, it was breathtaking

A beautiful woman of seemingly Asian descent, her black hair flowing down her waist and her green eyes shining lightly. Her sitting position was relaxed and lazy, giving her a seductive air.

Her half-closed eyes brushed past the geniuses in front of her, stopping briefly on Feng Qing'er and that mysterious girl before once again returning to surveilling the surroundings. Yet, after a minute passed her face showed a disappointed expression.

"Hey~ such a beautiful woman is earnestly seeking you, yet you remain hidden? How uncourteous!"

Her voice was smooth and ethereal, causing some of those with weaker minds to fall into a daze. Feng Qing'er noticed this and made no move to hide the disgust evident on her face as she looked at them.

"Hahaha," a sudden bout of laughter rang out from the void. "Although I've never counted myself as someone who would reject the invitation of such a beautiful lady, I'm not a fan of picking thorny roses."

But despite his words, the man in question stepped out of the void and revealed himself to the world. His glistening black hair, those silver streaks within it, his shapely face and mystical eyes. His presence wasn't the slightest bit less stunning than the woman he was responding to.

But his eyes weren't looking at the woman as a person. No, any observant individual could see the sharp glint that was flashing through them.

"Oh my~ oh my~! I never expected you to be so handsome! Say, how about you come spend a night with this big sister?"

Uncaring of his demeanor, the woman continued flirtatiously.

The man smiled in response. "Indeed, spending a night with you sounds like a great idea. I have many questions that need answering, you see."

The woman's eyes suddenly lost a bit of their playfulness as he continued speaking.

"And what kind of questions might those be?"

"Ah, well I ran into some bugs on the way here and learned a few interesting facts. But as you know, bugs will be bugs. It might not be by much, but you're at least somewhat better than a bug, right? So I don't think it'd be a waste to ask you instead."

"What did you just say?" A cold killing intent unfitting of the personality the woman had previously been showing leaked from her body.

"Hm? Did I speak any lies? Bugs will be bugs regardless. And aren't you one of them? What is the use of putting up such pretenses anyway? You know as well as I do that today will be your death date."

A fierce grin crept up Damien's face. He had felt the urge to entertain this woman simply because of how different she was from any other Nox being he had met before.

They were all grotesque, and even though the captains were relatively humanoid, their features were still somewhat morphed. This woman, however, was truly a beauty. And he could tell very easily that it wasn't just some illusion.

But he didn't care about her beauty at all. Even when he met Ruyue for the first time, he hadn't been enthralled by her stunning beauty. Hell, he hadn't even noticed it until he consciously checked her out later.

And besides the aspect of beauty, there was no way Damien would be attracted to someone who had sold their soul to the Nox. The raging inky black mana around her was enough for him to confirm that.

And to him, a Nox was a Nox regardless of the form it took. From the start, he never saw a woman in front of him. The only thing he saw was a target.

A target that he wanted to interrogate properly before killing.

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Perhaps it was the words he spoke or perhaps the woman had seen the look in his eyes, but her facade immediately crumpled. The barely concealed killing intent from before suddenly bloomed to the point where even the elephantine mount she was riding was shivering in fear.

Fierce winds rushed from within the other three palanquins as their riders felt the woman's killing intent. Three equally handsome men with the exact same facial features were suddenly standing around her in a triangular formation.

"Do you understand who exactly you're messing with?" The woman's eery voice rang out. The killing intent around her had multiplied even further with the addition of the other three Generals, causing an intimidating air to permeate further into the atmosphere.

Feeling the pressure coming from the four Generals, the 25 geniuses who had been diligently fighting back the remains of the abomination army suddenly froze in fear.

Their bodies shuddered to the point where they couldn't even lift their heads. Any fighting spirit they had broke. If it wasn't for that mysterious girl's timely help, there was no doubt they would've been killed off without worry.

Even the elephantine beasts collapsed to the ground helplessly, signs of foam coming from their mouths.

"And is there any reason I shouldn't know?" Damien replied with a cocky grin. "Why should I give a shit about scum who sold themselves for a meager amount of power?"

"You...!" An enraged shout came from the woman. She no longer maintained her sitting posture, standing at her full height which was almost as tall as Damien and glaring at him heavily.

The thundering clouds above seemed to rage. Swirling winds and thick black lightning danced through the air. It was clear that a fight was on the cusp of breaking out.

Feng Qing'er watched the whole interaction from start to finish without even properly having the chance to speak. Whether it was the man who had just arrived or the ones within the palanquins, they all ignored the presence of all others.

But regardless of how much she paid attention to the conversation, she was still confused about its contents. She really couldn't figure out what was going on, but she understood that it was something greater than what she originally thought.

She couldn't be blamed though. Knowledge of the Nox wasn't a common thing in the first place, with only the stronger experts in the world knowing about it. Even at Damien's level, he wouldn't have been qualified to know this information if he was born and raised in the Cloud Plane.

But through a series of coincidences and fortuitous encounters, he had become deeply entrenched in the Nox conflict far before he had the qualifications to even utter their names.

Even then, he basically knew nothing. He knew of their existence, he had seen some of the activities of their followers, but he had only come into contact with the race itself one time.

And even that one time was in a controlled environment where the Nox was severely weakened.

Even disregarding the taboo-ish nature of the subject, with the 3000 Beast Mountain Range being a sealed area without contact with the outside world, how could they have any information at all?

The only ones Damien suspected had this kind of knowledge were the elves who resided under the World Tree, and perhaps the White Dragon King who was once a traveler from the outside world. But evidently, they had followed the same procedures in not sharing this information with those too weak to know it.

Feng Qing'er, who was clueless to all of this, probably wouldn't have cared either way. Her pride flared at the way she was being treated.

"Hey! Who do you think you are to ignore me?!" She yelled in fury. Her flaming gaze landed on Damien, who she still hadn't settled her score with.

A soft giggle rang out as another figure flashed into the air, appearing next to her. "Now, now. A fun thing is happening in front of you, why don't you just sit back and enjoy it?"



Looking at the two women, one known and the other a mystery, Damien smiled lightly. "Well, the short version is that they are scum. If you really want to know, think of them as a stronger variation of those abominations you fought earlier."

"Eh?" The unexpected answer took them by surprise. Feng Qing'er's gaze became strange when she looked towards the woman and three men standing on the enemy side.

But she didn't let any thoughts linger for too long. "Hmph! I'll accept it for now, but when this is over you have to tell me everything! If you don't, watch how I tear you to shreds!"

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The mysterious girl simply giggled once more, but from the way her aura flared, her position was obvious.

Three on one side and four on the other. Seeing how no more talk was necessary, Damien cracked his neck.

"I'll take on that woman. The other three shouldn't be too hard for the two of you, right?"

"Are you looking down on me?!" Feng Qing'er fumed.

Damien smiled, but his eyes were still as cold as ever. Looking at the woman once more, he spoke one final time.

"Joining hands with those scum and becoming one of their dogs is simply...COURTING DEATH!"

Giving himself a hearty laugh, he shot forward with intense speed, immediately crossing the distance between him and the Demon Generals.

Without hesitation, he shot his fist forward at the female demon general's face.

Boom!

The demon general raised her arm to block, but the force of the punch still managed to push her back. Still, she remained uninjured.

"You...you actually attacked me..." she muttered in disbelief. Suddenly, her arms shot up once again as another punch shot towards her face. But it was soon followed by a low uppercut to her stomach.

Bang!

The woman shot into the air, still dazed by the fact that she was being attacked. When was the last time she had been disrespected like this? When was the last time she had been hit?

Despite the fact that she was only a Demon General at the moment, even the Commanders didn't dare disrespect her too much. Her position within their ranks was already guaranteed as long as she had the chance to grow.

But now...now, some random guy wanted to abuse her like this? She suddenly broke out into a fit of laughter. It was a maniacal laughter that truly didn't fit her fairy-like appearance.

"Good! Good good good! Hahahaha!"

Raging black mana exploded forth from her body and transformed into thick tendrils of what looked like black flame.

"Let me show you the consequences of daring to attack me!"

Her body flashed forward like a black comet towards Damien's location. Her empty hand was now holding an inky black sickle made of the same mana that emanated from her body.

Damien raised his fist that crackling with black lightning and slightly distorting the surrounding space and punched out, meeting the sickle head-on. A ring-like shockwave rippled through the air and caused the winds to rip around.

Their clash seemed to signal the start of a massive battle of even greater proportion than when thousands had charged forth.

Feng Qing'er and the mysterious girl arrived before their targets as well. And even though they had been largely ignored so far, the other geniuses also acted.

Their combat power might not have been enough to participate in the battle in the sky, but there were still 20 odd demon captains on the ground with them. Not wanting to be dead weight, and wishing to make up for their humiliating cowering from before, they fervently attacked those captains.

The sky which had already started to dim with the setting sun was once again lit up by a series of explosions and colorful mana.

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Feng Qing'er arrived before her targets immediately, flames dancing at the soles of her feet and on the wings that sprouted from her back.

"Listen here. I'm not in a very good mood since those assholes want to treat me like I don't exist, so don't blame me if you get a little hurt, okay?"

With a brilliant smile that looked especially dangerous in the current situation, she shot forward.

A longsword had entered her hand at some point, making a smooth arc in the air as it chased the neck of one of the generals. As for the other, a similar sword made entirely of flames was flying at him as if it had a mind of its own.

Swish!

With the sound of air getting cut, the sword made impact. But Feng Qing'er wasn't able to feel the satisfying feeling of flesh being torn. Instead, a clash of metal was heard.

A black rapier blocked her sword easily, sliding down its blade and parrying it before thrusting towards her throat. With a flap of her wings, she shifted her body to the side and narrowly dodged.

"Ha!"

A spirited shout left her mouth as she swung her sword once more. Every time she struck, her blows were infused with unbridled power that seemed to want to crush a mountain.

But without suspense, her blows were parried. The rapier in the Demon General's hand moved with elegance and speed, eventually forcing Feng Qing'er to go on the defensive.

The cold and stoic face of the Demon General flashed imperceptibly before his speed increased.

By the time Feng Qing'er adapted to the change of pace, a sense of danger enveloped her.

"Shit!"

Her wings flapped and a burst of flames came from her soles. Her body shot up into the air, causing the massive axe that was trying to sever her from behind to impact nothing but air.

The two demon generals shot up in pursuit. The rapier and axe in their hands followed her movements precisely, making sure not to leave her any room to breathe.

Feng Qing'er swung her sword diligently. Her powerful strikes made it seem more like she was using a hammer than a sword.

She moved in spontaneous bursts, not allowing the two enemies to encircle her. With her flames supporting her on the side, she kept both targets in front of her, allowing her to maneuver the 2v1 situation with more ease.

But as time went on, Feng Qing'er realized her disadvantage. While her skill may have been slightly above theirs, they had more raw physical power than her.

But it couldn't be helped. Even if she followed the path of brute strength, her Phoenix clan wasn't known for its powerful body, but its mana instead. For this reason, the Primordial Undying Fruits that could grant her the physics body she desired were all the more valuable.

'If we continue like this, the battle will stay stalemated for too long.'

Spreading her awareness, she glanced at the other two battles and frowned. 'It'd be too embarrassing to finish after they do.'

Flames sprouted once again and propelled her backwards.

"Aiya, how could the two of you team up against a poor lady like me? Simply too shameless!"

Despite her words, there was a mocking expression on her face.

The stoic faces of the demon generals contorted for the first time as they sensed a foreboding feeling from below.

The earth cracked open and two pillars of blistering flames rushed into the air.

But her opponents weren't idiots either. In the split second it took for the flames to reach them, they had already erected inky black barriers around their bodies.

Skree!

The cry of a Phoenix resounded through the atmosphere. A phantom incomparable to the ones she had thrown at the abomination horde materialized in the air.

Its wings flapped gently as if painting a picture of elegance, but every time they completed the motion, a hail of feathers fell from the sky.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The barriers of the Demon Generals were barraged incessantly by the flaming feathers. Each one seemed to carry the force of a cannon ball.

Explosions continuously rang out, causing the barriers to quake. Light cracks began to form on their surfaces as the attack continued.

It was at that time when a murky aura covered the area the barriers had surrounded. Out of nowhere; the attacking force of the feathers seemed to have drastically dwindled.

'No, they're being corroded.' Feng Qing'er realized. Even her awareness was corroded when she tried to send it into the area.

The corrosion force spread through the air, becoming inky black tendrils that shot forward and wrapped around the Phoenix phantom.

Skree!

A pained cry left its beak as it fiercely resisted, but in the end, it wasn't a living entity. It had no intelligence, and could only be helplessly corroded by the chains surrounding it.

As Feng Qing'er's attacks were being dissolved, the barriers also retraced, revealing the unharmed forms of the Demon Generals.

Feng Qing'er frowned. This wasn't how she expected things to go. Truthfully, she had thought they would've been defeated with the Phoenix phantom's barrage.

'They are similar to me.'

She realized that it was naive to think they would be simple mid-level 3rd class beings if they were given the power to act as generals over such an army. Even if Damien had called them insignificant, she knew that their power couldn't be considered as such.

But still, she wasn't the 3rd ranked on the 3000 Beast Record for nothing. If she couldn't take care of two people at her same level, how could she have earned her reputation?



Thinking this far, she decided to take the battle a bit more seriously.

Her hands came together and formed a mysterious seal. In response to her motion, the air around her began to vibrate.

"Ahh, I hate using this skill. Why did it have to take the form of those damn lizards!"

With an incomprehensible shout, her hand seal changed. The vibrating air burst into flames, dying the atmosphere red.

Space seemed to distort at that moment as a massive head reared itself from within.

The Demon Generals' faces hardened. Raging mana erupted from their bodies and the tendrils of corrosion force joined together

Behind their figures, a phantom shaped like a massive Kraken with an infinite amount of tentacles formed.

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Not waiting for Feng Qing'er to finish what she was doing, the tentacles descended on her body like an ocean. They flailed wildly and dripped with an aura emanating wrath.

BOOM!

A horrifying collision resounded. From an outside perspective, it seemed like Feng Qing'er had been directly crushed by the fierce attack.

But contrary to that belief, an indomitable wall seemed to have formed in front of her. It was made of pure darkness, almost indistinguishable from the color of the Kraken.

Feng Qing'er cracked a grin. "Damn! Although it's annoying, I guess I'll have to accept the help for now."

Hundreds of tentacles shot towards her from all directions, but that wall of darkness seemed impenetrable. With the time it bought her, she was able to properly form the image that was coalescing behind her.

It was like a second sun lit up the cool night that had enveloped the trial world. The residents of Astoria could only describe it as such.

The light it was giving off was so blinding that they couldn't make out its figure, and the heatwaves it was radiating raised the temperature to almost unbearable degrees even within the barrier around the city.

Suddenly, the eyes of the image opened. Two reptilian slits gazed down upon the world. It opened its gaping maw wide and...

It roared.

Boom!

Damien's fist impacted the sickle covered in black flames yet again. Their exchange had been going on like this from the start of the battle.

From what he could see, this Demon woman was far too prideful to use any other kinds of attacks against him even after seeing the power he used to decimate the legion she commanded, but he didn't really care.

In fact, it worked out better for him this way. After all, his plan was to thoroughly break her so he didn't have to trouble himself too much when it came time for interrogation.

The blade of the woman's sickle was far more thin and sharp than an ordinary weapon could achieve, but from what he could tell, it still landed within the realm of SSS rank.

And it would take a peak SSS rank that was better classified as a half-step Chaos rank artifact to pierce through his bodily defenses.

If she continued like this, he knew she wouldn't be able to scratch him at all, but that black flame was another matter altogether.

It contained a malice unlike anything he had felt from an element before. Whenever they made contact, it tried to crawl up his body as if it was sentient.

But yet again, it met its match. If his Void Physique that had now properly gained a connection with Void Essence couldn't expel this tiny amount of flame, it truly wouldn't live up to the domineering attitude it had shown before.

Damien smirked. It seemed he had met someone he could easily counter. Actually, this didn't seem to be a strange sight when he encountered the Nox.

From what he could tell, corruption and corrosion were their strong points, and those were the things he feared the least.

Still, he didn't let it get to his head. Knowing full well the taste of defeat after being beat senseless by the Incarnate Snow Beast King and being forced to flee by the members of the Eclipsing Shadow Sect, he was well aware that he wasn't someone considered unrivaled.

His idle thought didn't continue for long, as the black flames dancing along the woman's sickle became fiercer and fiercer with every exchange.

They seemed hellbent on burning through his defenses as if its pride had been damaged by his resistance.

The Demon General also had an annoyed expression on her face. She poured a greater amount of mana into the flame with an unwilling look while unrelentingly attacking.

Damien suddenly flashed away from his position, appearing one meter behind her and throwing an electricity-coated punch.

Even though they weren't close enough for his fist to hit her, the wind pressure from his attack did so on its own. And hidden within that wind pressure, a distortion of space.

Before she knew it, the woman was sent flying back, a portion of the cloth on her chest burned to shreds. Even her flawless skin had been slightly charred.

"What?"

She didn't understand how it happened, but that only made her rage boil even further. The fact that the first one injured in this fight was her, it was unacceptable.

Boom!

It seemed she could no longer handle the humiliation. The black flames burst from her body and covered her entirely, her piercing eyes became dyed red.

"Bastard!"

She shouted in anger. A beam of black light shot from her hands and arrived in front of Damien at insane speeds.

But Damien simply smirked in derision. When the beam reached a point one meter away from him, it suddenly switched course and made a sharp turn to the right.

But the woman was too frenzied to notice. She continued shooting beam after beam of concentrated black flames, her scarlet eyes burning with madness.

Damien watched the scene curiously behind the protection of his vector shield.

'Why is she so pent up over a single injury? Ah, well I guess it kind of makes sense.'

He doubted she had ever tasted the flavor of defeat before. In a realm like this one where demons were the supreme race, there was no situation for her to.

And with her inherently haughty and arrogant attitude, this kind of always winning would inevitably lead her to become complacent.

But Damien didn't feel like this was all there was to it. Her response to provocation could be explained with this much, but the amount of wrath she was showcasing wasn't at a level that he could simply call the result of arrogance.

No, she seemed to be influenced by outside forces.

'That black flame sure is interesting.'

Damien wanted to get his hands on that flame to see what was going on, but he figured he could do so after the battle ended.

Boom!

Leisurely watching the other battles taking place, Damien had a fun idea. Doing some slight calculations, he shifted the trajectory and magnitude forces of his vector field in slightly different directions.

The incessantly pouring black beams that were randomly striking the surrounding environment seemed to have gained a purpose. They moved in a targeted fashion, heading towards an unsuspecting demon general that was entirely tied up by the mysterious girl from before.

In all honesty, her battle was both the most and least interesting at the same time. The blackness that came from her shadow dominated the one the demon general tried to use, forcing him to fight with physical strength alone.

But the girl's movements were fleeting and nimble. She dodged his attacks like a loach. Every time he thought she was in a situation where she could no longer escape, she would somehow twist her body unnaturally and do exactly that.

He was frustrated. The stoic expression he held at the beginning couldn't maintain itself. He could feel it. Just like the captains from before, he was being toyed with.

Every once in a while, cuts and gashes would randomly appear on his skin, but even as he watched the girl with utmost focus, he couldn't tell when she moved. A primal fear was taking root in his heart.

He felt like prey that was standing in front of its natural predator.

His eyes soon became dyed scarlet. The girl's eyes also changed, showing a hint of interest. But before anything could happen, tens of black beams suddenly shot in their direction and hit the demon general squarely in the back.

His body shivered. He knew immediately what had hit him. In fact, he had been whipped by the same flames countless times before. Such had been his fate for so many years that he no longer felt any shame from it.

But now, those same flames had hit him in a much more visceral fashion. With every new beam that impacted his body, the burning hole in his back grew wider and more pronounced.

By the time the demon woman finally stopped firing after realizing something was wrong, he already had a massive hole in his chest.

The demon general's expression was aggrieved to say the least. Why did he have to die like this? Even if he died, why couldn't it be in a more justified way?

And just as his life force was about to fade away, the mysterious girl dropped what was apparently the final nail in the coffin.

"Awww~ Kill stealing is no fair!"

Those were the final words he heard before he dropped dead.

Hearing the girl's words, Damien broke into a fit of laughter unbecoming of the situation. "Alright, I see your point. But what was I supposed to do with these annoying beams?"



"Hmm~ Annoying? But that woman didn't seem to be playing around?" The girl responded, feigning innocence.

Damien smirked in response. "Please, a beam attack isn't supposed to be weak shit like that."

"Oh? Then what is a beam attack supposed to look like?"

While the girl spoke, she glanced at Feng Qing'er and suddenly waved her hands. A massive black barrier surrounded her, causing the endless stream of tentacles assaulting her to be held back.

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Once her task was finished, the girl focused her attention back on Damien.

"Is that a provocation?" He asked with a smile.

"Why can't it just be a girl trying to satisfy her curiosity?" She quipped back.

"Fine, fine," Damien responded. "I guess I'll just have to show you then. Watch carefully."

Damien refocused his gaze on the demon general who was still fuming and covered in black flames. Her scarlet eyes hadn't reverted to their original black color yet, and she still seemed to be attacking madly.

Although his vector shield couldn't block physical attacks, she didn't seem to have realized it yet, as she was still throwing out a barrage of mana-based attacks.

"Sigh, how am I going to interrogate her if she's in this state? Welp, I guess a healthy dose of dragon's breath should snap her out of it."

Damien breathed in, his throat expanded to its limit. Sunflames coalesced within, as well as destructive black lightning. The two forces immediately tried to fight each other, but a strand of Void Essence entered the mix and quelled them.

It only took a second for all of this to happen. And when it finished, Damien opened his mouth wide. A fearsome roar left his mouth, accompanied by a massive beam of black and red light.

And at the same time, another dragon roar rang out from a separate part of the battlefield.

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The two simultaneous dragon roars filled the world with color incomparable to anything before. A wave of red and black light covered the battlefield and coalesced, swallowing the demon generals that could only helplessly watch its progression.

The Kraken phantom they had erected melted away due to the extreme mana and heat, and even the barriers they tried to erect were burned away without problem.

It was especially troubling for the female demon general, who managed to regain a semblance of reason in the face of a fatal threat. But it was all too late.

Boooom!

The raging torrent of mana didn't stop its movements for many minutes, causing even the normal geniuses on the ground below to retreat in apprehension. The demon captains they had been facing were directly incinerated without even knowing how they died.

After many minutes of such pandemonium, the brilliant light finally faded, giving way to the now scorched land outside of Astoria city.

“Wow!”

An enthusiastic yelp was the first sound that was made after the passing of the storm. That mysterious black-haired girl was staring at the aftermath with shining eyes, scanning for traces of the demon generals.

Damien grinned lightly at her response before spreading his awareness to do the same. And it didn't take him long to find what he was looking for.

Hundreds of meters away, the charred body of the female demon general was slumped on the ground. Although he could sense lifeforce from her, it was obvious that she had been knocked unconscious.

Teleporting a few times to reach her body, Damien did a deeper scan. “Wow, it looks like the heat did most of the damage on her, huh.”

Despite saying something so obvious, Damien had a surprised expression on his face. His dragon's breath was blisteringly hot, sure, but the heat didn't compare to the penetrative power and sheer destruction that was provided by the black lightning.

But, he had to acquiesce. The sunflames seemed to be exhibiting more and more power as he learned how to use them. And perhaps one day when he had enough mana to sustain them, they'd become an integral part of his arsenal.

Snapping out of his thoughts, he grabbed the body of the female demon general and slung it over his shoulder. He debated whether or not to put it in the Sanctuary, but there was no way he'd do so with little Xue'er happily exploring it.

'I should make a private area so I can move with more freedom in there.'

A wry smile decorated his face as he realized how troubling it was to keep a little kid around him, but he quickly shook it off. He was the one who made the decision, so he'd see it through to the end.

His gaze soon traveled to the rest of the battlefield. The corpses of the two other demon generals weren't too far away, but it was evident that they hadn't been as lucky as the female. Their bodies didn't even resemble humans anymore, being more similar to lumps of charred meat.

"So? How was it? I helped right?"

"You know I could've done it on my own either way, it was your choice to step in."

"Still still! I helped didn't I!"

“Aghh, fine! You helped! Are you happy now?!”

“Hehehe, miss Flame Queen herself is praising me, how can I not be happy?”

“Tch!”

The mysterious girl and Feng Qing'er happily bickered, acting as though the battle from before hadn't happened in the first place.

And on further observation, Damien could see that this was basically the case. The mana in their bodies was as rigorous as ever, and he couldn't see any signs of exhaustion on their faces.

Even if they had to fight another ten generals, these two would probably still have the stamina to continue fighting.

Silently admiring the physical body of beasts, Damien did a light stretch. And then, while everyone was busy, he quietly teleported away.

Or at least, he tried to.

“Oi! Where do you think you're going?!” A loud yell came his way.

Turning his head slightly, he saw Feng Qing'er and that mysterious girl approaching him.

With a wry smile, he responded. "Yo, rank 3! Haven't seen you in a while!"

"Why do you insist on calling me rank 3, huh? I have a name, you know."

"Eh? It's too long and I'm too lazy. Rank 3 is a lot more fitting."

"Bastard!"

When it looked like Feng Qing'er was ready to pounce on him again, another voice chimed into their conversation.

"My, my! Mr.beam attack seems to get along well with the princess!"

Damien looked over to see that mysterious girl smiling slyly.

"Ah, right right I guess I should introduce myself." With a cordial curtsy mimicking princess even though the girl was wearing combat clothes, she continued. "My name is Qing Tan, or I guess in your mind I'm rank 5."

"Ohh, so that's you. Mm, makes sense why you were on par with rank 3 over there." Damien nodded his head matter-of-factly.

“On par? You jest! How could I dare compare myself to the princess?”

“Grrr!” What sounded like growling interrupted them. “You bastards dare to keep ignoring me?! You’re asking for a beating!”

Feng Qing’er charged at Qing Tan, smacking her forehead continuously.

“Ah! Big sister spare me!” Qing Tan screamed. If Damien wasn’t standing right next to them, he would’ve thought she was being severely beaten from how painful she made her screams sound.

Damien chuckled. ‘These two seem awfully close. Or is it just this Qing Tan’s personality? She gives off that wild and carefree vibe.’

While the two girls played around, Damien glanced at the body that was slung across his shoulder. ‘I shouldn’t delay this.’

Thinking so, he cleared his throat. “Alright, I know you probably have some questions and I have some answers as well, but let me go interrogate this woman real quick before I answer.”

“And how do I know you aren’t going to run away?” Feng Qing’er frowned.

“Ah? When did I ever run away? You should know that I, Damien Void, have never run from anything in my life!”

“Damien Void, is that your real name? Did you think a stupid last name like that would fool us? Besides, didn’t you run like a headless chicken when we met after the magma trial?”

“Hey! What’s so stupid about my last name?!” Damien swiftly ignored the last question she asked.

“Please, as if any normal person would carry the family name Void. Obviously you’re playing another prank.”

Damien wanted to refute, but truthfully, even he had cringed at his last name multiple times in the past.

‘Fuck, I really don’t want to agree with her.’

Now that he thought about it, Damien Void, Void Physique, Void Essence, he cringed once more at the repetitiveness of Void in his body.

‘Damn that old man! Did he know about my physique and purposefully name me Void to spite me?’

Considering his conjectures about his father, the reasoning behind his random thoughts didn’t actually seem that illogical. Thinking that he found one more reason to beat his dad up, Damien refocused on the main issue.

“Okay, enough jokes. I need to get as much information as I can out of her before these shitty demons make another move.”



With that, he flashed away, teleporting until he reached a secluded area where even beasts weren't present.

Thump!

Damien threw the woman's body on the ground without any semblance of decency. Then, grabbing one of the chairs he made with Xue'er out of the Sanctuary, he sat down in front of her.

"Let's get to work."

Chapter 266 Generals [6]

"Cough..."

Bright light shone on Elitra's eyes, forcing her consciousness to come back from its shut-down state. The first thing she did was let out a series of dry coughs.

'What happened?'

Her memory was a mess, something she was used to by now. So, she immediately went to work trying to remember what happened before she fainted.

"Agh!"

A sudden wave of pain shook her body. Her skin felt like it was on fire, and even her insides seemed to have been shaken out of place.

‘What the hell?’

It was never like this before. The flames had taken over before, and she’d definitely found herself similarly unconscious, but her body had never been damaged in the process.

Her eyelids fluttered as she tried her best to open them. She wanted to quickly take in her surroundings and make sure she was safe. But at that moment...

“Looks like you finally decided to wake up.”

The unfamiliar voice of a man entered her ears.

“Oi, don’t think about pretending to be unconscious. Open your eyes already.”

Although she was unwilling, she still ended up cooperating. With her head in a mess, there wasn’t much else she could do..

The first thing she saw was a mystical pair of eyes staring back at her. Seeing them, she felt a jolt in her mind.

“Ah!”

It all began to flow back. The invasion on Astoria, and the fight she had with this man. Or at least, until he had injured her. After that, everything was just flaming darkness.

“Hello? Can you hear me?” The man waved his hand in front of her face with an annoyed expression.

Elitra glared at him. This man was obviously an enemy, and from the way he looked perfectly fine sitting on a poorly made wooden chair in front of her, she had clearly lost the battle.

It was only then that she realized her own position.

She was tied to a tree, her arms spread in a t like she was crucified. Immediately, she raised her mana to tear away the ropes that were binding her.

But the man’s hand landed on her shoulder faster. Just like he had done back in the White Dragon Grotto, he seized control of the personal vectors within her body and sealed her mana.

“Ah, don’t be hasty. I’m not a bad guy, you see, I just have a few questions I want to ask you.”

Elitra’s gaze hardened. It didn’t take an idiot to know what kind of questions he was going to ask.

“Hah! As if I’d ever tell you shit!” She spat.

“Oho? Your attitude seems to have changed significantly from the prim and seductive lady you were pretending to be before.” He smirked.

“Tch, what do you know.” She grumbled. Suddenly, she began to chuckle. It was such a sudden change that even Damien was caught off guard.

“Something funny?” He asked with furrowed brows.

“Mm, mm, very funny. I was just thinking about what’ll happen to you once they find out I’m kidnapped.”

“Oh? You must be important then.”

“Important? As if merely important is enough to describe me. Just know that as long as you are within this realm, you’re already dead in my eyes.”

Damien frowned. The fact that she had confidence in this situation made her words more believable. For her status to be high enough that she’s so assured...

‘Daughter of a Commander? In the worst case, it’s a king, but I doubt it.’

“Well, since you think I’m dead meat, you might as well tell me what I want to know, right?”

“Do you think I’m an idiot? I already said I won’t tell you shit, so stop trying.”

Damien sighed. “You know, I’m asking nicely right now, but you don’t know how long that’ll last. Are you sure you want to risk it?”

“Threatening me with pain, huh? To be honest, that’s the worst move you could make. Do you really think you can stimulate pain worse than being burned alive every single day?” She sneered.

Damien was startled by her words. ‘This girl might actually be an idiot the way she keeps giving me info.’

Damien didn’t need information on rankings or anything like that, so he had been avoiding questions about the demons. Still, he was able to find that she had a certain level of status as well as something about the black flame so easily.

But Damien wasn’t shaken by her resolution. “Worse than being burned alive, huh. It should be doable.”

Nodding his head, he looked at her one more time. “Well, just don’t say I didn’t warn you.”

“Huh? What are you-“

Her words were quickly cut off by Damien’s hand covering her mouth. When it came to torture techniques, he obviously didn’t have many since he had no use for them.

But ever since he awakened on that fateful day almost 11 years ago on earth, he had been wondering about something. It was a curiosity he could never satiate since he wasn’t daring enough to try it on his own body.

But thinking about it, using that experiment as a torture technique would be great for testing.

Damien concentrated on the spatial layers around him. He had never tried to teleport someone by themselves before, but he didn't think it was too hard, especially when he wasn't trying to do it right in the first place.

Soon enough, he roused his mana and initiated a teleportation.

In the next instant, an ear-piercing shriek came from the woman in front of him.

“AHHHHHHH!”

Her crucified body was now positioned a few feet lower than it was before. The only problem was, the area from her knees down wasn't visible.

Damien watched the woman in front of him scream and plead. It was much worse than he originally thought, to the point where he almost felt bad for her.

What had happened to her was simple. He had teleported her into an area that intersected. Just like theory stated, two sets of molecules couldn't exist in the same space and superimpose. It was against the laws of physics.

And what happened to the two sets of molecules in such a case? Well, in a normal situation, both superimposed objects would explode. The rejection of natural laws would force it to happen.

But Damien had directly interfered with the spatial layers to carry out such an action. Rather than simply superimposing, the molecules of the two structures had been forcefully fused into one.

The pain that came with such a process and the aftermath was what Elitra was being forced to feel right now.

Damien looked away. This was his first time ever torturing someone, and even if he didn't have to truly get his hands dirty, he didn't like the feeling at all.

His earthling mentality that barely held a shred of identity in his heart had bore its head. After all, even when he killed, he never did something so gruesome.

'This is enough. There's no need to go farther.'

Thinking so, he grabbed her shoulder and teleported her once again, moving her back to her original position.

But even he didn't have the power to unfuse those molecules that had already become one. When Elitra was disconnected from the ground, she no longer had legs below her knees.

And the most disturbing part of it was the fact that even though she suffered such a severe wound, there were no signs that it was artificial. The stumps in her legs looked as if they were like that since birth.

The pain immediately subsided when Elitra was disconnected from the ground. All that was left was the sound of her silent sobbing in the otherwise quiet atmosphere.

Damien sighed. He felt like a sinner. But remembering her identity, he steeled his heart.

Right. There was never any good or bad in this world. There was only strength. He had said it to the tribe leader of the Turbulent Blizzard Leopards back then, and he had once again come into contact with it today.

‘Why do I feel like I’ve become the villain since entering this mountain range?’

He didn’t like it at all. But in the end, everything was for benefits. And today’s actions, they were for the sake of the universe.

In order to get rid of a race that threatened all others with extinction. He could no longer view the Nox or anyone affiliated with them as “people”.

His eyes turned cold. Finally settling his gaze back on Elitra, he decided to get this over with as soon as possible.

“Are you finally willing to speak up now, or do I need to help you understand again?”

Within Damien’s body, in a location that even he couldn’t feel yet, there were two formless and colorless essences swirling about.

The first was strong and made its presence known, while the second seemed to still be in its infancy.



Next to these two essences, there was something that looked like a small black marble. The marble occasionally flickered with dancing black lightning.

And at that moment, a small flicker of red and black light came to life. The marble shined black and red, causing even the dancing lightning to shrink back in fear.

And in the next instant, the light vanished, causing peace to return to that space.

Chapter 267 Demons [1]

“Let’s start with the simple stuff. Name, age, the likes.” Damien said expressionlessly.

The woman couldn’t answer him right away, though. Her entire body was shaking in fear, and the silent tears never stopped flowing from her eyes.

What he had just forced her to experience was beyond her capacity of understanding. Even now, she couldn’t comprehend what had happened, and that feeling of disorientation only worsened the mental damage she had.

It wasn’t as if her legs had simply been dug into the earth. No, they had fused with the earth itself. Essentially, her legs became the ground.

The forceful changing of her molecular structure, as well as the suddenness at which it happened, brought unimaginable pain. When compared to being burned alive every day, it was still leagues worse.

Damien understood this, and he knew that if he pressed her before she could regain her wits, he would only get incoherent drivel from her mouth. And so, he quietly waited.

Until an entire 30 minutes later. “Elitra, 20, Demon.”

It was curt, or rather, dull, but perhaps because she was still in shock. Damien simply nodded his head and continued.

“You said you were a relatively important person, right? So, who’s your backer?”.

“Father, Demon King Lucius.”

Another brief reply, but one with much worse connotations. Damien’s face contorted when he realized the implications of what he just heard.

“Demon King Lucius? How does he compare to the other 3 Demon Kings?”

“Stronger than Demon King Granheim, weaker than Eden and Eliza.”

‘Granheim, Lucius, Eden, Eliza.’

Damien noted down their names in his mind. He also sighed a breath of relief. Even if he was going against a Demon King with his actions, he was glad it wasn’t the strongest of them.

But he didn't let his guard down because of this. He knew very well that anyone who could gain the title of Demon King would by no means be weak.

"What is the strength level of the Demon Kings? Also, if you're the daughter of the Demon King, why did he send you out on a mission like this?"

Elitra's dull voice once again rang out. "Demon Kings are 4th class existences. Only the mighty Demon God can stand above them."

"Father sent me on a mission to gain experience. The Nihility Flame would consume me if I didn't learn how to control it soon."

Damien was worried about this Demon God character, but he focused on the second part of her answer first.

"Nihility Flame? The black flames that made you go crazy during our fight? What's so special about them?"

"Nihility Flame, ranked 23rd on the Heavenly Flame Index. It's a flame with the ability to devour to grow stronger, but it is semi-sentient and unwilling to submit, so it will do everything it can to devour its master.

"It is the flame that originally belonged to the Demon God, but after he was sealed, he passed it on to the Demon Kings. Of the Demon King descendants, I am the only one who inherited this power."

Damien nodded his head in understanding. The flame was too powerful for her body to bear, and it didn't accept her as its master. Due to this, she was being burned alive every day as it attempted to

consume her. And when she lost her cool during battle, it took the opportunity to hasten its consumption.

It wasn't that Elitra went insane, per se, it was that she was fighting the Nihility Flame while it randomly controlled her body. Although the target was set to Damien, there was no conscious mind delineating the body's actions, leading to her constant use of beam attacks and long-range mana bursts.

Thinking back to the way it tried to get into his body and corrupt him, it all made sense now. Rather than corruption, it was devouring. Unfortunately for the flame, Damien's body had a far stronger devouring force within it.

Damien also had to remember that the flame in her possession wasn't a fully formed Nihility Flame. It was growing alongside her, as it had been birthed with her, otherwise she would have long been consumed by it.

Not only that, but there was also the so-called Heavenly Flame Index. For a flame so unique and powerful as the Nihility Flame to only be ranked 23rd, what kind of monstrous flames were above it?

In any case, the reason she was sent out to head the mission made some sense to him now. For her Nihility Flame to grow and accept her, she had to feed it. And what better way to do so than to slaughter those humans living within the realm? Since they also needed to kill the humans for their other goals, it was a perfect opportunity.

But Damien suddenly had a thought. "Did the Demon King know that people from the outside world would be here? If so, did he not think of the possibility that you would be harmed?"

“Father naturally knew of the outsiders. He didn’t think they would be able to combat the Nihility Flame.”

Thinking about it now, it was true. Damien had an ultimate anti-devouring trump card body, but others didn’t. Facing the invasion of the Nihility Flame, he didn’t know how they would last.

“Also, if I die or face a life-threatening situation, father can manifest and help me.”

Damien felt a cold sweat running down his back. ‘Thank god I decided to use her for information gathering. If I had thought to kill her...’

It wasn’t like he had no thoughts of going against the Demon Kings, in fact, he was exactly planning to do that. But only after proper preparations had been made. He was in no condition to face one now.

Damien cast a strange look at Elitra, whose gaze hadn’t left the ground since she started talking.

‘I can’t kill her now, but I can’t simply leave her here. Her spirit is crushed at the moment, so she isn’t a danger, but I can’t speak about the future. It’s better to be safe than sorry.’

He obviously had a way out of this situation, but he was hesitant to use it. There was no way he’d let this demon woman anywhere near little Xue’er.

But, thinking about how he could section off portions of the Sanctuary like he did when he separated space for his inventory, he figured that it was the best choice.

Perhaps, he would be able to lure a Demon King away from the rest of the Demons' forces. If he could do that...

A certain plan he had been cooking up could be set into motion.

'All four Demon Kings have a Nihility Flame in their body. If I can just devour them...'

Another goal sprouted in his mind. Others might have been wary of a flame that would try to consume them. Others might have been wary about the fact that it would corrupt their mind. But for him? None of these problems mattered.

The flames would become docile the second they came in contact with the Void Essence that always helped him out. As for the mental corrosion, didn't he have a Mind Prison to entrap any unwanted thoughts?

The Void Heart Sword Law was something that should have been used to turn him into an emotionless killing machine, but Damien had now decided to repurpose it.

He would use it as a convenient method to entrap and extinguish all of the negative thoughts transmitted by the flame.

Of course, all of this was simply counting his eggs before they hatched. For any of his plans to work, he first needed to kill a Demon King.

Taking a deep breath, Damien moved on to his next line of questioning.

“Tell me more about this so-called Demon God.”

## Chapter 268 Demons [2]

“Lord Demon God is the reason that we demons are allowed to exist. We are merely servants that follow his will.”

All of a sudden, Elitra’s tone became respectful, but nothing else about her changed. It was a disconcerting incongruence that Damien didn’t understand.

“According to my Father, Lord Demon God is the true body that the four Demon Kings were birthed from. He separated portions of himself and gave them life. When they gained consciousness, they became the Demon Kings.

“Whenever Lord Demon God gives an order, the entire demon race will follow without hesitation. Even if he asks for us to kill ourselves, we will do so.”

Damien looked up and noticed a hint of a sour expression on Elitra’s face. She looked as if even she didn’t agree with the words she was saying.

“How do you feel about the Demon God?”

Damien asked. Originally, he wasn’t planning to do it at all. But, something inside of him was telling him to do so.

“I...I, of course, am extremely grateful for Lord Demon God, as he is the progenitor and the sole reason for my existence. I would willingly follow any command that Lord Demon God sends me.”.

The look on her face became sourer, and the words she said were basically the words she said prior, just rephrased.

It was then that Damien realized where the incongruity came from.

‘She...she is being forced?’

It wasn’t as if someone was consciously forcing her to speak certain words; rather it was more like a command was being carried out by a robot.

It was as if, when speaking about the Demon God, Elitra had no control over what she said or did. There was a set amount of things she was allowed to say.

Seeing her sending slight glances at him, Damien realized that she had used the same words again to cue him in on this.

‘But why?’

He didn’t understand. She had been dull and seemingly broken until this point, but after his questioning, she seemed to have changed her stance.

‘Is she insane?’



What other reason could there be for her trying to help him gain information? She was a demon too, wasn't she? And wasn't she bragging about her father earlier? It didn't seem like she wanted to defect.

Damien decided to replay their conversation so far in his head. From start to finish, and even before when they first met, she had shown a variety of different personalities.

Seductive and carefree, spiteful and foul-mouthed, dull and dispirited, and now, despondent and reigned.

It seemed like a natural progression after being captured and tortured, but the way things happened made it seem different.

'Which one is her true face?' Damien couldn't figure it out.

He wanted to know more about the Demon God, but that line of questioning wouldn't get him anywhere. And so, he decided to put aside his confusion and figure out something more practical.

"Where is you demons' base? And what are the movements that'll be taking place soon?"

"Base...I cannot speak of the location, as I will immediately die if I try. As for the movements, there will be a few more city attacks like this one, mainly on the larger cities such as Darknorth and Ecatra. The forces will be at the same or similar levels as our force today."

The way she gave out information so willingly was suspicious, but Damien had been concentrating his awareness on the surroundings the entire time they had been here, and he didn't notice any oddities.

His main concern, though, was the Demon Kings. He knew that he wouldn't be able to feel their presence if they decided to snoop. But he also assumed that they weren't close enough to the location to do so.

After all, if they were, there was no way they'd sit still and allow him to do what he had done to Elitra. He wasn't stupid. She wasn't just the Demon King Lucius's daughter, she was also the sole inheritor of the Nihility Flame. Her value to the demons inevitably would be high.

Damien sighed. He had a rough idea of how he wanted to move in the future, but he couldn't count for unknown variables. At the end of the day, he was genuinely stepping into something he didn't have the strength to step into yet.

After getting the information on the coming raid locations from Elitra, he took an hour to section off a part of the Sanctuary for him to leave her. And then, he disappeared from his spot.

There was plenty more he needed to ask her, but now wasn't the time. He had more pressing matters to take care of.

It was only a minute or so later when Damien reappeared again, but this time, he was alone. Elitra had already been transferred to the Sanctuary. Glancing around the area once more, he flashed back in the direction he had left Feng Qing'er and Qing Tan.

'Should I have just killed her?'

The thought raced through Damien's head. He doubted whether a Demon King could manifest considering the difference between the Sanctuary and the Real Plane. He also knew that finding the location of the Sanctuary would be impossible for a mere 4th class.

But he still hesitated. It wasn't due to some danger or even the threat of Demon Kings. No, it was something even Damien himself never expected to happen.

The All-Seeing eyes. The ability he stole from the spider back in the First Dungeon. It could see through any illusion, he could read the mana surrounding people, it had a sort of danger sense ability, and most recently, he had been able to see the hazy outline of other people's status windows.

But there was another ability that he had long forgotten. It was an ability that had shown itself countless times during his time in the dungeon, but rarely manifested after he left.

It was the ability that allowed him to sense opportunity. The same ability that allowed him to meet Zara, who had been a loyal companion ever since that day.

And now, that ability was ringing bells in his head again. It didn't happen initially, but the second he truly considered killing Elitra, the intuition-like ability urged him not to.

He couldn't figure it out. Hadn't he just resolved to never see the Nox or anyone related as people anymore? What would be the problem with killing Elitra after her father had died?

He didn't understand at all. His entire being screamed for him to kill her, but the ability directly contradicted it.

Damien was stuck in an awkward place, but he didn't have to think too much before making a decision.

That ability had saved him from dying multiple times. It had led him to meet a trustworthy beast companion that he would willingly risk his life for.

If that ability was telling him that keeping Elitra alive within the Sanctuary would give birth to an opportunity, he wasn't going to turn it down.

With a faint anticipation about what was to come, Damien's figure breezed through the Trial World before coming to an abrupt halt.

In front of him, there were two kingdom-toppling beauties who were still bickering as if nothing happened.

Damien grinned. "Yo! did you miss me?"

Chapter 269 Demons [3]

Hearing Damien's voice, Feng Qing'er's face immediately showed her annoyance.

"Oh? You actually cared to come back? I thought for sure that you'd run away this time as well."

Damien coughed lightly and averted his eyes. 'Well, it's not like you could've beat me back then even if I had stayed still and fought.' But he didn't say those words out loud. Only god knew what kind of beating he'd receive if he did so.

“Hehe, so? Did you get the information you wanted? Where’s that demon girl? Tell us everything!” Qing Tan didn’t even wait for him to answer, firing off several questions in a row.

Damien smiled wryly. It seemed he would have to tell them at least the general information.

He’d thought about it on the way back, but he realized that he couldn’t really go and tell them everything he knew about the Nox and the outside world, as it wasn’t something that could be revealed carelessly.

Not only that, but he also felt that it wasn’t in their capacity to know, just like it technically shouldn’t be in his. Those 4th class existences, regardless of which world they were in, seemed to have a tacit understanding not to spill information about the Nox.-N(0VE)L.

Although he didn’t know the reason they were like this, he couldn’t simply ignore it. Sure, when it came to the general public, their reasoning could be to not incite mass hysteria, but it was different when even their personal disciples were in the dark.

If even those closest to them weren’t qualified to receive information from them, then he, as an outsider and a 3rd class existence, didn’t have the right. He’d have to ask the White Dragon King or Tian Yang before speaking rashly.

“Kuhum, listen carefully. While we may be in this Trial World for the sake of the Primordial Undying Tree and its tests, the residents here view it as their homeworld. Essentially, the thousands of years when this realm isn’t open aren’t simply spent in stasis...”

“Why are you suddenly bringing this up?” Feng Qing’er asked. She wasn’t in the mood for a random history lesson she didn’t need.

“Don’t be impatient. Anyway, as I was saying, there are things going on within this realm that are far greater than merely a trial for us outsiders. And the main thing we need to focus on is the Demons.”

Damien went on to introduce the demons and their hierarchy as he had known it so far. He also told them about the elusive plans they had for spilling blood on the land in order for some goal they wanted to achieve.

He decided to leave out matters concerning the Nihility Flame and his own plans, since the sole inheritor was in his possession and the rest of the possessors were Demon Kings, but other than that and the matters pertaining to their relationship with the Nox, he didn’t leave out anything. Even the so-called Demon God was mentioned.

By the end of his story, both girls had solemn looks on their faces. Damien didn’t know enough about their schemes since even Elitra wasn’t told anything of relevance, but even with the basic information he had told them, they knew that something big was going on.

“Hmm, that’s great and all, but do we really need to get involved? I mean, we’ll be leaving this place in 9 months anyway.” Qing Tan suddenly spoke up.

Damien shook his head. “I guess we don’t necessarily need to get involved, but it’s for the best that we do. The matters within this world will end up affecting our lives in the outside world if we don’t at least quell them to a manageable level.”

Seeing that she wasn’t convinced, Damien added a cherry on top. “Besides, if you look at the proportion of beings in this world, the Demons are undoubtedly the most prevalent race. And since there’s so many small fries and Generals among them, wouldn’t you be able to acquire a much larger amount of points than the competition?”

Qing Tan's eyes lit up at the mention of benefits. Damien inwardly clicked his tongue at this, but he didn't say much. After all, even he was somewhat similar. If it wasn't for his knowledge of the overall situation, he'd probably be the same.

Feng Qing'er, on the other hand, seemed to be deep in thought. A fiery aura had coated her body before anyone noticed.

"Those damn bastards...they dare to harm innocent mortals?! For their own petty gain?!"

Furious mutters left her mouth. Her mind kept remembering the scenes of the destroyed villages she had seen on her way to Astoria, the cold corpses that littered the ground. Even infants hadn't been spared from the slaughter.

The whole thing made her furious, but she hadn't had anywhere to vent her fury. That is, until now.

"Demons...demons...demons..." her head suddenly shot up, her Phoenix eyes glaring at Damien.

"Tell me where they are. I'm going to rip them all to shreds!"

Damien watched her in amusement, trying his best to suppress the chuckle that threatened to leak out of his mouth. 'Truly a heroic spirit, ah.'

"Relax, you'll get your chance to kill. However, rushing into their base isn't something any of us can do carelessly. Actually, even if we thoroughly plan it still isn't something we should do. There are 4 4th class existences staying there. Even in the case that we can evade their radars, even the smallest mistake will mean death.

“For now, we should focus on the cities that demon woman told me about. The best thing we can do is stop the assault and slaughter more Demon Generals. When the time comes, we can move on to Commanders.

“Unlike the Generals, who number in the hundreds, there are only 10 commanders. Not only will we rake in contributions for our stars when we kill them, but we can also leave a significant dent in their forces.”

As Damien spoke, Feng Qing'er seemed to calm down slightly. Though, the air around her was still burning.

Qing Tan, on the other hand, seemed much more practical. “Hmm, that's a good plan, but is there any assurance that the Commanders will actually come out? If we show too much power, wouldn't they become wary instead?”

“Right, that's how it usually would be. And we definitely need to keep an eye out for such a situation. But, the Demon Kings severely underestimate us.

“No, it's not right to say they underestimate us. Rather, their estimations are based on those ordinary geniuses. We can be considered outliers that they haven't planned for. If my guess is right, they'll send a few Commanders out without much thought when they first hear about us. We only need to worry about what happens after we kill those Commanders.”

Qing Tan nodded in agreement. A bright smile emerged on her face as she spoke. “Mm! It looks like things are starting to get a lot more fun! Let's go then!”



Damien smiled wryly. Where did this girl get all her energy? Did she really have to be so peppy all the time? But it wasn't so bad. She reminded him of an older and more scary version of little Xue.

Shaking off his thoughts, Damien returned to the main point. "Now the question is, should we stick together or spread out to cover more cities in a shorter amount of time?"

Chapter 270 Demons [4]

"Darknorth, Ecatra, Scheherazade, and Relia. These are the four cities that will be suffering attacks in the coming days."

"Even if we split up, we won't be able to cover them all. And all four will have the same lineup as we faced today. If we split up, we'll have to face four Demon Generals each."

"That shouldn't be a problem though. It's not like we had difficulties dealing with the ones from earlier. Well, I can't say the same for Miss Queen over here, can I?"

"Hey! I could've finished them off easily if I was actually trying. Plus, I fought two while you each only fought one. It can't even be compared."

The trio began discussing their plans forward, and in the end, they decided to split up. Damien would go to Scheherazade, Feng Qing'er to Ecatra, and Qing Tan to Relia. Luckily enough, Darknorth seemed to have been occupied by another faction of geniuses who came to the secret realm.

Feng Qing'er had assured him that it'd be fine, but frankly, he didn't trust those normal geniuses. Although Qing Tan's presence surprised him, he knew for certain that there weren't any other outliers like the three of them present.

And against Demon Generals, those normal geniuses would have to give their all. To do so while protecting a city? He didn't think they were up to the task.-(0ve)L.

Not to mention, they most likely wouldn't care enough to stick around and protect the city. Once things started looking bad, their desire to live would overcome their greed for contributions and they would flee immediately.

As such, Damien chose to go to Scheherazade, since the distance between it and Darknorth could be covered in a few hours if he abused teleportation and moved at full speed.

"Hmph! Just because you're closer to Darknorth, don't think you'll be able to hog all those points to yourself! I'll be the first to get a White Star!" Feng Qing'er harrumphed.

Qing Tan giggled at her provocation. "If the Queen says so, then it must be true, but how about you leave a few points to this retainer?"

"You don't even work for me, why would I leave anything for you?"

"Oho, then please do not fault me if I accidentally reach Darknorth before you."

PAN(D)A NOVEL Damien watched their quarrel with a light smile before turning to look in another direction. There, far in the distance past where his eyes could see, was Scheherazade.

Bidding farewell to the bickering girls, Damien parted ways, immediately rushing in that direction.

‘There should still be plenty of time before the armies reach Scheherazade, but I don’t want to risk it. If I can intercept them before they get close to the city, it’s even better.’

Damien had a wry look on his face. Thinking of the massive wave of enemies he’d have to face, he began to miss Zara.

After all, even if it was a horde of 2nd class beings, they’d still waste his mana. If Zara was with him, they’d be able to sweep a situation like this much faster and without problems.

Sending his awareness into his shadow, he was once again met with her sleeping figure. Even after so many months, she hadn’t moved in the slightest.

But he definitely noticed the changes in her body. Her coat had become much silkier and full, her wings had become more expansive, and even her tail seemed to possess a sort of whipping power it didn’t have before.

The most striking change was probably the silver fur that began to grow on her forehead like a marking. It gave her a mystical feeling she didn’t possess before.

‘Will she still be the same Zara when she wakes up?’ The aura she gave off had gone through so many changes that he almost doubted it, but he decided not to dwell on it.

Whatever she was when she returned to his side, she would still be his Zara. That wasn’t something that’d change regardless.

Damien spread his awareness to the far reaches of his limits, observing carefully to find traces of the Demon army that was approaching.

And as he got closer and closer to Scheherazade, the traces of activity and slight hints of mana in the surroundings only got more prevalent.

‘I’m getting closer, but from Elitra’s information, Scheherazade should still be a few days away. Good, I should be able to intercept them before they can surround the city.’

It was much more beneficial to him if he could do so. Spreading his attacks to cover the radius of the entire city and beyond wasn’t difficult per se, but as always, being able to concentrate his strength in one direction would yield much better results.

Swoosh!

The whistling winds became fiercer as Damien suddenly increased his speed. Even the sky began to crackle with signs of a storm.

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The Trial World in the Primordial Undying realm looked massive if one stood at ground level, but if they managed to make it to the peak of the tallest mountain, they’d realize that the size was somewhat of an illusion.

While the size of the realm was indeed large, it wasn’t to the point that it’d warrant marvel. After all, in its totality, it was only the size of a portion of the country of America. Compared to the grandiosity of other locations Damien had visited in the past, it wasn’t much.

But it could only be considered normal. In the end, this trial world was only one of many. There were 8 more trial worlds of similar size that operated semi-independently where the rest of the hundreds of geniuses were undergoing their own trials.

That was why, although the location of the Demon City stayed hidden to Damien and his companions, it wasn't actually far beyond their reach.

Located on a mountain a few hundred kilometers away from the city of Astoria, a sprawling city stood tall. It was comparable to the cities Damien saw in the outside world, taking up almost the entire slope of the mountain. And in comparison to the cities below, it was a true behemoth.

Thousands of seemingly human creatures lived within this city. The only thing differentiating them was the occasional non-human traits they carried, such as horns and tails.

The city's architectural style couldn't be considered as anything special, but the ambiance was indeed somewhat odd. Despite the jovial and calm atmosphere surrounding the people who lived within it, the aura the city gave off was dark and gloomy.

And near the peak of the mountain where the city was located, there were 4 towering castles carrying a similar black theme to them.

Perhaps when one saw these castles, they'd immediately be led to believe that they were the most important part of the city, the thing that the people in the city would worship most.

But that assumption would be proved wrong the second one gazed upon the peak. At that peak, there was a massive pantheon that outstripped the castles in grandiosity by leagues.

The dark aura congregated in this pantheon was far greater than anything the city or even the castles could produce, but the scenes beyond its walls were something that normal citizens wouldn't be able to witness even if they offered their very lives in exchange.