

# Void 411

Chapter 411 Settling Down [4]

"Waaaaaaah!"

"Let's gooooooooo!"

When Damien and Ruyue reappeared, they were met with the excited screams of two children.

'What is...?'

And immediately after that, the reason for those screams entered their eyes. Damien could hardly believe what he was seeing.

In the portion of the Sanctuary that was sectioned off for little Xue to use, the amount of free space remaining had been reduced to nothing.

That entire space was now filled with what could only be called the greatest slide a child could ever imagine.

It was made of ice so crystalline that it looked like it would shatter with a single touch, winding in loops and other patterns that would normally spell out instant death for anyone who rid the slide.

But such a situation didn't occur at all.

"Waaaaaaaaaah!"

Another scream rang out. When Damien looked over, he saw Xue'er upside down, halfway through a loop in the slide. Around her, an assortment of giggling spirits were manipulating the wind so that she wouldn't fall off the slide.

Not far from her, the same situation was taking place for Lily and Mei, who had split their body and were manifested together at the same time.

"What kind of madman put the idea for this thing inside those kids' heads?" Damien wondered out loud.

He didn't know whether to laugh or cry. The scene of these girls arguing and fighting didn't appear in front of his eyes as he expected it to, which was a good thing. But at the same time, what they were doing was way too dangerous for him to condone.

But when he moved to bring them down and give them a good scolding, Ruyue held his arm and stopped them.

"Idiot, can't you see how much fun they're having? Let them be."

"Eh? Even if they're having fun, I can't allow them to think that being this reckless is something good."

"Of course you should teach them that, but isn't it fine? From what I can see, their safety is guaranteed." Ruyue pointed towards a separate direction, where two people were watching the girls play.

It was Elitra and the maid that usually stayed by the Demon King Lucius' side.

Damien sighed. 'Well, if they have a 4th class watching over them, I guess I can't complain much. Still, though. This kind of thing...'

It was unbelievable. Putting aside his concern for their safety, just the fact that the three girls had made something like this was insane.

The structure of the slide was so intricately made that it didn't seem like the work of a 10-year-old. But considering that Lily and Mei were Ice Spirits, and that their true age was far greater than just a mere ten years old, he could somewhat accept their masterful usage of their abilities.

But Xue'er was another matter altogether. That girl had no training to speak of, only the wild imagination of a child. Yet, the little spirits around her were listening to her like docile puppies and executing whatever her imagination could think of.

'Did I...accidentally pick up a gem?'

He should have realized it when she was using elemental spirits to boost her speed to jump at him months ago. Even that much was insane considering her circumstances. But such a grand showing really cemented the idea in his mind.

Damien opened his eyes wide.

[All-Seeing Eyes have been activated.]

An unexpected system message appeared. And along with it...

[Status]

[Xue'er]

Human

Female - Age 7

Level 1 - [Classless]

Title(s): [Friend of Spirits]

Affinities: Spirit

His eyes widened in shock. Although he had somewhat glimpsed this ability before he entered the secret realm, he never thought he'd unlock it so fast.

'Her experience value is missing, and I can't see her stats, skills, or traits, but considering that most people can't see anything at all, this is insane.'

But ignoring that, the fact that Xue'er had a unique affinity and had also gained a title at such a young age was just as insane.

'Damn, seeing this makes me want to train her. She would be an unprecedented genius if I did...but, that can wait. There's no need to thrust a 7-year-old child into a world of blood.'

Damien shook his head. Seeing the improvement in his All-Seeing Eyes had made him curious about his own status as well. And he just so happened to have some time while he waited for the girls to finish playing.

'It's been so long since I've seen it, I can't help but get excited.'

'Status.'

[Status]

[Damien Void]

Human/Dragon/???

Male - Age 24

Level 183 - [Celestial]

Experience value: 230,000/275,000

Title(s): [●●●●●●, Bearer of the Void Physique, Evolver]

Affinities: Space, Time, ????

Physique: Void Physique

Magic Power: 50000

STR: 1500

AGI: 1450

DEF: 1470

INT: 1400

DEX: 1450

Skills: [Dimensional Magic Level 4], [Time Magic Level 1], [Transcendent Regeneration Level 1], [Void Art Level 6], [Devour Level 6], [Awareness], [Celestial Authority]

Trait(s): [All-Seeing Eyes Level 6], [Dragon's Breath], [Ananta Matrix], [Storm], [Void Essence], [Void Flames], [Dragon Transformation], [Demon Transformation], [Heal]

'...Wow.'

His stats had increased by more than 1000 points since the last time he had seen them. His mana capacity was even more blown out of proportion. They were numbers that he could hardly believe.

'It must be the boost from the Primordial Undying Fruit. There's no way that such an increase is natural, though a portion of it definitely is. Come to think of it, without this much mana it would have been impossible for me to transport everyone into the Sanctuary even if I sacrificed my blood vitality to do so, so I guess it makes sense.'

Other than his stats, his skills had also changed a great deal. All his existing skills had leveled up, and there were a few new ones as well. Not to mention, some of his old skills were missing.

'Or rather, they've been absorbed into my existing skills. It's like my skill list has been cleaned up.'

Warp getting absorbed into Dimensional Magic seemed natural, since the nature of Dimensional Magic also encompassed something like warp. Since he could still use that skill, he knew that it hadn't disappeared. The rest must've been the same.

'The trait from the Goblin King is also missing. That one...I don't think it's the same situation as my skills.'

The Goblin King's absorption and reflection trait. Although it was useful, that was only if he was fighting enemies weaker than himself. In his hands, it had never gotten a chance to shine.

How it disappeared wasn't something he understood, but if he had to guess, then it must've had something to do with his Void Essence and Alaric's Divine Power restructuring his body.

The main function of the Primordial Undying Fruit that he had been looking forward to was purification. His body had been purified of any unnecessary or wasteful parts, and that trait was most likely a part of it.

'My bloodlines have also been completely purified. The Demon Bloodline is also shown on my status, albeit as question marks. Which means that it definitely isn't a bloodline from the Nox.'

Damien sighed. The purification of his bloodlines was obviously something that benefited him immensely. It was just...

'I'll miss my wolf bloodline.'

It was his roots. The very first mutation he had undergone was by a wolf, and it was his wolf bloodline that allowed him and Zara to get along so easily when they first met. Feeling, or rather, not feeling its presence in his body made him feel somewhat empty.

But change was a good thing, and it wasn't something he'd find fault in. It was just him getting sentimental for no reason.

Other than what he had already gone over, there were two more new things in his status that interested him, and they both seemed to have the same origin.

Transcendent Regeneration and Heal.

Chapter 412 Settling Down [5]

After telling Ruyue that he'd be back soon, Damien left the area. He wanted to try something that he couldn't show to others lest he caused them to panic.

Transcendent Regeneration.

He had an idea of what it could do. It was an evolution that he had been waiting for eagerly for a very long time. His regeneration had been stuck at High-Level without evolving ever since his days in the dungeon.

When Damien got to his personal practice area, he didn't waste any time. First, he turned his finger into a claw using Dragon Transformation and made a slit on his wrist.

It healed instantly.

By the time his claw went from one side of his wrist to the other, the wound had already closed.

'Damn! That's amazing!'

He took his experiment further. His first success had truly emboldened him. From cutting his wrist, his next move was to cut off an entire finger.

And as he expected, a new finger regenerated in its place within thirty seconds.

'Good! Good! This is how it should be! Now then, should I move into the real test?'

Damien's eyes shone with a light of mania. Mana coated his hand and turned into a spatial blade.

Shing!

Thump!

It cut cleanly through his flesh. His left arm fell to the floor as it was severed from his body.

'Hissss....' Damien sharply inhaled as he dealt with the pain. But even as he did so, his regeneration kicked in.

The clean wound he created made it even easier to heal. Starting from the bone, his arm began to regenerate until half an hour later, a completely new arm was formed in place of the one that was severed.

"Hahahaha!" Damien laughed victoriously. He was slowly becoming an unkillable zombie that could regenerate from even a single drop of blood.

It was perfect. Devour was an ability that could take care of his stamina, and Transcendent Regeneration would make it so that his wounds would never accumulate.

If Damien was ever put into a battle where he was one against many, he was guaranteed to be an unstoppable killing machine.

It almost made him look forward to war. But when he recalled the harrowing 10 years he had lived in Alaric's body during the first war, his excitement died down.

'Alright. Transcendent Regeneration is a truly life-saving skill. Now, all I need to test is Heal.'

Heal was the most unexpected thing in his status. From the start, gaining a trait from the Primordial Undying Tree never crossed his mind.

'But...Heal seems to be something that I can use on others rather than myself, since Transcendent Regeneration takes care of my own healing. Does it have any other effects besides just being a regular healing skill?'

Calling a healing skill passed to him by a tree with heavenly vitality regular was a huge understatement, but Damien never took healers seriously since he had always been able to do so without outside help.

But he could see the uses of a healing skill. Diseases, injuries, if his comrades ever suffered, he would be able to take care of them.

But he had Elena whose elemental affinities were for Life and Light. She was a born healer even though her preference was being a fighter.

His Heal trait would only be necessary when she wasn't around.

But he activated it anyway. Since it was, after all, a gift from Alaric that he definitely wouldn't have gained without Alaric's intention, it had to be something good.

A green aura filled with vitality surrounded Damien. Just like the World Tree in the 3000 Beast Mountain Range, his vitality spread into the environment and nourished everything around him.

"Ohhh, I see how it is," Damien muttered. This skill was far greater than he gave it credit for.

Damien's blood began to boil. His mana raged with more strength than he could handle as he sacrificed his blood vitality to strengthen it.

But at the same rate as it was being sacrificed, it was replenished by the Heal trait that Damien currently had active.

'This is broken. Too broken.' Damien shook his head inwardly. Alaric was too generous to him as always.

'With this much help from you, it's impossible for me to shirk the responsibility you gave me no matter how much I want to. Very well, so be it.'

Damien stopped burning his vitality and canceled the Heal trait. For now, his preliminary understanding of it was enough to get by. When he had more time in the future, he could properly explore it.

But now wasn't the time for that. He teleported back to Ruyue and the girls.

"Hm? It seems things were settled when I was gone." He commented. The first thing he saw when he arrived was Lily and Mei in Ruyue's arms.

"Big brother, I want it too!"

And the second thing he saw was a small black object hurling towards him at light speed. Using vector control to slow her down, he scooped Xue'er into his arms as well.

"Hmph! See, big brother likes me better!" Xue'er snorted while hugging him. Her gaze was locked on Lily and Mei.

"No fair! You cheated!" Mei yelled back.

"That's right! We were already with big sister, so it doesn't count!" Lily agreed.

"Hmph! Hmph!" Xue'er responded haughtily. Damien could've sworn he saw sparks fly in the air between the girls as they argued.

Ruyue looked at him helplessly, causing him to smile.

"Little Xue, have you been introduced to everyone yet?" He asked.

Xue'er nodded excitedly. "Lily and Mei are weird, but also fun! Also, there's a beautiful big sister! Big brother, where did you meet her?"

"Little Xue, if she is your big sister, then who do you think she is to your big brother?" He teased.

Xue'er tilted her head. "Hmm, your wife?"

"That's right!" Damien grinned. "Our Little Xue is the smartest!"

"Hehe!"

After appeasing Xue'er, Damien sent a sound transmission to Ruyue.

'So? What do you think of them?'

Ruyue looked at Lily and Mei. 'It's interesting. Even though we're meeting for the first time, it feels like I'm meeting my own kin.'

Damien nodded. 'It's only natural. Although they were born into the Ice Spirit Tribe, it's more apt to call them a Yin Elemental Spirit.'

'Elemental Spirit?!' Ruyue's eyes widened in shock. 'So when you said you had a gift for me, you meant...'

'Of course, I got you two cute little sisters!' Damien joked.

Ruyue giggled. 'Well, to say I'm not satisfied would be a lie. They are indeed cute little sisters that I want to dote on all day. But, why are they like that?'

Ruyue was obviously talking about the fact that there were two of them residing in the same body. It was natural for anyone to be curious when they met the girls. Even Xue'er was curious about their abnormality.

'Hmm, the story is a bit complicated so I'll explain it all to you later. For now, just know that they have a special body constitution.'

Ruyue nodded. It was the most logical reason why such a thing would happen. As for the story behind it, although she was curious, she knew how much Damien had to do at the moment. If she really wanted to know, she could hear it directly from Lily and Mei when the girls were ready to share.

Damien also nodded in satisfaction. Since Ruyue and the girls' got along so well that Lily and Mei didn't want to leave her arms, it meant that having them form a contract wouldn't be difficult at all.

So now, all they had to do was go through the process.

#### Chapter 413 Settling Down [6]

The process of forming a contract was relatively simple. It was similar to how Damien and Zara had formed their contract back in the dungeon.

And since Ruyue and the Lily/Mei duo were both more than willing to form said contract, it was even easier. Only a few minutes after Damien proposed the idea to them, they had successfully completed the process.

Lily and Mei's body became incorporeal and shot into the space between Ruyue's eyebrows.

"Wow, to think there was such a thing!" Ruyue exclaimed. She could clearly feel the girls' presence in her mindscape.

"Mm, even I didn't know things would turn out like that. It must be something specific to spirit contracts." Damien commented. As he thought about it, his mind drifted towards Zara.

That girl had been slumbering in his shadow ever since she ate the Death Seed over a year ago. He was already worried about her, but he couldn't act on that worry since all signs pointed to her being fine.

It was just a matter of when she would wake up, and that wasn't something he could interfere with regardless of how worried he was.

'Haa...let's stop thinking about it. It should be about time to go and see for ourselves the state of the 3000 Beast Mountain Range.'

After giving his goodbyes to Ruyue and the girls, Damien flashed away, appearing in front of the four clan leaders, who had been in the middle of a discussion.

"Are you all ready?" He asked. He didn't have any interest in what they were talking about. If it concerned him, he trusted they would tell him about it.

The clan leaders' eyes hardened when they heard his question. They nodded their heads in unison and stood up.

"It is time to verify the absurd things you've told us thus far." The Elf Queen replied.

Damien nodded. He didn't mind her aloof attitude. In fact, it made him feel better that he had to earn her trust and loyalty rather than just having it from the start.

Without any more words, he opened a portal back to the Real Plane.

"Woah!"

Winds whipped around Damien the second he walked through the portal. Unexpectedly, he was falling through the air.

His mana swirled around him and stabilized him, vector control adjusting his gravity so he could float. As he did so, the four clan leaders also appeared and used their various means to hold themselves in the air.

"Where are we? Didn't you say we were going to see the mountain range?" The Fire Phoenix Matriarch questioned.

Even Damien had the same question. For a second, he doubted whether his understanding of the Sanctuary was completely wrong. But it didn't take long for him to shake off that thought.

But the realization that came along with it was so jarring that he couldn't speak for a while. Only a full minute later was he able to push the words out of his mouth.

"No...this is the 3000 Beast Mountain Range...or at least, what's left of it."

A chasm. A massive chasm with no bottom, better to be termed an abyss. Over half the area around them was engulfed in this chasm, and they were at its far end.

"When I entered the Sanctuary, I was standing directly next to the World Tree, so that's where we should be right now..." Damien muttered.

But there was no World Tree in sight. As a matter of fact, there was no mountain range at all.

All 50 mountains that made up the 3000 Beast Mountain Range had vanished. Not even rubble that signifies they once existed remained. The endless abyss they were floating above stretched for thousands of kilometers in front of them.

As for the area behind them, it was wrought with even more havoc. The fact that signs of battle could be seen from it actually made it look worse than the abyss.

Millions of gashes littered the ground, each having a depth similar to the abyss in front of them. Millions upon millions of corpses were strewn about, and those were only the ones who had managed to escape the destruction of the mountains that used to house them.

All the vitality of that land had been sucked dry, leaving it as a barren wasteland where even mana couldn't intrude. It was a harrowing sight.

"This..."

The four clan leaders looked at the scene in horror. Only now did it sink in for them the level of calamity they had been able to avoid thanks to Damien.

"What happened here...?" The Elf Queen muttered under her breath. It was hard to even breathe in such a suffocatingly bleak atmosphere.

Damien sighed. "Didn't I already tell you? A battle between Demigods. When taking their power into account, even this much atrocity is nothing. If the Senior didn't contain the destruction to the 3000 Beast Mountain Range, the entire Central Continent would've most likely been destroyed."

The Elf Queen stared into Damien's eyes. The expression in her eyes wasn't something he had ever expected to see from her when facing him.

It was fear. Fear and wariness.

"You...how can you remain so indifferent after seeing this kind of terrible thing?!" Her voice shook as she questioned him.

But Damien stared back at her without breaking away. He also knew it was a horrible thing to not show any sympathy or mercy during a time like this, but he couldn't help it.

"I've seen worse."

It was all he could say, and it was all he needed to say. The 10 years he had lived in Alaric's body during the war before his death, they weren't cut together like the 100,000 years that followed.

He experienced them in full.

And how many people had died during those 10 years?

Even numbers in the tens of billions were putting it nicely. The alliance that had been made during that war was created by the forces of the entire universe together.

The number of combatants they had dispatched for a single battle would trump the number of corpses that could be seen here.

Yet, not to mention a single battle, Damien had lived through hundreds. He had personally felt the hopelessness and helplessness of that war.

So even if he did feel it was a pity that this many people had been sacrificed, he couldn't help but feel that it was necessary.

Because if the battle hadn't been contained as it had, the number of casualties wouldn't have ended at a mere millions or hundreds of millions.

But unlike the inevitability that he felt, the four clan leaders who had lived their lives without experiencing such a tragic war were different.

Mainly the two Phoenix Matriarchs, who had never left the 3000 Beast Mountain Range in their lives. The shock they received from this scene was too great for their minds to bear.

The Elf Queen and White Dragon King were different. They had come from the outside world and had participated in wars of their own. The White Dragon King especially was someone who fully believed in the law of the jungle.

The shock he experienced came from the scale of battle itself, rather than the people who had died.

As for the Elf Queen, after her initial shock, she realized something. Her thoughts churned and she began understanding the reason for the calamity of the 3000 Beast Mountain Range.

All her feelings vanished. The only thing left was an unbridled fury.

Chapter 414 Settling Down[7]

"Those scum bastards...!"

It wasn't a conclusion that just anyone would reach. Blaming every calamity that took place in the vast universe on the Nox was nothing more than escapism.

But for the Elf Queen, seeing through this matter was simple. Because she had personally experienced it.

10,000 years ago during the second war, she had been there when the Nox invaded, and she had seen as her home world was slowly corrupted and destroyed.

Anger and resentment that had been buried in the deepest recesses of her heart began to boil forth once again. 10,000 years of repressed feelings came back to haunt her.

She looked to Damien for confirmation, and he could do nothing but silently nod. He was never planning on keeping it from her.

Taesi, meaning defector in the language of the elves. Even if everyone else forgot, the Elf Queen, who had named the elven city after the shame of their past, would never do so.

The flames in her eyes burned heavily. "If I follow you, what are my chances of getting revenge on those scum bastards?"

She asked it seriously. Even though the boy was only a 3rd class, she could no longer look at him as just another weaker being. Clearly, he was far more embroiled in the conflict with the Nox than she was, and he was someone who would have a major stake in the coming war.

She thought she was safe. The sacrifices of so many people had allowed her and a few million of her clansmen to escape the hellish war, and after that, they had lived many years in peace.

'I've been too complacent.'

She realized it instantly. She had become soft-hearted and weak-willed. She had become used to living in safety and prosperity due to the blessing of the World Tree.

But in the blink of an eye, the World Tree was gone, her new home was gone, and everything she cherished was gone as well. If it wasn't for the boy in front of her, even her people would have been victims to the calamity that had ensued.

A boy that her Ancestor trusted enough to impart the Ancestral Seal onto, a boy who was unfathomable even while being so weak that she could crush him within seconds. She was willing to stake it all on him.

Damien stared into her eyes. Her thoughts were written on her face. A desire for vengeance was something many people learned to repress, but in the heat of the moment, it would burst with splendor and refuse to be suppressed any longer.

The Elf Queen was currently experiencing that. Her rationality was being overwhelmed by that desire.

But that wasn't such a bad thing for him.

'I needed to gain her loyalty anyway, and this is a perfect opportunity. And since she has such a heavy grudge against the Nox, she should be a great help in the war.'

Damien thought it over. He didn't want to give any false hope or meaningless numbers. If she was gambling on him, he would give her the chance to gamble properly.

"Whether or not you can get revenge isn't something for me to decide. It depends wholly on your own determination and ability." Damien finally said.

"However," he continued. "If it is an opportunity for you to get your revenge, I can set the stage for you and allow you to reap the benefits. I need allies for the coming war and beyond. If you are willing to swear true fealty to me, I can promise that I will do everything in my power to help you."

It wasn't empty words. Damien spoke with sincerity to reciprocate her sincerity.

And the Elf Queen could feel it as well. Slowly, she calmed herself down. The fire in her eyes dimmed, becoming a raging inferno that hid beneath a calm exterior.

"Very well." She finally made her decision. She got down on one knee and lowered her head. "From this point forth, I, Elvira Moonwind, and all those related to and under me, swear total fealty to the Lord. If this promise is broken, may the Heavens bring down their wrath upon us."

Damien's eyes widened. Not only at the oath she had made, but also at her name. He let out a wry chuckle.

'Fate truly is a strange thing.'

Elvira Moonwind. The name held no particular meaning to him, but it did to someone else. Someone who he unwittingly got to know very well.

'Senior, are you seeing this? The woman you loved so much that you were willing to sacrifice yourself for her safety, a woman with the same name and position is standing in front of me today and burning with the desire for revenge on your killers. If this isn't a working of fate, then what is?'

He smiled and turned to the other three clan leaders. The conversation between him and the Elf Queen wasn't hidden at all, so they had heard everything the two discussed.

"What about you three? What are your plans from now on?"

The White Dragon King snorted. "Kid, didn't we already make this promise? As long as you take me to the outside world and help me find my son, I'm willing to swear the same oath that she swore just now."

Damien nodded. "Don't worry. I never planned to go back on that promise from the start. The Sanctuary is probably the safest place in the universe right now, so even if you want to spend the rest of your days peacefully with your son after we find him, that can be arranged. As long as you help when you're truly needed, that's enough."

The White Dragon King nodded as well and extended his hand. Damien reached forth and grabbed it, shaking it strongly.

After the two men had made their agreement, he turned to the final two. Their decision was much more complicated, but at the same time far simpler than the other two.

Damien knew their concern.

'Where can we even go now?'

That was probably the thought going through the two Matriarchs' heads at the moment. They had lived their entire lives in the 3000 Beast Mountain Range, and knew nothing other than it.

Even if they were powerful 4th class existences, the fear of the unknown wasn't something they were safe from.

"The outside world is a cruel place, but it is wondrous and beautiful at the same time. Phoenixes are true descendants of Godbeasts, so if you go out flaunting your true forms, it is undoubted that you will be hunted. However, with your power, living while mixing amongst humans is also possible.

"I can vouch for myself and the Sanctuary as much as I want, but in the end, it is simply my desire to keep your two clans that will motivate my words. So think carefully and decide for yourselves what you wish to do from now on. Don't let the rest of us interfere with that decision."

Damien hated being led along by the whims of others, and he didn't want to become the very thing he hated so much. Especially since he had some relationship with Feng Qing'er, he wanted to give the Phoenix clans the ability to make a free decision.

But as he hoped, the two Phoenix Matriarchs shook their heads.

"We may be powerful, but our clansmen aren't all the same. The safest option for them is to remain within the strange world you created and grow their strength along with the dragons and elves." The Ice Phoenix Queen said.

"Right. If the day comes when we can confidently declare that we will set off and establish ourselves, we will do just that. But until then, it's better for us to rely on your protection." The Fire Phoenix Matriarch continued.

She felt a bit embarrassed by it, asking a mere child for protection, but it couldn't be helped. His capabilities allowed him to receive such a request.

Damien smiled. "Of course. And if I have the capital to help you establish yourselves when that day comes, you can be assured that I will aid you in any way I can."

After a few more talks, the negotiation between Damien and the four clan leaders came to an end.

The fealty of these four clans, even if some of them were temporary, was something Damien was delighted to have.

His preparations had just started. Now that he understood the true calamity that a war with the Nox could bring, he needed to move with more fervor than ever before.

So that he could build a foundation that was sturdy and stable enough to keep everything he held dear safe.

Chapter 415 Them [1]

The Central Continent of the Cloud Plane.

It was a continent with a variety of different environments. If one looked at the Cloud Plane as a whole, the Central Continent looked like a representation of the other four continents combined.

It was surprising that this vast piece of land had such a small number of ruling powers, but this was simply a testament to the strength of those powers. However, currently, all those powers were paying attention to the same place.

After many years, it was finally time. The Empyrean Dragon Realm would once again be open to the world. And depending on what these powers were able to gain from it, their standings in the rankings may very well be affected.

The once-ruling Empyrean Dragon Sect was just that powerful, to the point where even if they were revived today, the current 5 Great Sects wouldn't be able to stand against them.

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In a hidden area whose true location was only known to a select few individuals, a bevy of beauties had gathered together.

In front of them stood an elderly woman who was far past her prime, but the aura she emitted seemed to convince people that she could still hold the title of "fairy".

"The Empyrean Dragon Realm has finally opened." She opened her mouth and spoke to the beauties lined up in front of her. "For this opening, each of the five sects have gained 20 quotas. As for the four clans, they will each get 10."

As she gazed upon the beauties, her eyes paused on two girls before continuing to pan across. "The strength of our Supreme Fairy Paradise has been hidden from the public since time immemorial. Even now, we are ranked towards the bottom of the Five Great Sects ranking.

"But we have never been bothered by this standing. Even with our low ranking, not a single person would dare act uncouth towards our girls. However, times have changed."

She paused. Her aura and momentum grew, causing the blood in those beauties' bodies to boil.

"The Age of War is once again going to dawn upon us, and our Supreme Fairy Paradise will never shirk its duties. Now is the time for us to reveal our strength, for us to become a pillar that can hold up the sky. And this Empyrean Dragon Realm opening, it is our first opportunity to prove ourselves."

""Yes, Sect Master!""

The beauties roared in unison. Each and every one of them had powerful flames burning in their eyes.

The Sect Master of Supreme Fairy Paradise smiled. "Good! To others, we are called fairies because each and every one of you is an unrivaled beauty. They believe that our sect recruits by looks instead of talent. But no longer will they look down on you! Prove it with strength! The Supreme Fairy Paradise is no weaker than the likes of the Celestial Star Palace and the Jade Heavenly Palace!"

""Yes, Sect Master!""

The twenty who were representing the sect in the secret realm expedition had already been decided through tournament, so all that was left to do was prepare to depart. And so, once the Sect Master's speech was completed, the 20 women who were selected went to do just that.

However, not all of them could enjoy such an easy situation.

A group of ten women stopped two of the participants. The one in front of that group was an above-average woman with long blonde hair and blue eyes.

She looked at the two women in contempt. "You two, come with us for a second."

The two women looked at each other and sighed. "And why should we listen to you, Senior Sister?"

The golden-haired woman snorted. "You call me Senior Sister, but it seems you don't respect our hierarchy at all. Since your Senior Sister has ordered you to come, then you should just be obedient and come."

The two women had differing reactions to her words. The one on the left sighed in exasperation, while the one on the right had a playful smile on her face the whole time.

"Very well, Senior Sister. I'd very much like to see what you have planned for these humble juniors of yours."

The group soon left the area, moving to a more secluded spot. As they went, murmurs spread through the crowd.

"Isn't that Senior Sister Lan? What is she doing with the two of them?"

"Shh! Don't you know Senior Sister Lan's personality? It's better to not get involved."

"You're right. But I feel bad for the two of them. Senior Sister Lan's family has close ties with the Long Clan, so offending her isn't something just anyone can do."

Another girl looked at the one who just spoke and scoffed. "What good is Senior Sister Lan? Didn't you see who she messed with this time?"

"No, they were hidden inside of Senior Sister's group so I didn't get a good look. Who was it?"

"Ha! No wonder you said such a thing. This time, Senior Sister Lan has chosen to offend the wrong people."

A third girl chimed into the conversation. "Hm? But aren't those two just girls without backgrounds? How could they compare with Senior Sister Lan?"

"Hah, it seems you're new here so you haven't heard the rumors. Those two are legends within the sect at this point. They have even been rewarded the title of the two Heavenly Fairies."

The surrounding crowd let out a series of gasps. "Those two Heavenly Fairies? Are you sure it's them?"

"I couldn't mistake them even with my eyes closed! A year ago when they first joined the sect, they were given the title of Cotton Candy Fairies to mock them because of their hair colors, but do you know what happened to everyone who tried to test them?"

"What happened?"

"They either ended up braindead and bedridden, unable to even eat by themselves. The strangest part is, no matter how hard even the top doctors in the sect looked, they couldn't find any injuries on the girls' bodies or minds."

""Hissss!""

The crowd drew a sharp breath. Some of the more knowledgeable among them began to remember rumors that had spread starting a year ago. At that time, they had only regarded them as mere rumors and brushed them off, but it seemed they were wrong.

The two Heavenly Fairies. Anyone who had been in the sect for enough time knew their titles.

The ones who had crushed their opposition regardless of status and rose to the position of Sect Master's disciples, the ones who had monopolized all the benefits from the sect's exclusive Fairy Pond and Misty Cloud Secret Realm.

And those were only their achievements within the sect. They had fended off tens of beast tides with just the two of them, helped the Shi Clan uproot a rebellion, and many other feats. It seemed every time they took a mission outside of the sect, they would accomplish something unimaginable.

Those were the two Heavenly Fairies. Their titles were justly earned. But not everyone believed the rumors. After all, the two fairies had never publicly taken action within the sect, so some of the sisters who didn't go to the outside world often refused to accept the feats those two girls had accomplished.

"Poor Senior Sister Lan..."

"She kicked an iron wall this time."

"Hopefully the Long Clan won't get offended by her misfortune."

The crowd's sentiment changed immediately. Anyone with half a brain, or anyone who has left the sect in the past year, knew very clearly the veracity of those rumors.

After all, the two Heavenly Fairies were widely renowned throughout the entire Central Continent. It was impossible for such renown to come from faked accomplishment.

The crowd of beauties looked towards the direction the previous group had left in pity. Now, all that was left was to see whether Lan Ruxue would return in one piece or not.

Chapter 416 Them [2]

'Tch! These two bitches. How dare they show up out of nowhere and steal my quotas!'

Lan Ruxue was fuming internally, but her face outside contained the same cold contempt it held whenever she looked at the two girls in front of her.

‘Heavenly Fairies? That’s bullshit. Just because they achieved a few minor things, they suddenly get so much attention. I could do the same just as easily as they can.’

The girls in the sect seemed to hold these two in high regard, but whenever Lan Ruxue looked at them, she couldn’t understand why.

Just because they were somewhat prettier than the average? Or somewhat stronger? She was certain that if they fought, the two so-called Heavenly Fairies would be begging at her feet in no time.

‘After all these years, I’ve finally reached the peak of mid-stage 3rd class. These little girls who haven’t even stopped sucking their mommy’s milk yet, there’s no way they can be more powerful than me.’

As she monologues internally, her group finally reached a secluded space along with the two girls they were escorting. The second they did, they formed a circle around them.

“Finally, I got you two fake bitches alone. I don’t like useless talk, so I’ll be forward. Give me the quotas you stole from me and I won’t cripple you.” Lan Ruxue sneered.

But the two Heavenly Fairies didn’t even look at her. Instead, they were glancing at each other.

Standing next to each other, one with pink hair and ruby eyes, the other having dark blue in both, the contrast between them really accentuated the unique points of both beauties.

Coupled with their opposing temperaments, many people were confused about how they got along so well. Yet, the two Heavenly Fairies didn’t seem to care about the logic imposed upon them by others. They acted as if the entire world meant nothing to them.

Whether it be temperament, looks, or status, Lan Ruxue knew in her heart that she didn’t match up to the fairies in any of them. It was part of the reason why she hated them so much.

‘The Young Masters of the Long Clan always eye me with lust. Even the men of my own family can’t keep their eyes off me. How dare you look better than me?’

Lan Ruxue grit her teeth. Even as she thought it, she remembered the rumors about the two Heavenly Fairies that she had heard.

The pink-haired one had a playful temperament, and the blue-haired one was more indifferent. Both of them gave men a strong desire of wanting to conquer.

It started with the first young master of the Wang Clan, who had spotted them during their first mission. After that, young masters and even a few elders from the Long Clan, Xue Clan, and even the Jade Heavenly Palace had tried to court the two.

But without suspense, they had all been rejected. A few had even gone home with their little brothers and other important appendages missing, while some who still couldn't get the hint had ended up dead entirely.

Over the course of the past year, the two Heavenly Fairies had formed grudges against countless powers, yet, the Sect Master was still hell-bent on protecting them.

'Tch! Even if they go to the Empyrean Dragon Realm opening, they'll just cause trouble for the sect. In fact, the Sect Master and the Elders should thank me for putting them in their place.'

She was jealous. She could at least admit that much to herself, but she didn't care. What right did these two women with no background or power have to become the object of affection for men that she could only ever dream of? The fact that she was being ignored by the two only made her anger boil further.

"You dare ignore me?!" She waved her hand, causing an arc of golden mana to rush at the two girls.

Although it was a light attack, it was still something that could cause injury if it wasn't evaded or blocked properly. Lan Ruxue took special care in controlling her strength so she would only humiliate them instead of harming them.

But unlike what she expected, the pink-haired beauty simply waved her hand, causing the golden arc to disperse as if it never existed.

“Do you want to take this one, or should I?” She asked the woman who stood beside her.

The blue-haired girl glanced around with indifference. “I don’t mind either way. It’s not like it’ll take long regardless of who does it.”

“That’s true, but still! Don’t you want to have a little fun? How can my little sister be such a wuss?”

“I don’t think calling me a wuss is right in this context. Also, when did I become your little sister?”

“Ehehehe! You know just as well as I do why you’re my little sister. Even if he doesn’t accept it, I just have to make him!”

“Tch. You’re talking nonsense again. Whatever, if it’ll shut you up, I guess I’ll take care of it this time. But drinks are on you tonight, and not the cheap shit. I want the premium quality Dew Wine that the Sect Master gave you as a reward.”

“Gasp! How could you target my precious Dew Wine?! You’re too cruel!”

As the two girls continued to converse, Lan Ruxue felt like she was getting repeatedly slapped in the face. But at the same time, an uneasy feeling crept into her heart.

‘How could my attack be blocked so easily? No, it must be because I didn’t put any strength into it. Do these girls think they’re so good just because I went easy on them?’

But before her thoughts could reach a conclusion, a sword appeared in the blue-haired beauty’s hand.

“Remember this, I don’t want to be known by some cringe title like Heavenly Fairy. The name of the one who crippled you is Elena Pierce. Don’t forget it.”

She vanished from her position, appearing next to one of the girls in the encirclement.

Swoosh!

In an instant, 4 streaks of Sword Aura appeared in the air, severing the girl's extremities. Before the limbs could even fall to the floor, Elena moved to her next target.

A faint white light covered her body as she moved. It enhanced her speed to the point where even Rose had a hard time following it.

Within seconds, nine of the ten girls were laying on the ground leaking blood. Not a single one of them had limbs attached to their bodies anymore.

"Oh, my bad. I didn't think you would be so weak. Let me help you." Elena spoke flatly. A greenish-white mist emanated from her body.

The mana moved and placed the girls' limbs back where they were supposed to go, and when the greenish-white light passed by, it slowly reattached those limbs to the body.

All of it happened in an instant. Lan Ruxue couldn't believe what she was seeing. Her face was pale in horror.

'What...what just happened?'

She couldn't see it at all. By the time she understood what was going on, all of her lackeys were on the floor, limbless. And before she could even process that information, their limbs were being reattached.

'Run...I have to run.'

She understood it. She had barked up the wrong tree this time. She turned around and prepared to flee, but she suddenly couldn't feel her legs under her anymore.

Thump!

Her body fell to the floor. Blood spurted from her thighs.

“AHHHH! SOMEONE HELP!”

She screamed. If someone saw the atrocity that these girls were committing, they would surely be expelled from the sect. It was her last hope at salvation.

She screamed and screamed. For minutes on end she screamed, but nobody appeared to save her.

Rose giggled at her attempts. “Confused? Don’t worry. This is only the start of the show. I like to be a little more lowkey when I act. Elena, on the other hand, can’t hold herself back when she gets excited like this.”

Before Lan Ruxue could ponder on Rose’s words, her body was forced into an upright position.

A chair appeared under her as if it had always existed there, supporting her body. Chains wrapped around her soon after to prevent her escape, and a mechanism that held her head in place and her eyes open materialized as the finishing touch of the contraption.

“Alright! The audience is in place, the main actors are all ready! So, let the show begin!”

As Lan Ruxue watched, the nine girls she had brought with her were dismembered countless times. Every time they reached a point where they’d die of blood loss soon, they were healed into peak condition again. The process only repeated after healing.

Ten times, twenty times, it went on like a never-ending cycle. By the fifteenth time, the girls’ eyes had become blank and dull. They were foaming at the mouth and unable to form proper sentences anymore.

Lan Ruxue finally understood. She understood why those girls had been mentally crippled without any physical injury.

And she also understood that these two Heavenly Fairies weren't fairies at all. No, they were demonspawn and reapers.

"Phew, that was satisfying," Elena commented lightly before turning towards Lan Ruxue. "She's the main perpetrator, right?"

"Yup!" Rose responded happily while munching on popcorn.

"To use illusions to eat without gaining weight. The fact that you can even replicate taste makes it even more of a cheat. You don't even understand how envious I am."

"Tch. I can't use this method to fill my stomach though, so it's only good for situations like this." Rose quipped back. "Anyway! Continue, continue, I'm enjoying the show!"

Elena shook her head. "You...um, I don't know your name, so I'll just call you "dog". Bark if you don't want to die."

"Woof Woof!" Lan Ruxue barked without hesitation. After the scene she had just witnessed, she was no longer in the proper state of mind. An opportunity to live, that was all she could see at the moment. Pride meant nothing anymore.

Elena nodded matter-of-factly. "Very well. Since you're being such a good dog, I'll make sure to treat you right. Now, allow me to give you a little massage as a reward."

Elena appeared behind Lan Ruxue. Her hands were placed on the latter's shoulders.

"Enjoy."

It was the last word Lan Ruxue heard before she was plunged into hell.

In a space where sound could never escape, the sounds of bones cracking and incoherent screaming rang out for many hours on end.

## Chapter 417 Them [3]

With the arrival of dawn, the women of the Supreme Fairy Paradise began to awaken from meditation or training and start their days. Within this crowd were Rose and Elena, however, Senior Sister Lan and her group were completely missing.

The hushed voices of the crowd all revolved around the duo. It wasn't surprising. After all, just yesterday they had been seen surrounded by a group of their seniors, but here they were in perfect condition, perusing the streets as if nothing big happened.

Those seniors, on the other hand, had been found in a secluded area. Not a single one of them was left with their minds intact. It was only natural that the women of the sect would talk about it.

But Rose and Elena paid these women no mind. From start to finish, they didn't feel much attachment to the sect.

These women prided themselves on being fairies, but a vast majority of them were snakes wearing human skin. They would spread falsities to ruin their competition, backstab at any given opportunity, it was the definition of conniving.

But this kind of atmosphere had been perfect for the two of them to foster their growth. With trouble waiting for them at every step, they had an ample number of stepping stones to cause leaps of improvement in their own prowess.

If there was one thing in the sect that they cared about...

"Sect Master." The two girls greeted together when they arrived in front of the elderly woman who had given the speech the day before.

Their waists were bowed to show proper respect, and their tones were also extremely accommodating. Compared to the arrogant and indifferent image that they showed to the rest of the sect, their actions now were like heaven and earth.

“You two little brats, didn’t I say to call me Master? It seems you still haven’t accepted me after all this time.” The Sect Master smiled wryly.

“Master that isn’t—”

“Enough. I am already aware of your circumstances, so I never planned to bind you to the sect anyway. If only I could tie you down, I’d have chosen to do so without hesitation. But, you two already have somewhere to return to, don’t you?”

It was troubling. Neither of the two could respond, they could only hold their guilt within their hearts. It was true. Regardless of what the Sect Master did for them, their paths were never fated to stay together for too long.

They had somewhere to return to, or rather, someone.

Elena sighed. The Sect Master and Rose were the only two people she cared about in this massive sect. Due to their reputation, the other women either feared or disdained them, so they couldn’t make friends.

It wasn’t like she cared about the rabble at all, it was just a shame that things had to be this way.

But before she could make any excuses, the Sect Master spoke up once again.

“So? Who is he?”

“Eh?” Elena snapped out of her thoughts. Her eyes widened at the sudden question. “W-who are you talking about?”

“Don’t think I didn’t notice. Any time I even alluded to keeping you in the sect, you would have a faraway look in your eyes. My cold and indifferent Elena, to think you were so deeply infatuated with a man! I almost couldn’t believe it.”

Despite her age, the Sect Master of the Supreme Fairy Paradise's demeanor tended to have this youthful side that only those close to her were aware of. It often made the Elders of the sect suffer plenty of headaches, but for her disciples, it served to bring smiles to their faces.

Elena's face blushed red. "Infatuated is a strong word..."

"Yeah, but it probably isn't strong enough in this situation." Rose suddenly interjected. She was trying her hardest to suppress the giggle that was threatening to leave her mouth.

"You...!" Elena protested, but her defensiveness only made the other two laugh harder.

"Don't think I forgot about you." The Sect Master suddenly said to Rose. "Even if you can hide it better, you aren't much better than her."

"Nonsense!" Rose replied proudly. "Unlike her, I can boldly tell you about my handsome, powerful, and overall perfect man."

Rose thumped her chest and began to tell stories about Damien as if to brag to her grandparent.

"He's a crazy guy. Back when we were in my home world, he actually thrashed all the top geniuses there even while restricting a large majority of his power. And that's not all..."

Rose began to tell stories about her time with Damien. Although the time they had spent together was relatively short, it had been filled to the brim with adventure and wonder.

Damien had opened up a whole new world to Rose. He showed her a path that she never thought she'd be able to take, a path she loved far more than her constricting life on Apeiron.

So perhaps, Rose's evaluation of Damien was more than a bit biased. She easily glossed over his bad points as if they didn't exist at all. Especially when she spoke about their more romantic moments, it sounded more like she was writing a novel than speaking about real-life events.

As Rose spoke, Elena tried to imagine the gentlemanly version of Damien that she was describing. In a full suit, on one knee in front of her, his mouth moving to...

'Stop! Stop! Stop!' She hurriedly wiped away her fantasy. As soon as she did, the actual image of Damien she had after he returned appeared in her mind.

A shameless rogue, a ferocious wolf, a heartless fellow, these were all great words to describe him. He was far from gentlemanly, that much was for sure. But his free-spirited and untamable self, that ferocious yet gentle demeanor, everything about him held a fatal attraction for her that she couldn't seem to pull away from.

Even before he had become such a man, back when he was still pathetic and weak-willed, she had fallen too deep to ever even think about escaping.

Elena sighed. Her thoughts became complicated. She had practically begged Damien to take her on this trip. It was her first time leaving Earth in her life.

And seeing the vast universe, albeit the tiniest portion of it, aroused a kind of ambition in her heart.

'I want to see it.'

She wanted to see it all. To go exploring on different worlds and uncover more mystical places like the Fairy Pond or the Misty Cloud Secret Realm.

But that could only be considered as a secondary objective. Her main goal was elsewhere.

It happened after she ranked up, after she became a Valkyrie and obtained a connection to Valhalla.

Her fighting style had changed, along with the root of her power. And along with it, she received something similar to a calling.

There was a place somewhere out in the universe that appeared in her dreams as often as she slept.

It was a mystical place where her abilities would rapidly improve and her power would truly bloom.

She didn't know where that place was, but she knew the general direction to get there.

Only, she had an instinctual understanding of what kind of place it was. It was something akin to a secret realm, only, the restriction in place was so that only she could enter.

'I want to know why. Why there is such a place and why only I have the qualifications to enter. However...'

She would have to choose.

Of the two things she held dearest in her heart, two passions that she could never let go of. She needed to choose between them.

And it was eating her up inside.

Chapter 418 Them [4]

While Elena was struggling with her complicated inner thoughts, Rose finished telling the Sect Master everything about Damien.

"What a man. You aren't thinking about eloping without introducing him to me, are you?"

"Ehh? Why would I do that? I know you won't believe me until I properly show him off to you."

"Okay, okay. What about you then, little Elena? What's your man like?" The Sect Master shifted her attention.

"He—"

"Didn't I just describe him?" Rose interrupted. She knew Elena's personality very well by now. Until Damien told her outright, she would continue to act as if the two of them didn't have any relationship at all.

But Rose wouldn't allow that. She had taken a liking to Elena when they had first met, and the past year they spent together only made them closer. She wouldn't accept a future where Elena wasn't her little sister.

This time, it was the Sect Master's turn to be surprised. "You're saying..."

Rose nodded her head in affirmation, causing Elena's blush to deepen.

"Haa..." the Sect Master sighed in exasperation. "To think that the two Heavenly Fairies of my sect actually belong to the same man! Now, I must meet him. I need to see whether he's truly worthy of such fortune."

The two girls and the Sect Master chatted a bit longer before separating. Tomorrow, they would set off for the Empyrean Dragon Realm opening.

And there, they'd finally meet the person they had been thinking about so much.

"Tch." Rose snorted. "That damn bastard. Now that the day of our reunion is so close, I can't think of anything other than his face. How am I supposed to train like this?!"

Rose fell backward onto her bed and covered her face with a pillow. As darkness encroached upon her vision, an illusion spawned in front of her.

It was just an old memory of hers, nothing special. Just another time when she and Damien would sleep together while cuddling. It was such a common occurrence back then, she felt a bit sad that she had grown used to having a whole bed to herself.

She allowed the illusion to continue playing, putting herself in the position of her past self. She stimulated touch using the same method, but it just didn't feel the same.

It was so close. After a year of parting, it was finally time for the subsequent reunion. She had thought the same phrase multiple times over, but her head couldn't think of anything else.

'I'm obsessed.'

She realized it extremely late. She was well aware of how in line she was with him. She had fallen in love with him on that fateful day on Godspark Mountain. However, it took a year of separation for her to become obsessed.

His scent, the scent that used to be so familiar to her, she couldn't remember it anymore. She wondered how his face had changed, how much more powerful he had become, if he would bring another woman back...

'That guy goes around seducing beauties everywhere he goes. If he doesn't bring a beauty back with him, I'm willing to abandon all my cultivation.' She joked to herself.

Slowly but surely, the thoughts in her head vanished one by one, leaving only her desire to reach the Empyrean Dragon Realm as soon as possible in her head.

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At the arrival of a new day, the twenty women who filled the quota of the Supreme Fairy Paradise, the Sect Master, and a group of elders boarded a flying boat artifact.

It wasn't just them. The opening would happen sometime in the coming week, although the exact date was unspecified, and to be there as soon as that moment arrived, all powers would congregate as soon as possible.

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Within the Celestial Star Palace, another group boarded a flying boat. Along with the Sect Master, Tian Yang and a few other elders were also present. As for the disciples, naturally, Long Chen had earned himself a spot.

"Xun'er, why worry so much? You are coming with me, are you not?" He spoke to a woman in front of him.

She had beauty that only fell short of those on Ruyue's level. Her body proportions were perfect, and the sword on her hip only served to add a valiant and charming air to her overall look.

"Still, little Chen, I can't go with you into the secret realm. How can I be sure you'll be safe? If only it wasn't for my status..."

The woman sighed. Never would she have expected that she, who spent her whole life married to the sword, would feel such a way for a boy so many years younger than her.

Even she had gone through such training experiences in her life, yet even while knowing Long Chen's strength, and the fact that the experience was necessary for his growth, she couldn't help but feel hesitant.

Looking at the relationship between the two, it was obvious that they weren't just simple acquaintances. What was even more unexpected, though, was the fact that the woman Long Chen was calling "Xun'er" so endearingly was actually an elder of the sect, and the one who had taken him as her disciple.

The way their relationship progressed wasn't something either expected, nor was it something they had plans to publicize. Whether it be elder and sect disciple, or master and personal disciple, romantic feelings between the two were heavily taboo.

Long Chen sighed as he saw people approaching them. "Relax. I'm confident enough that nobody in the younger generation can harm me anymore."

'Unless it's...'

Long Chen suddenly thought about the brat who he was forced to call Boss for a week and clenched his teeth. His blood boiled at the thought of their last clash.

'This time...let's see how I make you lose face when we fight.' A beastly grin lit up his face.

The treasures of the secret realm? Sure they were great, but the resources of the Long Clan and the Celestial Star Palace had been heavily focused on him recently, so he wasn't particularly interested.

As for his competitors, he had heard of their feats before. Other than those on the level of the two Heavenly Fairies from the Supreme Fairy Paradise, the rest didn't have enough strength to interest him.

But there was one guy, a guy who had already won against him twice. That guy had gone missing on a mission for the past half a year or so, and there had been no news of him. Whenever he asked the Grand Elder about it, the only response he got was that they'd meet again at the Empyrean Dragon Realm.

So Long Chen was extremely excited.

To fight someone who was the same age as him, yet far more talented, to overcome that hurdle that stopped him from being the best in his generation.

That was the goal he had in mind as he boarded the flying ship.

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While the outside world was busy clamoring over the Empyrean Dragon Realm, the people in the Sanctuary finally found some semblance of peace.

Although it wasn't much, everyone at least had a residence now. And with all the beast corpses that were left over from the massacre earlier, they had enough food to last a while.

Damien exited the Sanctuary and looked off into the distance. 'Judging by the time, he should be calling soon...'

A transmission talisman appeared in his hand as he patiently waited. While he did so, he touched upon the formless essence in his surroundings and worked on perfecting his domain.

It wasn't a process he was anywhere close to completing. He didn't just want a space domain or a time domain, he wanted to combine them into an absolute area where he dominated space-time. Such a task wasn't simple at all.

Even the beginning stages of creation that he was in now granted him massive power, so he couldn't even imagine what it'd be like when he reached perfection.

A few hours passed with Damien meditating and forming his domain. And finally, the transmission talisman lit up like a beacon.

Damien opened his eyes and poured his mana into it.

"Yo, old man. It's been a while, hasn't it?"

Chapter 419 Reddish-Black [1]

"Yo, old man. It's been a while, hasn't it?"

Damien spoke in a light tone with a relaxed smile decorating his face. He was thoroughly satisfied with the improvement he had made in the past week or so, and it had left him in a good mood.

A mildly annoyed yet cheerful voice responded to his words. "Brat! Since you were able to answer my call, it seems you've found a way out of the 3000 Beast Mountain Range!"

On the Celestial Star Palace's flying boat, Tian Yang sat in one of the rooms with a bright smile on his face.

He truly didn't think his disciples would be able to do it. The 3000 Beast Mountain Range had been enveloped in the mystical Myriad Illusion Veil ever since the previous Great War, and in that time countless cultivators had gone to try their luck, thinking themselves better than the rest.

But of all those cultivators, not a single one managed to make it out of the mountain range alive. To think that his disciples would be the first ones to do so, how could he not be excited?

That is, until he heard Damien's next words.

"Rather than saying we escaped the 3000 Beast Mountain Range, it's better to say that the 3000 Beast Mountain Range no longer exists."

Damien thought about it before Tian Yang called, and he decided it'd be best to let the old man know about what had happened here.

Damien's vision was far wider than it was before he entered the mountain range. Things he didn't understand before clicked into place much easier whenever he thought about them. Of those things, was the fact that Tian Yang definitely wasn't as simple as he made himself out to be.

The White Dragon King, Fire and Ice Phoenix Matriarchs, Elvira, and Lucius, these were all 4th class beings under his command now. And besides Lucius being entry-level, the rest were all experienced veterans of the class.

But even when compared to them, Tian Yang's aura was far vaster. Either the old man was nearing the peak of 4th class or...

Whichever one of the two it was, the thing that mattered was that Tian Yang's voice was definitely loud enough to impact the fate of the entire Cloud Plane. Him knowing about the First War and the plans of the Nox would be anything but detrimental.

As Damien spoke about his and Ruyue's adventures in the mountain range, Tian Yang's face went through a range of expressions. From curiosity, to excitement, shock, and even a bit of horror. The tales he heard were something he never imagined would come out of his disciple's mouth.

'To think the Forbidden Zone was holding such a secret within...even the mission I assigned him led to something far greater than expected. The Death Seed, Primordial Undying Realm, an ancient war, a battle between Demigods...what kind of insane disciple would get involved with such events besides mine?'

Tian Yang didn't know whether to laugh or cry. On one hand, both of his disciples had become far more powerful than their peers could hope to match. Damien had even unlocked a Time affinity, which was necessary to practice the sect's staple Divination Techniques.

On top of that, somehow this kid had managed to gain not one, not two or three, but six whole 4th class subordinates! Not to mention the million-strong of lower-class subordinates he had, Damien had wantonly built a force that was on the same level of power as a mid-sized sect, maybe even a large one!

Tian Yang sighed. "Brat, I'm almost jealous of your luck. Although I understand that you had to put in a great deal of work before gaining what you have, it's still something unimaginable to most people! Anyway, where's little Yue? Let her see me as well."

Damien nodded and brought Ruyue out of the Sanctuary. Once he did, he handed her the transmission talisman and let master and disciple talk as they pleased.

The following conversation wouldn't involve him much, since he had already said his part. He still had a few more things to check up on within the area before he finally made his way over to the Empyrean Dragon Realm.

'Food supplies have been covered for now. The elves brought in a great deal of produce and seeds, and with their natural affinities, growing crops will be a breeze, especially with the fertility of the Sanctuary's land. However, the current housing situation isn't ideal. If it wasn't for the people being satisfied with the high mana density in the Sanctuary, they would probably rather revolt than live there.'

He needed materials. Wood was a given, but civilization was too advanced to just build plain wood houses and be content. His gaze traveled to the massive abyss that was left in wake of the Heaven Shaking battle that had occurred.

'That leads...well, I guess I'll see how far down it goes once I travel down there. But now isn't the time for exploring. I need to grab an insane amount of metal and ore and bring it into the Sanctuary.

He flashed above the abyss and began traveling down. His All-Seeing Eyes were activated to help him actually have vision in this endless darkness.

'Hmm, no notification. I guess it only shows up when I read peoples' statuses.'

Damien didn't travel in the center of the abyss. He stuck to one of the walls and transported any useful metals and minerals he could find into the Sanctuary.

'If I knew something about the materials of this world, I could probably sort out what's useful from what isn't, but it can't be helped. At least the All-Seeing Eyes allow me to somewhat differentiate.'

He traveled down further and further, exploring a few naturally formed caves and tunnels where more useful ores were present. There were plenty of signs of subterranean beasts in the area, but he assumed most of them had gone extinct due to the Divine Mana that had invaded the area.

'I got everything I can up here. Maybe I should go down to the bottom? I heard that if I reach negative thirteen on the y-axis, I can find diamonds.'

He continued to descend, but the abyss didn't seem to have an end to it at all. He couldn't understand how such a massive hole had been formed in the clash unless the two Demigods had purposefully dug down as they attacked.

'Or maybe...it was already here to begin with? The clash above only served to expand the abyss and create an entrance from the surface...the Heaven Swallowing Beasts were living far below the Endless Snow Mountain, to the point where a single bellow from them could shake its foundation evenly.'

There were definitely more mysteries to this abyss than what it looked like on the surface. The Heaven Swallowing Beasts were already enough indication of this, since the existence of their race alone was something extremely rare within the wider universe.

'But I can't check it out right now. Perhaps I'll come back in the future...if I don't forget because of all the bullshit that seems to follow me everywhere I go.'

Even as he descended, he had been continuously picking up ores and minerals from the walls of the abyss. And he did so in quantities far surpassing what would be necessary to build basic infrastructure for everyone in the Sanctuary to live peacefully.

After recklessly moving millions of people into the Sanctuary last time, his control over warping space and transportation increased significantly. Moving a few hundred thousand kilograms of weight at a time didn't seem impossible to him anymore.

Of course, when they were living beings, the situation changed a bit. It was far harder to transport living beings than it was to do the same with inanimate objects. It was why when he first awakened teleportation, he couldn't take anyone along with him unless he wanted to turn them into a flesh ball.

'Wait, then how did I manage to save Elena from the dungeon back then?'

He suddenly realized an inconsistency in his memories that he didn't even see in the Trial of Self not long ago. Well, since the Trial of Self started after he was already trapped in the dungeon, it was more like he was never shown.

'Something is off. Not only Elena, but Zara as well. When I was still too weak to carry another person with me during teleportation, I somehow still managed to save both of them by doing just that...'

From his memories, it almost seemed like a plot armor moment where he simply was able to do it because he needed to be able to do it.

But plot armor didn't exist in real life, nor would space confine its laws to abide by his wants and needs.

If things went as they should have, Elena would've been trapped in the dungeon with him as well. Zara would've most likely died in the hands of that Wyvern.

Sadly, Damien didn't have enough information. To this day, he still didn't know about the odd spatial phenomenon that had occurred when he first forged his resolve in the dungeon.

There was only one thing he could currently deduce.

This situation...wasn't so simple at all.

Chapter 420 Reddish-Black [2]

Damien wanted to shake off his thoughts, but they stuck in his mind like a tongue on an icy pole. As he delved deeper into the matter, he realized there were far more inconsistencies in his life than just those few.

'What the hell is going on?'

Rather than apprehension, the feeling bubbling in his chest at the moment was a surging rage that he could barely control.

There were many things he hated in this world, and at the very peak of that list was being controlled by others.

Being used as a tool for their machinations, living his life like a puppet on strings, he hated not being in control of his own decisions. And the fact that he was being made to doubt that very fact, it made him furious.

Sensing his rage, his dragon blood roared to life, along with a certain reddish-black seed that Damien still wasn't aware of. His body was soon coated in a mixture of black-red flames and lightning.

BOOM!

Space shattered around him, falling into the abyss like shards of glass. The wall next to him imploded and crumbled, causing the abyss to widen ever so slightly.

The Void Flames emerged from his body and tried to swallow those reddish-black flames, but retreated in fear as soon as they touched them. It was by no means powerful enough to devour such a flame yet.

But even while all this was happening on his body, Damien didn't notice at all. He had retreated to his spiritual world, watching his memories on repeat as if they were a film.

'Too many, there are too many coincidences. It's like everywhere I go, I'm perfectly embroiled in the grand-scale events of the universe. Is someone truly guiding my path? Or is there something greater at play?'

The worst part was, he couldn't necessarily trust his memories. He learned it in the Trial of Self. The memories in his mind didn't accurately represent the situation that had occurred back then. There were plenty of falsities and misconceptions that had been subconsciously formed, altering the way he viewed the past.

'If I had an indelible memory, this kind of perusing and analyzing might be useful, but I don't. It's useless to be swayed by my recollections when I can't tell truth from falsehood.'

"DAMMIT!" He roared inadvertently. His aura flared. The destruction taking place around him only seemed to heighten as it did. Even the darkness of the abyss was being burned and sundered away by the flame-lightning around his body.

He didn't know why he was so infuriated. He understood why he had become furious in the first place, but without any substantial evidence or indication that his conjecture was anywhere close to the truth, he didn't know why he was getting more and more infuriated as time passed.

The reddish-black seed hidden in his body pulsed with fervor. The more his rage grew, the more fuel it fueled its growth. The reddish-black flame-lightning conjured by it grew at the same time.

If Damien wasn't so deep in the abyss at the moment, he would've caused a second, albeit far smaller, catastrophe in the 3000 Beast Mountain Range.

Thousands of kilometers of space around him was shattered. It looked like hundreds and thousands of crystalline mirrors were surrounding his body. Above his head, an incorporeal stream began to form.

It was colored in blueish starlight, with shimmering star-like motes floating through it. As the stream grew in size, the mirrored space around him became more and more chaotic.

The concept of direction became meaningless, the concept of distance was the same. Walking a single step forward might cause one to move thousands of kilometers downward. It was a disorienting effect that would cause weaker-willed people to directly lose their minds.

But more than that, everything seemed to slow to a crawl within this space. A falling leaf took hours on end to go from the top of Damien's head to his feet.

"Kahak!"

Damien keeled over, copious amounts of blood leaking from his lips. It was only then that he finally became conscious of his surroundings.

The reddish-black seed in his body stopped pulsating. The indescribable rage he was feeling disappeared along with it. Even the flame-lightening surrounding his body was retracted as if nothing happened. Damien didn't notice its existence from start to end.

However, the domain around him was still in effect. His eyes widened when he saw it.

'Space-Time River.'

That insane blackness that almost caused his ego to disperse, the shimmering river of starlight that brought it back and showed him glimpses of the future...

Even if his memory of that time had been fogged over and almost wiped completely, the impact that river had on his subconscious wasn't small at all.

It was so much so that when it came time for him to finally form his domain, he had used that river as inspiration for the concept.

To see a version of it in front of his eyes, no matter how much smaller, less powerful, or less profound it was than the original, it still brought a smile to his face.

Even with blood still dripping down his chin, even with more blood threatening to spill out of his body the longer he kept the domain active, he wanted to keep looking at it for just a little while longer.

'My goal...my aspiration...'

It was a construct that man couldn't dip their hands into, something that could erase the ego and peer into the fate of even someone who had achieved True Godhood.

An inviolable law.

That was what the Space-Time River represented to him.

Finally, after a few seconds that felt like an eternity later, Damien canceled his domain. Even with his mana capacity exploding to 50000 points, the Space-Time River, even a cheap imitation of it, wasn't something that he could sustain properly.

'Tch! I can't reach for the skies when I haven't even managed to climb to the top of the well yet. The Mirror Domain is enough for now. As for the Space-Time River, I'll achieve it in due time.'

As the Space-Time River Domain had been canceled already, his Transcendent Regeneration immediately went to work and healed his internal injuries within minutes.

The fact that it wasn't done in seconds was testament to the level of concept he had tried to grasp far before he had the qualifications to.

And as soon as he was healed, he wiped the blood off his face and changed into a fresh set of clothes that wasn't stained in it, teleporting out of the abyss and returning to Ruyue's side. His last task for the immediate necessity of the Sanctuary had been completed.

Everything else could be done as it was required to be.

"What did the old man say?" Damien asked lightly. The transmission talisman in Ruyue's hand was already dim, indicating that the call with Tian Yang had ended.

"Nothing much. Just that he's eagerly waiting for our return, and that I should punish my rebellious Junior Brother if he tries to do anything funny."

"Oh my! How could I ever dare to try anything funny on my Senior Sister? I'm an innocent and pure man, don't you know?"

"Yes, yes. Innocent and pure. Just as pure as that bitch Eliza that you were talking about earlier."

"Kuhum...!" Damien obnoxiously cleared his throat and looked away. It seems Ruyue was still holding a grudge over that.

A few days ago as they were sharing their Trial World experiences with each other, he may or may not have let it slip how he played with a certain Slutty Demon Queen. Since then, Ruyue had been constantly giving him the cold shoulder, forcing him to give her the Queen Treatment so that she would forgive him.

'Damn my big mouth...don't talk about other women in front of the one you're currently attending to, isn't that the main rule for not losing your life as a man with a harem?'

Of course, Demon Queen Eliza, that most likely dead man-eating witch, was never even close to a harem candidate, but the rule applied nonetheless.

Damien shook his head wryly. It looks like he'd need a few more days of coaxing before he could get back on Ruyue's good side. For now, he needed to change the topic.

"Anyway, are you ready to leave?" He asked smoothly. That was a lie. He cringed at how poorly veiled his attempt was.

Ruyue rolled her eyes at his obvious behavior. "Since we have other things to do, I'll forgive you for now. But don't think I'm appeased."

"Yes, yes. If my Queen demands it, it shall be done!"

Ruyue nodded triumphantly. "Good! Then, send me back into the Sanctuary. Let us go to the Empyrean Dragon Realm where I can meet my first and third sisters."

Damien's wry smile grew. That was definitely another jab at him, but at least this time it was light-hearted. Ruyue often actively came to him to hear stories about Rose and Elena, and he had caught her once trying to think up the best way to introduce herself to them when they met.

He knew that she had already accepted the two of them in her heart, so he didn't mind these kinds of light-hearted remarks. Besides, he was technically being unfaithful to all of them, while also being faithful to them all at the same time. In this kind of situation, maybe he deserved to be teased a bit.

But he wasn't going to just let her off easy. He was Damien Void! A man who repaid even the slightest grievance a hundredfold! He would make sure she understood the consequences of teasing her husband.

His arms wrapped around her waist.

"Go? Who allowed you to go?" He moved his lips to her ear, nibbling on her earlobe before he whispered, "your lascivious husband demands your company on this trip."

And without allowing her to respond, he teleported away, leaving the rubble of the 3000 Beast Mountain Range behind to start a new journey.