

Void 331

Chapter 331 Readjusting [3]

“This...where are we?”

Mutters of confusion were the most prominent symptoms among the demons at the moment as they looked at their surroundings. Until now, they had been confined within a strange space that even the Demon King couldn't escape, but now, it was like they were transported to a new world.

Tall grasses grew and spread as far as the eye could see, to the west there was a large forest where the faint outline of a shabby treehouse could be seen. To the east, there was a large body of water reminiscent of an ocean, and to the north was a mountain that overshadowed the entire continent.

Comparatively, the space was generally small, but it was still large enough to house several hundreds of thousands of people comfortably without clutter.

“That brat must've done something...” Lucius muttered as he surveyed the realm. Sadly, his realm was still suppressed so he could only do so with his eyes.

“I forgot how annoying life is as a mortal.” He sneered.

His maid stood by his side quietly with a curious glint in her eyes. As for Elitra, she was marveling at the astonishing methods of her Master. Aside from these three, the rest were showing varying degrees of panic.

“Hey!”

Suddenly, a loud shout woke them up from their frenzy. The voice was filled with youthful exuberance and spirit. Accompanying it, a black blur shot through the air and landed in front of them.

“Who are you guys?”

A little girl no more than five years old stood before them with her hands on her hips. Her attitude was pompous, but combined with her stature it was simply too cute.

Elitra smiled sweetly when she saw this. “Little girl, why are you in this place? Are you Master’s daughter?”

“Master? Who’s that?” Xue’er responded in confusion.

“Ah! His name is Damien, but he likes to be called Master, so I call him that!” Elites happily answered.

“Big brother’s friend? Big brother likes to be called master? I’ll try it too!”

Xue'er happily spoke as the spirits around her laughed uncontrollably. Their intelligence seemed to have been heightened in recent days, as they could completely understand and respond to the ongoing conversation.

"Girl, where are we?" Lucius interrupted their conversation and asked. Even in front of this little girl, he kept up his stern appearance.

Xue'er glared at him for a while before suddenly exclaiming. "Bad man!"

"Bad man? Me? Hmph, a little girl who can't see Mt. Tai."

"I can't hear you! You're a bad man! Xue'er will fight you so you don't disturb Big brother!"

Xue'er put her fists up and glared at Lucius. Lucius's maid and Elitra giggled on the side as they watched the interaction.

"Hoh? A little girl like you wants to fight me? Aren't you afraid I'll beat you up?"

"Hmph! Hmph! If you beat up Xue'er, big brother will beat you up too!"

She proudly declared it as if it was only right. Additionally, she seemed to have come to a liking of using 'hmph' as the Demon King had done before.

“What can your big brother do to me?” Lucius sneered back. “Even if there were hundreds of him, he still wouldn’t be able to touch a hair on my body.”

“Don’t insult big brother!” Xue’er shouted. Enraged, she shot forward with astonishing speed for a girl her age and threw a punch at Lucius.

‘This little girl isn’t simple.’ He thought inwardly as he put his hand out. Even if her speed was great, she was still a mortal. Lucius wasn’t afraid of her attack at all.

But when her fist impacted his hand, he felt an overwhelming force transfer into his body, causing him to get pushed back 10 steps.

“You...” His eyes widened in shock. This girl was only a child. Even with his strength suppressed, there was no way for her to overwhelm him, right?

The surrounding demons also watched the scene in shock. Their all-powerful Lord was being suppressed? By a five-year-old?

And of course, Elitra and the maid were still giggling to the side.

“Does he not realize how goofy he looks right now?”

“He’s too caught up in the momentum. He hasn’t even realized he’s been arguing with a five-year-old for so long.”

“Hehehe, Master has really annoyed him so much that he even does something like this! It’s truly admirable.”

“Keke, little lass, taking someone who could push the Lord to this extent with mere words as your Master might not be a bad decision after all.”

As they conversed, the Demon King’s face became increasingly black. His eyebrows were twitching uncontrollably.

“Brat! I know you’re there! Come out and face this King!” He suddenly shouted into the air.

Damien, who was watching the whole fiasco while concealed, wondered whether he should actually listen. After all, if he didn’t come out, wouldn’t that embarrass the Demon King even more?

‘Kek, the urge to tease him is too strong. It’s his fault for always acting so stern.’

But in the end, he decided against it. Too much antagonizing wasn’t a good thing. He soon appeared on the scene not far from Little Xue.

“Hahahaha! Lord Father-in-law, how could I come out and ruin your grand performance? How did you like the beating my little sister gave you?”

“Big brother!”

When Xue'er saw him, she immediately wanted to dash into his arms as she did last time, but unfortunately, the distance between them wasn't far enough for her to gain speed. Instead, she had to settle for entering his arms normally.

But since she received the hug she wanted either way, she didn't mind much.

“Master~!”

Another endearing call rang out as Elitra tried to do the same. But when she got close enough to hug Damien, a little hand reached out and blocked her way.

“Hmph! Big brother is mine! You can't have him!”

Elitra suddenly felt irked. ‘This little girl...is she scheming against me?’

Soon, a silent glaring contest ensued between the two girls, causing sparks to fly in the air.

“Brat, you’re finally willing to come see us?” Demon King Lucius once again interrupted.

“Father-in-law, why must you speak like this? If someone was unaware of the context, they would mistake you for an indignant concubine!”

“Stop calling me Father-in-law! Also, who the hell is an indignant concubine?! Don’t go too far!” Demon King Lucius exploded.

“Calm down, calm down! Don’t take your anger out on me just because you got beat up by my little sister!”

“Argh! Let me out of this realm so I can set you straight! Don’t think I don’t know it was you pulling strings behind the scenes!”

“Hahahaha!” Damien burst out laughing when he saw Lucius’ fuming look. Little Xue soon joined him.

Every time a peel of laughter came out of their mouths, the Demon King’s face turned a different shade of red as he tried to contain his anger. Unfortunately, this only made them laugh even harder.

“Lord, perhaps you should restrain your anger? Your behavior is very unlike your usual character.” His maid suddenly whispered from the side.

It was only after her urging that he finally managed to calm down. He knew he wasn't usually like this, but there was just something about this brat that always managed to rip away his calmness and aloofness and forced him to act out.

'And he keeps calling me father-in-law! Who the hell is his father-in-law? How can my daughter be so subservient to a little brat like him?!' Lucius inwardly lamented. He closed his eyes and started adjusting his breathing.

It took a few minutes for him to finally calm down, and when he opened his eyes again, he saw Damien playing with little Xue as if nothing had happened.

"Big brother! That big sister said that you like being called Master! Should Xue'er call you Master too?" Little Xue asked curiously.

Damien's face immediately paled. "Never! Don't even think about it! Listen, little Xue, this big sister is a bad girl who will teach you bad things! Don't listen to her, okay?"

As he spoke, he sent a silent glare at Elitra, who responded with an aggrieved look. But the sly smile she was concealing couldn't be hidden from him.

'I'll have to thoroughly punish her later.' Damien noted inwardly.

He soon turned his gaze away and noticed that Lucius had managed to calm himself. Seeing this, he nodded to himself.

“Little Xue, these people will be living here with you from now on, so why don’t you give them a tour of the place? Big brother is going to have a chat with that bad man over there.”

“Mm!”

Xue’er might’ve liked to act willful, but she had already greatly matured due to her experiences before Damien saved her. She knew when to give him space.

Lucius’ veins seemed ready to pop out when he heard Damien refer to him as a ‘bad man’ in front of the child, but he held it in and stayed silent as little Xue led the rest of the demons to explore the Main Realm. Soon, only Damien and Lucius were left in the area.

“Sigh. Alright, it’s just us now. Brat, tell me what happened in Acier.”

Chapter 332 Readjusting [4]

Damien nodded before briefly explaining what had transpired in the past few months. He didn’t leave out any details, including the Demon God’s descent and True Voice.

But he only skimmed over what happened within his mental world, only mentioning that some external force helped him recover.

“So it was like that...” Lucius nodded. To be frank, he was surprised by how a young man like Damien could get himself involved in such convoluted things.

Back when he was the same age, he was still training in his hometown, trying to level up by killing the monsters in nearby places. He hadn't even thought about adventuring like Damien was doing, and becoming so strong in so little time.

When comparing himself to Damien when they were similar in age, he couldn't help but feel a bit embarrassed. But he didn't let this embarrassment stay for long.

"That foreign race actually descended personally to deal with you. It definitely isn't as simple as it looks on the surface. For someone of that power level who has lived for untold millennia, it's impossible for such a small hitch in his plans to provoke him to move personally.

"And logically speaking, you should've died at that time. The one who helped you is at a similar level of existence. In my understanding over these 10,000 or more years, there are only two beings of such strength within this realm. One is that being of the race you call the Nox, while the other is the Primordial Undying Tree itself."

Damien's eyes widened at the revelation. Although he had some guesses based on the limitless vitality contained within the greenish-white essence that helped him, hearing it confirmed was a different story altogether.

"So it's really like that..." Damien muttered. "But if that essence came from the Primordial Undying Tree, then why...?"

Why did the visions he saw not include a tree? It wouldn't be too surprising for those survivors to have taken a Sacred Object like the Primordial Undying Tree with them when they fled, but he didn't see anything like that in the visions. There were only humanoid beings in the starship.

'No, it could've been omitted. But, if the visions were truly unintentionally shown to me, then there's no way for something so important to be omitted.'

The faces being blurred could be explained. He didn't know how long ago the events of that vision took place, but it wouldn't be surprising for the faces of people to become hazy with the passing of time.

Besides his own family, Damien didn't even remember the faces of most of those he used to interact with on earth, regardless of how long they had stayed together.

'If that essence came from the Primordial Undying Tree, when coupled with those visions things have become much more complicated.' While he thought inwardly, Damien continued conversing with Lucius.

"We can't say anything about what existences like those two are thinking. We simply don't have the qualifications. Originally, I brought you out of Acier because I wanted your help in eliminating the rest of the Demon race's forces, but it looks like there has to be a change of plans."

"Oh? Why do you say so?" Lucius questioned.

"I can't take risks now that the Demon God has acted personally. Although I'll still work towards eliminating them, it'll have to be done much more slowly than I originally planned. For now, you should just stay in the Sanctuary and get used to it. This will be your new home from now on."

"Brat, don't tell me you're thinking of..."

"Of course I am! Why wouldn't I? For one, Elitra is my little maid and you're her father. Secondly, you're a genuine 4th class existence. Barring personal sentiments, as long as I can take you out of this realm, won't you be a great asset to me when you aren't suppressed."

"Hmph. Although I can't say I enjoy being thought of as an asset, I can't fault your mindset." Lucius begrudgingly agreed.

But inwardly, he couldn't stop his heart from racing. He had been trapped for so many years, the thought of freedom was something he didn't dare to entertain. Now that hope had been placed in front of him again, how could he not be excited?

"Alright. I have to go check on the situation in the outside world now since I've been comatose for months. I'll let you know how things are after I find out."

"Good. Proceed carefully. No matter how much I dislike you, I can't have you dying here."

Damien smiled. "Take care of little Xue while I'm gone. Although she's a bit mischievous, she's a good kid. Also, don't let Elitra teach her anything bad. Sheesh, that girl is a little demoness. I have to wonder how you raised her."

"Sigh, even I don't know how she became like that. She used to be such a well-behaved kid, but now she's going around calling strangers Master and acting all rebellious."

Demon King Lucius shed a silent tear as he thought about the days when his daughter used to be obedient. Damien almost had the urge to tease him again when he saw it, but he shook it off.

After exchanging a few more words with the Demon King, Damien once again exited the Sanctuary.

“Good. Let’s get back to the city and see if anything new has happened.” Damien stretched a bit before he set off.

His figure flashed away, appearing ten meters from where he was originally. It was another great benefit he had received after he woke up. Yet again, it was something that was made possible by his new fine control and level of mental power.

“Risk and reward really come in pairs.” He said as he thought about what he had to endure for him to taste this benefit. “But ten meters, huh...reminds me of the old days. Except, I can actually use my power properly this time.”

Without delaying anymore, Damien made his way back to Darknorth.

It didn’t take long to arrive back in the city with his current teleportation range and speed. When he arrived, he noticed that the atmosphere was far more bustling than when he left.

“Hey, what’s going on here? Why is it so lively?” Damien asked a random passerby.

“Huh? Do you live under a rock or something? How can you not know about the fact that an inheritance was found recently?”

“Inheritance? Those exist here?”

“Of course they do! Are you seriously some kind of hermit? Listen here, kid. Even my ancestors have passed down legendary tales about the Inheritances that lay dormant in our world! It’s said that each and every one of them contains untold power that could turn us into gods! Haiz, if it wasn’t for my own powerlessness, I’d already be at the site!”

Damien widened his eyes. Although he knew the tales were obviously embellished, the fact that there was an inheritance site opening was still good news nonetheless.

“When did this information spread?”

“Ah, it’s already been a few days. All of those esteemed people have already made their way over. You know what the worst part is? The site is only a few kilometers to the west of our city! If I had power, I could’ve already entered before anyone else! The heavens have truly forsaken me! Hey, kid, are you even listening?”

The man noticed that he wasn’t getting any response from the person he was complaining to. Looking up, he realized that he was completely alone. The passerbys on the street were looking at him like he was a crazy person.

His face instantly paled. “D-don’t tell me...I was pouring out my grievances to a ghost?!”

The man immediately took off running. He needed to prepare to sacrifice some of his provisions and pray to his nine-generation ancestors so he wouldn't get cursed.

How could he complain about such minor things to a ghost? How could his troubles be any worse than literally being dead? He lamented his big mouth as he ran, not even noticing the fact that his pockets were a little heavier than they were beforehand.

Meanwhile, Damien had long since left Darknorth. He was naturally headed west towards the location the man had pointed out.

His expression was incredibly ugly as he bolted at high speeds.

"Dammit! How could I miss such an important event?!"

It wouldn't be long before he joined the fray, but unfortunately, others had already gained a head start on him.

'The true final event of this Trial World is here! 9 months have passed already, and there are still three left. But regardless, everything will be decided here and now.'

Damien also realized this when he heard the news. Since Feng Qing'er was the one who spread it, the goal must've been elimination of the demons.

‘Well, the hero always arrives last, right?’

He tried to console himself as he approached the location.

A few kilometers away from him, an ancient temple stood silently among the trees. Its aura pervaded the atmosphere around it, giving off a feeling of desolation.

Within this temple, countless scuffles and life-or-death battles took place every minute as those who entered its grounds battled for the inheritance it held.

Chapter 333 Inheritance [1]

After the news of the Inheritance site spread through the Trial World, many powerful people began to congregate at its location.

Outside the ancient temple, tens of geniuses and even a few beasts who had gained intelligence were lined up in wait. They would have already charged in if it wasn't for the fact that the temple was still sealed.

Qing Tan sat quietly at the side and watched as these forces all continued to pile in, her gaze indifferent.

‘They still aren't here yet...they should be preparing something big then.’

A small smile decorated her face as she thought of it. If the demons really decided to go all out, it was perfect for them.

As Qing Tan was getting ready to close her eyes and begin meditating again, a lithe figure appeared next to her.

“How is it?” The woman asked.

“It’s good so far. Actually, even more people than we expected showed up.” She responded.

“Mm, even I didn’t include these beasts into my calculations. We haven’t had much contact with them, so I was expecting them to be more like the beasts in the ground layer of our 3000 Beast Mountain Range.”

Qing Tan nodded in agreement. “Right, most of them are like that. They just mindlessly slaughter and eat with no real goal. The ones who have appeared here are probably those cream of the crop among the beasts in this realm, as well as those who have been living in seclusion for a while.”

“The Inheritance site really draws all sorts of characters to it. We definitely underestimated its star power.”

Qing Tan shrugged. “It can’t be helped. We aren’t natives here so we don’t understand the appeal of an Inheritance as much as they do. Also, this thing probably doesn’t mean as much to us as it does to them.”

Feng Qing'er furrowed her brows before coming to a realization. "Right, I almost forgot."

For them, the Inheritance was a boost in power, sure, but that was it. It was something they would look at in greed more than anything else. However, it was different for the natives of the secret realm.

They had a power cap at the peak of 3rd class, being unable to progress further. Even more than that, they lived within the confines of a realm that would seem smaller and smaller as one gained more power.

For the humans, this kind of thing didn't matter since they were destined to live as mortals or near mortals for their entire lives. However, the lifestyle of a beast promoted evolution and growth at the lower levels. Only after they gained intelligence would they hold the capacity to become complacent.

But by that point, the pursuit of power was already ingrained in their bones, and the feeling of gaining it would become a kind of pleasure. To realize that there was no hope to continue this pursuit and that they were essentially trapped in a cage for their whole lives, wasn't it only natural that they would feel disillusioned?

Something like an Inheritance site was hope for them. These Inheritances were the best way for them to gain massive boosts in power and ability. And considering the kinds of rumors about the Inheritances that spread through the Trial World, perhaps they even saw it as a hope of freedom.

Only, finding an Inheritance was already an extremely rare thing. And when one found an Inheritance, they'd usually do everything they could to keep it to themselves. Since the Inheritance sites didn't raise

massive spectacles when they opened, it was even rarer for one to steal an Inheritance found by someone else unless that person failed and died within.

For an Inheritance site to be publicized like this, of course all parties converged as soon as they could.

As Qing Tan and Feng Qing'er conversed about these things, more and more people arrived. Soon, the number had already crossed the hundreds.

There weren't many outside geniuses when they first entered the Trial World in the first place. In the later battles, more than half had met their end. The majority of those who had come for the Inheritance opening were natives of the Trial World, bringing immense surprise to those geniuses who didn't realize there were so many experts in hiding.

Suddenly, a gloomy aura pervaded the atmosphere. The sky turned dark as it was blotted out by hundreds of black specks.

"They're here." Feng Qing'er muttered as she peered into the sky.

"Mm." Qing Tan let out a sound of agreement.

The auras blotting out the sky soon began to descend. Those standing beneath them unwittingly made space, pressured by their intimidation.

As they descended, their forms finally became visible.

“Hisss...” Qing Tan breathed in a cold breath.

Hundreds of Demon Captains and Generals lined the ground like organized soldiers. Each and every one of them was emanating a bloodthirsty aura. Their hands were all gripped on heavy chains that seemed too large to be realistic.

Attached to those chains were the abominations that had lost their purpose due to the power of those the demons had been facing recently. But with the current circumstance, even these were brought out.

Each chain held tens or hundreds of abominations that clawed and bit at anything they could find. They were extremely rabid, and even with their low strength, their behavior alone was enough to heighten the intimidation factor.

But even the combined aura of these thousands of abominations and hundreds of Generals and Captains couldn't hold a candle to the auras of those who stood at their helm.

Four Apostles, two men and two women, with sharp gazes that pierced the surroundings. Since they were in the outside world, they had assumed their hierarchal position as Commanders.

In front of them, there were three figures that stood out the most.

One was a curvaceous woman who caused the hearts of men to swoon even as she stood and did nothing. Some were already foaming at the mouth because they couldn't handle her beauty.

"Demon Queen Eliza." Feng Qing'er muttered. She and Qing Tan naturally recognized the woman, as they had met personally only a few months back.

Next to her was a burly man with a gargantuan stature. He was at least 10 feet tall, with muscles that seemed to be carved out of pure steel. His face wasn't handsome, but contained a rugged air that had its own charm.

"He must be Granheim." Qing Tan said. Although they had never seen him before, they had heard from Damien in Acier about the Demon Kings' mental transmissions. The voice Damien described could only fit this man.

"As for Eden, that bastard said he couldn't even identify their gender through their voice. I wonder what they look like?" Feng Qing'er pondered out loud. But she didn't have to wait long for her answer.

Descending at the forefront of the entire demon army was a being who couldn't be described as anything other than androgynous.

His face had the structure of a man's, but the features of a woman's. His body was lithe and graceful, but wasn't curvaceous. His skin was pale white, matching the long wheat-colored hair that descended to his waist.

"That's...a man, right?"

“...maybe?”

Many hushed conversations took place in the surroundings as people witnessed the Demon Army’s grand entrance. But soon, their attention shifted back to the ancient temple.

Even if the opposition had brought an army, it didn’t matter much. Within the Inheritance site, it was every man for themselves.

Qing Tan and Feng Qing’er nodded to each other before hopping off the tree branch they were situated on. Now, it was time to imitate the manner of a certain hateful man they knew.

“Yo~ Demon Queen! It’s been so long since we last met! Did you miss us?”

Chapter 334 Inheritance [2]

Hearing the rude manner in which she was addressed, Eliza instinctually turned around to punish the one who dared, but when she saw the two girls, she noticed that they looked a bit familiar.

“You two...” Eliza furrowed her brows and muttered. Her expression soon became mocking.

“Right, you’re the two companions of that brat. How is he by the way? I heard he got done in by the Demon God.”

“Ahh, you don’t have to worry about him. Haven’t you heard the saying? Good people die early but a scourge will last a thousand years. As if some fake god can kill him off.”

Qing Tan returned her words with a smile of derision. “But, talking about him so soon after we met, don’t tell me you’re...missing him?”

As Qing Tan spoke, her gaze traveled down to a certain part of the Demon Queen’s body.

Eliza gnashed her teeth. “Why the hell would I miss some random trash?! Don’t talk bullshit.”

Qing Tan smiled knowingly when she saw Eliza getting defensive. Truth be told, she hadn’t been there when Damien had humiliated the Demon Queen. Just based on the words Eliza was yelling while chasing after Damien, she had made a guess.

And it seemed she was right.

Eliza was feeling especially heated. She didn’t want to admit it, but the feeling of that bastard’s hands on her body still remained with her even now. She could vaguely feel a burning sensation on her skin whenever she thought about that day.

No matter how much she tried to go back to her previous habits, she wasn’t able to derive the same satisfaction she had beforehand. After all, she had discovered her kink, but it was too shameful for her to actually exercise it.

For being the one that taught her what her body craved, she wanted to tear Damien to shreds. If it wasn't for him, she wouldn't have ended up in such a pitiful state.

"Enough."

Just as she was about to counter again, a gruff voice interrupted. To the side, Demon King Granheim was looking over indifferently.

"Don't embarrass us. It's been so long since we've shown our faces, people will look at your performance and think we're nothing much."

"Tch."

Eliza turned away indignantly. Meanwhile, Granheim turned his attention back to Feng Qing'er and Qing Tan.

"It was the two of you that gathered everyone today, was it not? I assume your plan is to eliminate our forces. While it's not a bad idea to borrow a knife to kill, do you really believe that you can stop us?"

Qing Tan glared at the Demon King. Although he seemed like he was talking about the demon race in general, she was well aware that the last 'us' was exclusively referring to the Demon Kings.

“Whether we can stop you or not, you’ll find out soon enough.” Feng Qing’er responded with a humph.

“Say, where’s that guy from before, though? Don’t tell me he actually died?” Granheim suddenly said.

He was also interested in Damien. How could he not be? Regardless of the reason behind it, he had still forced the Demon God to act personally in order to deal with him.

“Didn’t I already say?” Qing Tan responded. “He’s alive and kicking. If you’re lucky enough, maybe you’ll be able to meet him inside.”

Granheim grinned. “Good! I’ve been wanting to see what’s so special about that brat. If I can have the chance to fight him, I’ll be satisfied.”

Feng Qing’er glanced at the final Demon King among them, who had stood silently throughout the whole interaction. Eden had a light, almost carefree, smile on his face as he observed the ancient temple. It was almost as if nothing else in the world concerned him.

When he noticed Feng Qing’er’s gaze, he briefly looked back at her and gave her a slight nod of acknowledgment before turning back to the temple.

‘Of the three of them, I’m most worried about him...’ She thought to herself. The other two had relatively easy personalities to see through, but it wasn’t the same for Eden.

Eliza was the most easily provoked, so dealing with her was the simplest. Even though Granheim wasn't the same in this regard, from what she could tell, he was a battle maniac. This kind of person was relatively straightforward in their ways.

Eden hadn't spoken yet. In fact, he had done nothing besides stare at the ancient temple since they arrived. But something about his presence screamed danger. His very existence made her want to run and never look back.

'Can this plan really deal with them?'

The two of them hadn't really accounted for the Demon Kings. They were wild cards in this plan.

From what they had learned over their stay in the Trial World, the relationship between the demon race and the Demon Kings wasn't as harmonious as it looked on the outside. They weren't sure about how the Demon Kings would move in the event that their plan was successful.

But more than that, they had learned from Damien that the Demon Kings could be forcefully controlled by the Apostles. In the event that they ran into an Apostle who had a Demon King by their side, everything would be for naught.

'We can only hope they get separated upon entry. If not, we have to find a way to separate them.'

Feng Qing'er and Qing Tan had never truly made a concrete plan, since the actual Inheritance site itself was out of their control.

Instead, they created the spine of the Olán while granting themselves the flexibility to change things on the spot if necessary. At the moment, they were discussing said changes.

Just as the tension between the Demon Kings and the two girls seemed to have subsided, the ancient temple began rumbling.

A heavy aura soon pervaded the atmosphere and filled the space with a feeling of desolation. As this feeling grew, the flora in the surroundings began to wither and rot.

Even the experts gathered could feel a subtle pull on their bodies that tried to return them to dust.

Everyone's expressions hardened. They understood what was happening. It was finally time for the Inheritance site to open.

"Did you find anything?" Granheim sent a mental transmission to Eden.

"Nothing. None of the records on Inheritance sites that I've collected match with the characteristics of this one. What happens inside will remain a mystery." Eden replied.

"Are we still going through with what we originally planned?" There was a hint of hesitation in Granheim's voice.

“Why not? Doesn’t it seem more interesting to do things this way?” Eden sent back with a smile.

“Interesting...your personality will never change, will it. Fine, I’ll follow your plan. But if I die, I’ll torment your soul for eternity.”

“Yes, yes, I understand.”

As the Demon Kings conversed, the spread of desolation seemed to reach its end. The ancient aura in the atmosphere strengthened to untold degrees.

And then...

Bang!

The massive doors of the ancient temple swung open with a bang. An endless corridor was revealed within.

“It’s open!”

“Let’s go!”

“Don’t push me!”

The gathered experts rushed in with all their might. Oddly enough, there didn’t seem to be any traps on the entrance.

The Demon Army soon rushed in as well. With the abominations in front and the Demon Kings in the back, they entered the temple unhindered.

Seeing the commotion, Feng Qing’er and Qing Tan looked at each other.

“No matter what, let’s meet up first.”

“Right. Be careful not to die in there.”

“Please. Die? If that bastard is a scourge that lasts a thousand years, then I’m one that lasts ten thousand.”

“Ha! Well said!”

Throwing around some casual banter, the two of them also entered the temple.

Chapter 335 Inheritance [3]

“What a domineering temple,” Damien muttered as he observed the Inheritance site in front of him.

The temple didn’t look big from the outside, with a stature befitting any normal temple one would see in the outside world. The material used to build it couldn’t be identified, but it had clearly been worn down with time. It didn’t have any shine or luster like it should have.

The temple overall looked dilapidated, but those two massive stone doors that signified its entrance were still as majestic as ever. On those doors, there were carvings in a language Damien didn’t understand, but they seemed to contain a profound aura that couldn’t be hidden.

“But even with those characters, if it wasn’t for the aura this temple is radiating, I probably wouldn’t even consider it as an inheritance site.”

The aura of ancientness and desolation had already corroded a 10-kilometer radius around the temple, and it was still continuing to spread.

“With this kind of commotion, it’d be a miracle if nobody noticed it. Weren’t inheritance sites supposed to be discreet?”

Although he wondered about it, he knew he didn’t have much time to dally. He was already many days behind the rest of the competitors that entered the temple grounds. And within these days, some people might have already reached the most central area of the temple.

“Hm?”

Damien's attention sharply turned to the ancient characters on the door. His eyes narrowed as he glared at a certain spot.

'Am I mistaken? I could've sworn I felt a gaze observing me just then.'

Damien furrowed his brows, but in the end, he ignored the feeling.

Well, no time to think it over. I should stop delaying and head inside.'

The stone doors were still swung open as if the temple hadn't finished accepting guests yet. Damien poured mana into his eyes and scanned the entrance for traps, but after finding nothing, he immediately shot forward.

When he entered, he found himself inside of a seemingly endless corridor with hundreds of doors lining both sides of the hallway.

Each door had a different set of inscriptions or patterns on them, but with Damien's lack of knowledge on the history of the Trial World, he had no way of discerning them.

'Let's continue walking for now instead of rashly picking the door. Either way, something tells me that I'll have to pick at random later on anyway.'

Damien continued down the corridor while observing the surroundings. The experience reminded him of the ancient temple back on Apeiron where he had first learned about and met the Nox.

‘That guy was way different than the ones I’ve met recently. Where does the inconsistency come from, though?’

In reality, the only pure-blooded Nox Damien had met since that day was the Demon God overseeing the Primordial Undying Realm. Everyone else was simply corrupted by them to be used as lackeys.

The thing Damien didn’t understand, though, was more related to intelligence.

‘The fact that he had been sealed for thousands of years can be used to somewhat justify his feral state, but I don’t think it’s that simple. He was in stasis, so his mind shouldn’t have been worn down too much. But if the Nox were really so unintelligent, how could they scheme so much and corrupt these high-level people that I’ve met?’

Combined with the fact that the Demon God didn’t seem to be unintelligent at all, Damien couldn’t understand why he felt such a discrepancy. By all rights, with the information he currently held, it should be easy to conclude that the Nox he met in the ancient temple was an outlier. But his instincts told him otherwise.

‘I seriously need to become more informed about them. Fighting an unknown enemy is damn annoying.’

As he thought, Damien had traveled a few hundred meters down the endless corridor, but the doors on each side didn’t lessen at all. Even the patterns on each door were still unique, never once overlapping.

“Haa...if I continue being indecisive, I’ll just end up walking down this corridor forever. Let’s speed up and see if there’s any door that feels special. If not, I’ll just choose a random one.”

Damien increased his speed, using lightning to boost his movement. He kept his awareness concentrated on a 30-meter radius around him to watch out for traps.

He wanted to teleport instead, but thinking that he might miss something important if he was skipping space, he decided against it.

He kept up his pace for another half an hour without pause, using his spread awareness to inspect the doors as he passed. Unfortunately, he couldn’t find anything special among them even with the amount of time that passed.

“Fuck it, we ball.”

Damien took a sharp turn to the left and charged into the nearest door. He had no interest in staying within the corridor until someone else claimed the inheritance.

He pushed open the door and proceeded to enter the room behind it. When he scanned the area, his jaw almost dropped.

The walls were lined with treasures of various kinds. SSS rank and Chaos rank artifacts weren’t even rare. In one corner, there was a bookshelf filled with hundreds of pill bottles.

'If I was an appraiser, I'd be able to find something of true worth within this room, but I can't, so I'll just take it all!'

As Damien moved to collect all the treasures in the room, he felt a ringing sensation in the back of his mind.

"This is..."

During the past three months while he laid comatose, the only thing he did was improve his mental power drastically. Because of this, his perception was far greater than it was in the past.

In fact, even his All-Seeing Eyes had seen a jump in quality due to his improvement. When he felt the ringing sensation, he didn't hesitate to pour mana into his eyes to scan the room once again.

"No wonder I felt like that. This whole setup is a trap."

The room Damien saw now didn't contain any treasures along the walls, nor were there pills or other valuables. The room was empty besides a single book that sat in the center of an indiscreet wooden box.

"If I had chosen any of the treasures on the wall, I probably would've been transported out or killed. Regardless of what would've happened, I would've gained nothing and instead missed out on the true treasure in the room."

Damien walked towards that indiscreet wooden box that was hidden amongst the illusion he once saw and picked up the book that sat on its surface.

“What is this, though? It’s so worn down and doesn’t even have a title...”

Damien opened the book and flipped through its pages, disheartened to see that they were also empty.

He tried many different methods to see if words would show up on the pages, including infusing mana into the book, but it was all for naught.

“Whatever. Even if I can’t activate it, it’s still a treasure. Maybe I just don’t have an affinity with whatever this book is for.”

Thinking so, he stored the book away in his subspace and glanced around the room again.

“Ah, there it is.”

Finding a hidden mechanism on the wall, he quickly went over and pulled the lever. In the next instant, the floor below his feet disappeared, leaving room for a dark abyss that didn’t seem to have a bottom.

“Welp. Guess I’ll just fall then.” Damien muttered.

His body soon fell prey to the laws of gravity as he plummeted into the abyss.

Chapter 336 Inheritance [4]

“I don’t really care if you cry~ On the real you should’ve never lied~”

Darkness was present on all sides and only silence reigned within the abyss. The only thing giving it life was the singing of a certain man who was currently falling through it.

‘Damn, I’m so bored.’

Damien had already been falling for what he assumed was at least an hour, but he had yet to reach even something close to the bottom of the abyss.

It wasn’t even that he simply sat still and fell, he actually tried multiple times to accelerate his fall to no avail. He extended his awareness as far down as it could go, only for it to be met with darkness.

He constantly teleported downwards at his full 10-meter range, but as time passed, the speed of his fall had exceeded the distance he could travel with teleportation, making it a futile task.

In the end, Damien had succumbed to boredom and began singing random old songs he had heard in his childhood. He didn’t really listen to music that came out in his own era, but instead listened to the old classics his father and mother would always listen to.

'2016 was really the golden era of music. The shit they made before I left earth was trash in comparison.'

Damien lamented the fate of the entertainment industry in his time as he fell. When another hour passed, he got bored of even this.

Realizing that his fall wouldn't end anytime soon, Damien put away all his stray thoughts and assumed a meditative posture in the air.

He didn't even need to tune out his surroundings for concentration since the abyss was void of noise and light, but he slightly numbed his physical senses so he wouldn't become too conscientious about the ever-increasing speed at which he fell.

Once he had adjusted his state properly, Damien closed his eyes and began to meditate.

It had been a long time since he sat still and focused on comprehension. Although he wanted to focus on awakening his time affinity, there weren't enough noticeable time essence fluctuations in the atmosphere for him to do so.

He didn't have the comprehension level on time to simply use the ever-present essence for his cultivation.

Since it was like that, he decided to go back to his roots and focus on space.

'I've been practicing and comprehending space for so long, but can I truly call myself an expert? Even though I'm only a 3rd class, I feel that my comprehension is still relatively exceptional at my level. Still, it isn't enough.'

Whenever Damien comprehended space, he always focused on a certain concept so that he could create a new technique. He used the ideas he already had in his head to guide his comprehension.

So far, there were a few different concepts he had comprehended. Spatial destruction was the vein he usually focused on, with Spatial Collapse, Bladeless, and even Dimensional Severance being heavily influenced by it.

Another concept he had decent comprehension on was distance. Horizon Break, which ignored distance, and Starfall, which shortened distance to call forth celestial bodies for him to use as hammers, were both influenced by this concept.

Other than these two, there were many miscellaneous concepts that he had some understanding on, but he hadn't truly expanded on them much.

'My current level is titled as Dimensional Magic. Distance is a concept that can be related to dimensions, so is transport, but other than that I haven't really taken the time to study what makes Dimensional Magic different from the Spatial Magic I had before. I haven't delved deep enough into the concepts related to it, which is why its skill level hasn't risen much since I obtained it.'

The closest thing he had to true Dimensional Magic were the abilities he gained and used as a Celestial, but those abilities came to him almost instinctually. They didn't count towards his comprehension progress.

'4th class has a close connection to comprehension, and even 3rd class has some reliance on it. I should take more time to cultivate diligently along with leveling up. This way, I can exert a higher degree of power. Currently, my physical body and devour skill are the main reasons I can fight above my level.'

As Damien analyzed his current state, he never stopped absorbing and comprehending the essence of space that constantly surrounded him.

As time passed, his body began flickering in and out of existence as if he was merging with space itself.

'Dimensional Magic isn't simple. It relates to crossing, destroying, and even melding with dimensions. Perhaps it even has connections to three-dimensional space.'

Damien was used to thinking about power on a grander scale. He would always think about the biggest and most destructive uses of his power first. As he had always considered what Dimensional Magic would look like at its peak, he never stopped to think about what he could do with it at his current level.

'Instead of focusing on dimensions, plural, I should put my focus on the dimension itself. It's not that different from what I've been doing with space since the beginning, it's just a far more profound and complex application.'

As Damien delved deeper into the secrets of Dimensional Magic and understood how he could comprehend it with his current power level, his body became more and more incorporeal. Spatial

essence rushed into his figure to nourish him even without his conscious call, flowing through his physical body and attempting to transform it.

'If it's like that, then...'

Many hours passed and Damien suddenly felt like he was on the cusp of gaining serious insight. But at that moment, his comprehensive state was interrupted by a large number of growls and roars that came from the surroundings.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The ground shook due to the impact of countless heavy footsteps. The tremors spread like shockwaves, abruptly waking Damien up.

'Damn! I almost had it! Wait, hm?'

He suddenly noticed that he was no longer falling through the abyss. At some point, he had landed on the ground. But there was no impact.

'Wait, I'm not even on the ground right now. Holy shit!'

He realized that he was actually in a relatively precarious position. His body had become largely incorporeal while he was merging with space during his comprehension, so he hadn't impacted the ground at all, even though he continued to fall.

Instead, when he reached the ground he had sunk into it. At the moment, he was occupying the same space as the ground itself.

'This is the same thing I used to amputate Elitra's legs back then. Luckily I'm still incorporeal, or I would've been blasted to meat paste immediately.'

Damien carefully observed the surroundings and spread his awareness.

'I'm not too deep underground. I should be able to reach the surface with relative ease.'

Damien carefully glided through space. He was like a fish in water, or rather, he was the water itself. It was as if he was one with space, having no physical form to speak of.

As he waded through space, he reached the surface and popped out of the ground. Only at that moment did his concentration break, allowing him to materialize into the physical plane once again.

'That state must've been a residual effect of my comprehension. If I had just been able to gain that spark of insight I felt, I probably could enter and exit that stage consciously. Fuck! Someone just had to come begging for death.'

Damien's eyes held a bloodthirsty glint. He was truly pissed that his training had been interrupted.

He glared into the darkness around him and felt the approaching beast tide through the tremors of the ground.

"You lot...allow this Young Master to teach you why you shouldn't go around courting death!"

Chapter 337 Inheritance [5]

Damien shot forward without care and began wildly throwing punches into the incoming horde of beasts.

He had already checked their strength level with his awareness, and none of them were strong enough to cause him concern. The main problem was, their numbers seemed endless.

'My awareness range is around 10,000 kilometers right now, yet I still can't see an end to this beast tide. What kind of place is this to contain such a massive number of beasts?'

He had obviously fallen into this abyss from the ancient temple, so logically speaking this space should be the underground of the Trial World. But how could there be such a vast underground abyss that nobody had discovered yet?

Damien didn't spend too much time thinking about it. Instead, he focused his attention on slaughtering beasts.

Although there were plenty of faster ways to go about it than his current method, he actually wanted to use this opportunity to test some things.

'It's been so long since you were born, but I haven't had the opportunity to properly use you yet. Go wild! Show me what you can do!'

Damien transmitted his thoughts to the Void Flame, which flicked its tongues in excitement. He spread his arms wide and summoned forth the flame that was unique to him.

In this abyss, the flame was almost invisible. Small flickers of golden light were the only indication that it existed in the first place.

With Damien's motion, the flames spread forth like a tsunami, consuming everything in their path. The shrieks of beasts soon rang out through the abyss.

But the Void Flame wasn't a simple flame. In the first place, the reason Damien named it such was due to its main characteristic which matched the ability of his Void Essence.

As burnt beast corpses piled up, they began to turn into pure essence that was absorbed by the flame. With each beast that died, the flame seemed to rage on stronger.

The tsunami became wilder and fiercer, spreading until hundreds of meters were covered in a sea of flames. In the next instant, that sea became a typhoon.

The flames burned through the air in the abyss, climbing into the air as if it was a ladder. With the way the flames whipped and whirled around, multiple tornados of flame had soon taken shape.

Damien watched in awe as the beasts within a certain radius of himself were all burnt to ash the second they stepped into the flames. The radius kept expanding, eclipsing multiple kilometers in only a few minutes and still growing.

‘Couldn’t I just stand here and watch this beast tide be reduced to nothing?’ Damien wondered as he watched the flame.

Although he did need to give it a significant amount of mana at the start, the mana cost had rapidly declined as the flame grew. It was because the flame used the essence of the beasts it devoured to sustain itself instead of wasting Damien’s own mana.

‘A self-sustaining flame that burns brighter the more it kills. It’s pretty much perfect.’

Damien nodded in satisfaction. But he was never one to stand still and let others do the work for him. Even if the flames were growing rapidly, they could only expand around a kilometer every five minutes. With this kind of speed, it’d take a few days to clear out all the beasts within the abyss.

Instead of waiting for that to happen, Damien rose to the sky and rapidly flew past the 10,000-kilometer range that his awareness could detect. Since he could still feel his connection to the Void Flames, he wasn’t worried about the beasts he left behind.

‘Even after spreading my awareness from this point, the beast tide still seems endless. There’s no way this space is beneath the Trial World, and there’s no way these beasts are naturally acting like this.’

There must be something afoot. But I can try to figure that out later. For now, I should properly make use of this beautiful exp farm that's been provided to me!

Damien let go of the mana he was using to fly and let gravity take him down to the ground. In fact, he even used vector control to increase the momentum of his fall.

Boom!

His impact caused a crater tens of kilometers wide to form in the ground of the abyss. The beasts within that area were all smashed to a pulp by the following shockwave.

'Let's get to work!'

Damien's nails sharpened into claws and his teeth into fangs. He charges into the beast tide and wildly ripped apart any beast he came across.

Hours passed.

Limbs and guts of beasts flew through the air and blood began to form rivers on the ground. Damien was still charging through the beast tide without even a hint of exhaustion on his face.

This kind of battle, he was utterly suited for. He was emitting torrents of mana like it was nothing, not even caring about consumption during a long and drawn-out battle against multiple enemies.

After all, why would he?

“Devour.”

With his call, Void Essence gushed out of his body like a plague and eclipsed the area tens of kilometers around him. Every beast corpse in the specified range was efficiently turned into nutrients that quelled Damien’s exhaustion and replenished his mana.

Every time he felt even a hint of exhaustion, he’d repeat the same move and return to peak shape. Against a large number of weaker enemies? No matter how many of them came, Damien would kill.

Hours passed once again.

By this point, Damien’s kill count had already reached the tens of thousands. All of these beasts were at 3rd class, but they couldn’t compare to the likes of the Apostles and those who could actually give Damien trouble.

And those tens of thousands were just the beasts Damien had killed with his own hands. He erected his vector shield to passively block the beasts around him and turned to look into the distance.

Even though he had traveled thousands of kilometers away in his killing spree, he could still see the flickers of gold on the horizon. What once looked like a little candle wisp was now the size of a raging storm.

One had to remember that the majority of the Void Flame was black. The gold was only a small portion of it. And if that small portion was blazing like a sun at the moment, how big was the blackness?

‘Looks like it’s become so big that it can no longer support itself solely with the essence it gains from devouring.’

Damien thought as he watched the flame. From a while ago, he had noticed that his mana consumption had become preposterous.

A black hole slightly bigger than Damien’s body was rotating behind him and rapidly sucking in the ambient mana in the atmosphere to cope with this loss. Even Damien himself had to continuously devour beasts for the same purpose.

‘It’s convenient until a certain point. Well, it’s only natural that a flame of that size would become inconvenient to sustain. Once I become powerful enough, though, even this much won’t be a problem.’

Although the Void Flame could indeed grow and be self-sustaining with the essence it devoured from its enemies, the amount of essence it needed would grow along with the flame.

Now that the flame itself was an ocean ten thousand kilometers in size, the beasts in the vicinity couldn’t quench its thirst anymore.

If it wanted to maintain its current size over a long period of time, it's need to consume tens of thousands of beasts every minute. Even with the massive size of the beast tide Damien was currently facing, this kind of consumption was impossible to sustain.

'Come back.'

Damien transmitted his message to the Void Flame. Although it transmitted back its unwillingness, it still complied with his order. Soon, that massive sea of flames disappeared from the horizon and a small hand-sized ball of flames returned to Damien's palm.

Seeing how the tongues of flame emitting from its body seemed to be drooping sadly, Damien smiled.

'This flame is surprisingly cute.'

"Did you think we were done?" He said out loud. The flame made a motion as if it was peeking its ears up.

Damien's smile grew wider. "Look at how many beasts are left here. How can we possibly be done? Go ahead and start again. I won't stop you until you reach the same size as last time."

The flame danced joyfully and rushed back into the ever-increasing crowd of beasts. Once again, it started its journey to grow from a ball to a limitless ocean.

Chapter 339 Dinner Party [1]

When the large doors leading to the dining room slammed shut, the enticing scent of food became even stronger.

Soon enough, tens of maidservants appeared from a certain door carrying hundreds of platters of food. There were only around 65 people in the dining room, but the food was enough to serve even three times that amount.

“Look at those maidservants. Who would’ve thought there were people living in here?” Demon King Granheim commented while drooling. It wasn’t certain whether he was drooling due to the food or the women.

“That’s wrong.” Eliza immediately interjected. She was the only Demon King who specialized in mental power. In comparison to others, she could see much more.

“These maidservants are nothing more than soulless husks. They are merely completing tasks that were assigned to them by a master, with no will or consciousness of their own.”

Damien quietly nodded when he heard her assessment. After his coma, his mental power had also grown tremendously. Although the bodies of the maidservants carried a life aura no different from a living person, their spiritual intent wasn’t present.

Spiritual intent was an odd thing. From what Damien could garner, it was just like life aura for the soul. But for people who trained their mental power, spiritual intent could be used to attack and defend as well.

All living beings had spiritual intent. It signified that a soul inhabited their body. For a mental realm master, seeing someone's spiritual intent was normal. For these maids to have none. It meant they were quite literally soulless puppets.

Damien didn't concentrate on the maids for long. After they placed the hundreds of platters onto the long dining table, they left without taking any more action. After that, the dining hall was once again enveloped in silence.

Damien looked around curiously at the others before shrugging his shoulders. "Welp, If nobody else is willing then I'll dig in first."

He dragged a few platters over to himself and opened them up. The delicate scent of delicious meat strongly wafted into his nose.

"Nice!"

Without hesitation, Damien dug in. He didn't even have the common decorum of a person when eating. He simply grabbed and stuffed whatever he wanted into his mouth without care.

"Gaha!"

He took a swig of the unknown liquor that had been presented along with the food and let out a satisfied sound. It was only then that he looked up again.

“Hm? Why is everyone staring at me?”

He noticed that all eyes were on him. It wasn't even just the few people around him that were gawking at him, but everyone at the table.

Feng Qing'er was stunned when she saw his roguish behavior. “Are you stupid?! Don't you know what kind of place you're in? How do you know the food isn't poisoned?” She yelled in exasperation.

“Mm! Mm!”

Sounds of agreement came from the crowd.

“So what if it's poisoned? Why should I care? Do you know how annoying it is to eat raw beast meat for days on end to satiate myself? I need some of this good stuff for compensation!”

Although devouring wasn't technically eating, it was basically the same thing. Although he couldn't “taste” the things he devoured with his skill, he could still technically taste them. It was just that he was tasting quality of essence rather than actual flavor.

As for the beasts he had been devouring over the past few days, they tasted like shit.

“Anyway, enough about me. What have you guys been doing over the—”

Clang!

Damien's words suddenly paused. His body jerked forward and his head slammed down onto the table in front of him, causing the platters around him to clatter.

"Damien?! You fucking idiot! This is why I told you to stop!" Feng Qing'er screamed. She rushed to grab his body and use her Reincarnation Flames to cleanse him of the poison, but all of a sudden, he shot back up.

"Boo!"

"Ahh!"

Feng Qing'er let out a surprised shriek at his sudden action.

"Hahahaha! Miss High and Mighty screaming like a little girl! I never thought I'd get to see it!"

Damien boisterously laughed. On the other hand, Feng Qing'er's face turned red in fury.

This bastard was actually tricking her? Did he have a death wish? But recalling that he was too strong for her to beat, her face flushed with even more anger.

“Hmph!”

In the end, she huffed and turned away with indignation.

“So~ the food isn’t poisoned?” Qing Tan asked curiously with amusement in her eyes.

Seeing that Damien was fine, a few others had already put some food in their mouths to satiate the fatigue they’d built up while they were in the Inheritance site.

“Nope. The food is definitely poisoned.”

“Kah!”

“Blegh!”

A few coughed up their food when they heard his words. As for the others, they collapsed on the spot while foaming at the mouth.

“See, I told you.” Damien nodded matter-of-factly.

“What an interesting kid...” Demon King Eden muttered on the side.

Meanwhile, the rest sat in silence once again. Due to Damien’s stunt, around 5 people had died from the poison. But when compared to the total number of them, it wasn’t much.

‘My poison resistance has significantly increased, hasn’t it? Void Essence can purify energy-based poisons, and from what I just found out, the Void Flames can purify physical poisons. It’s good that that weakness has been taken care of.’

When he had started consuming the food, he had almost stopped right away. He felt the poison entering his bloodstream and immediately trying to corrode him from the inside out. It was extremely quick and lethal.

However, his Void Flames had responded in kind. They devoured the poison and turned it into essence to feed on, becoming slightly bigger in the process. It was only after seeing this that Damien started to eat.

‘Disregarding that, it seems I’ve been placed with the rest even though I arrived way later...was my performance so satisfactory? Or is there another reason I got to skip the line?’

It was something Damien had been curious about ever since he noticed the people who entered the dining room. These 60 should be the only ones left in the Inheritance site. If not, then they were the 60 most qualified to receive the inheritance.

If it was like that, then why was he able to join them? If the illusion within the small room was counted, Damien had only been through two trials. And both of those trials were relatively easy.

He felt that something was wrong, but he couldn't place his finger on what.

'I'll have to keep it in the back of my mind and stay wary. I can't be letting things devolve like they did in Acier anymore.'

"Anyway, as I was saying before, what have you guys been up to since you got here?"

Damien continued the previous conversation as if nothing happened. The poison was an easy-to-see-through trick, so there's no way it'd be the true purpose of the dinner party. What was to come would naturally be much more trying.

Damien stuck a chicken leg into his mouth and savored the taste. His attention then focused on the girls as he waited for them to tell their story.

"I'll start!" Qing Tan volunteered. "So basically, it went like this..."

And then, she began telling Damien everything they'd experienced in the few days he wasn't with them.

The story wasn't actually very convoluted.

When Feng Qing'er and Qing Tan entered the ancient temple, they arrived in the same long corridor as Damien did, along with everyone else. And just like him, they had walked pretty far before they chose a door to enter.

The demons and the rest of the participants had also split up and entered the various doors in the corridor. As for their fate? Perhaps nobody knew besides the one controlling those maidservants.

When the two girls entered the room they chose, they were immediately stunned into a stupor. There were two paintings on the wall in front of them, and no matter how hard they tried to look away, they found it impossible.

It was as if their souls were being sucked into the painting.

Feng Qing'er was the first to escape her predicament. Her Reincarnation Flames worked similarly to Damien's Void Essence in its ability to cleanse outside influences. Since it was especially effective on evil presences, she was snapped out of her daze quickly before her soul was stolen.

After that, she was able to take Qing Tan out of her dazed state as well. When the two regained their senses, the floor dropped out from below them.

But unlike Damien, they didn't end up in the abyss. They were instead transported to a true treasure room filled with various pills and artifacts that they had taken for themselves.

After escaping the treasure room, their next destination was an arena. There, they had to fight for their lives and survive 10 battles before they were allowed to leave.

Their opponents weren't those who entered the ancient temple with them, though. They were soulless puppets like those maidservants with strength that was near that of the Apostles. Only, those puppets could fight much better than the Apostles, who spent most of their lives lazing around.

And when they escaped the arena, they ended up in the dining hall. That's all there was to it.

"Doesn't that seem a bit too...easy?" Damien asked while taking another sip of the liquor in front of him.

"Yeah, that's exactly what we were thinking. Even though the arena fights were genuinely difficult, it wasn't to the point of being able to take us to the final stage of the inheritance trials, which I assume is what this dinner party is." Feng Qing'er spoke in agreement.

"Not only that, but the timing is also off. We didn't spend more than two days at the most doing all of that, but for you to arrive here as well, how long were you within the ancient temple?" Qing Tan asked.

"Around two days. And when I entered, the people outside said that the temple had already been open for a few days already. Looks like there's something wrong with the time in this temple as well..." Damien muttered.

'But why couldn't I sense it?'

He could sense the time dilation in the Trial World, but not within the ancient temple. In fact, he had actually lamented about it while falling through the abyss before.

‘Wait...I only spent 2 days here, and they said they spent 2 days as well. If so, I wasn’t experiencing a time dilation but they were?’

It would make sense if it was like that. If time was sped up for them so that their activities only took two days for them while being four in the outside world, everything would add up.

Damien took another swig from his glass of liquor. This was already his fourth glass, and every time he finished the glass it would magically fill up again.

“What an odd realm...besides the time dilation, the trials are also too easy. I wonder what’s going on?”

Feng Qing’er chugged down her fifth glass of liquor as she responded.

“Not all Inheritance sites are created equal. Perhaps we just had bad luck and encountered something average.”

But Damien shook his head in denial. “You said that hundreds of people entered, didn’t you? For only 60 of us to remain, it naturally wasn’t an easy trial.”

“He’s right. Either we got extremely lucky with our door picks, or we’re being guided by someone more powerful than us.”

Damien furrowed his brows. He didn’t like the idea of being led on a string, but it seemed to be to their benefit this time.

‘Could it be...?’

He questioned whether it was the doing of the Primordial Undying Tree, but he had nothing to prove his conjecture. And before he noticed it, he had downed his tenth glass of liquor.

Clang!

The clattering of platters rang out through the silent dining hall. Since Damien and the girls’ conversation happened through sound transmission, even their voices were unheard.

When they turned to look over, a man at the end of the table had collapsed. There was no longer any life aura coming from his body.

Hey, what’s—glug...” Feng Qing’er tried to talk, but her arm picked up her liquor glass and forced her to drink it.

Damien found himself in a similar situation. Without even realizing it, he had been continuously downing the liquor ever since the feast started.

“This isn’t right. It seems the second trial has already started.” He sent another transmission to the girls as he downed his 12th glass of liquor.

“We’re being forced to drink? What kind of test is this?” Feng Qing’er huffed.

“It isn’t that simple.” Qing Tan replied. “We might not be feeling anything, but look over at the rest of the people here.”

Following her words, Damien and Feng Qing’er glanced at the other participants of the dinner party. Just as Qing Tan said, they didn’t look laid back at all.

A few of them were choking on the liquor in their mouths, but the invisible will that forced them to remain in their seats didn’t allow them to spit it out. After they swallowed the liquor, another glass went straight to their mouths.

Clang!

25 glasses of liquor had been drunk. At this point, another 10 people had already collapsed.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

50 more glasses of liquor later, 20 more people collapsed.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Once 100 glasses were drunk, Damien and the girls started feeling the effects as well. They were drowsy and unable to properly rouse their mana. But their mana still moved instinctively to purge the toxic substance from their body.

Under the influence of their mana, they were able to return to normal condition.

But not everyone was the same. Once 200 glasses of liquor had been drunk, 40 people had fallen. Now, there were only 20 left.

“We’re being forced to drink until we die. Truly avid for a dinner party.” Damien commented.

“Ugh...don’t talk. I feel like my head is going to explode.” Qing Tan replied back.

Of the three of them, she was the one with the least resistance to toxins. But since she still had her insane darkness affinity, she had better resistance than most.

The drinking game continued. 300 glasses were drunk, then 400, then 500. It didn't seem like the game would stop until everyone died.

After 900 glasses, only seven people were left. Damien, Qing Tan, Feng Qing'er, the three Demon Kings, and one other beast who had yet to achieve his human form.

As expected, the 6 at the head of the table survived until the end. That beast was the most surprising one. He was seated close to the middle, suggesting that he shouldn't be anything more than average. Yet, he had managed to last until it was only him and the best among the best.

925 glasses were drunk.

The beast began to growl furiously. His eyes turned bloodshot.

950 glasses were drunk.

His aura billowed as he resisted the effects of the liquor. It didn't seem like he would be able to hold out much longer.

975 glasses were drunk.

Somehow, that beast managed to live. At this point, Demon Queen Eliza, Demon King Granheim, and Qing Tan all were reaching their limits. They knew they wouldn't be able to hold on much longer.

But seeing how that beast was infinitely close to death, they held on with everything they had. At the very least, they wouldn't be the next to die.

999 glasses were drunk.

That beast could no longer hold on. His body collapsed to the ground and he was foaming at the mouth. His bloodshot eyes shone with unwillingness, but due to the restrictive force that prevented their bodies from doing anything besides drinking, he wasn't even able to voice his indignation.

And when the beast finally fell, the 1000th glass was filled with liquor.

Qing Tan, Granheim, and Eliza all watched their glasses with fear in their hearts. They were all aware. Based on the current condition of their bodies, this glass could make or break them. They might die if they couldn't resist it.

Their arms moved without their permission and grabbed the glasses. Damien and Feng Qing'er looked at Qing Tan worriedly, while Eden still sat with the same indifferent face.

And as everyone's emotions reached their peak, that 1000th glass of liquor was forced down their throats.

Gulp!

