

Void 49

Chapter 49

The next 4 months passed without any unexpected scenarios.

In the time Damien wasn't training either by creating his mana circuits or getting lectured about lightning by Malcolm he was constantly with Katherine.

They made a point to at least have dinner together every night, having idle conversation about their days and what they were doing with their respective teachers.

Naturally, they left out the most important details so they could surprise each other when they actually fought, but everything else was shared. When Katherine heard that Damien had never heard of mana circuits until Malcolm explained it to him, she almost fell out of her chair laughing.

Inwardly, however, she became even more curious about his identity. Not having a method to create them was natural but not knowing of their existence in general was mysterious. No matter how many topics they spoke about throughout the past few months, his past was never one of them.

The two had grown much closer over this period of time. Especially with them essentially becoming roommates, they spoke to each other constantly. Sometimes they would get close enough for even they themselves to suspect their relationship before awkwardly brushing it off.

Neither of them dared to bring up the topic. They had only known each other for around 6 months in total, which was hypothetically more than enough time for something to develop, but with neither of them saying anything, their relationship slowly became filled with palpable tension.

This tension wasn't bad, though, they just had moments where they would become awkward around each other and act like normal teenagers, blushing and unable to make eye contact.

His relationship with Katherine wasn't even close to the only thing he had improved over the past 4 months. His control over lightning had seen a drastic rise after he gained an expert like Malcolm as a teacher.

He even developed a fun ability where he could call down lightning from the sky to smite his opponents, the same one that Malcolm had used on him during their first meeting.

Though, the scale was much smaller when Damien used it. The ominous black color of his lightning also carried different properties than Malcolm's crimson kind, making the effects differ.

None of these were the greatest improvements, however, as Damien's main focus wasn't there. Rather, it was on his mana circuits.

Unlike his original plan, it took almost 3 months to complete the corporeal structure he had created. After his mana heart was finished, he spent 2 months completing the intricate system he built that covered his neck down to his toes.

This system was honestly a work of art. Thin purple strands now layered Damien's entire internal body, as rather than a circulatory system as he had originally planned, he structured it more like a nervous system.

And nerves were much more intricate than arteries. They snaked through his body, coiling around each other and forming patterns as they filled his body.

8 quadrants made up this system. One for each extremity and 4 for his torso alone. He figured that there'd be times when he'd be run through, and he couldn't have the whole upper body portion of his mana circuits be jeopardized by that.

Another change he made was his heart. After extensive thought, he connected his physical heart with his mana heart to stabilize the mana circuits' position within his internal body. Now, they had become a true part of him.

When his body evolved, they'd evolve along with it, and like legos, they could be taken apart and put back together as he pleased.

The final month he spent on his corporeal circuits was when he made another drastic decision. He decided to link his brain to the system as well, creating a feedback loop that spanned every part of his body. Since he didn't want to end up brain dead, he took 2 weeks studying its functions before even attempting this step.

This part was by far the most dangerous, as he had to put his complete focus on every movement he made. That week, he wasn't even able to move an inch from his spot on the mountain. When Damien finished, a faint purple hue seemed to emanate from his skin as his newly created "meridians" shone.

They weren't the same meridians that cultivators had, but he named them like that anyway.

And once that was done, Damien began working on the ethereal system. Once this system was finished, it would be anchored to its corporeal counterpart to complete his mana circuits.

This process was much easier for him than the previous one.

Creating the corporeal circuit was like creating a new body part, altering the base structure of his body. But the ethereal portion was similar to comprehending his affinities. He drew the pathway in his mind and focused on the “concept” he wanted to imbue in them.

He only had to trace the already existing parallel within his body.

As he formed these ethereal circuits, his mind wandered to various forms of destruction. Nuclear explosions that instantly incinerated hundreds of thousands of lives and the nuclear winter that reaped those who survived, the collision of celestial bodies that formed planets and galaxies, and even more complex forms of destruction like mental breakdowns and wrath.

All these thoughts of destruction fueled his creation as an ethereal reddish-black construct formed within his body. He started from his lower extremities and worked his way up, purposefully evading his mana heart as he built.

And then, on the final day of its creation, he linked the core of his ethereal circuits to his mana heart.

In that instant, the world lit up and Damien could swear he heard something akin to a car engine revving.

His body emitted a blinding amethyst glow as mana began cycling through the circuits he had set up.

Ba-dum. Ba-dum.

His mana heart started beating as it pumped mana through every part of his body. Since it was connected to his actual heart, it functioned in a similar fashion.

There were also benefits to connecting to his brain. Damien felt euphoria as the mana in his body followed the pathways he created as he flicked a casual bolt of lightning to test his gains.

It was instant.

Not only was there not even a microsecond of delay between his thoughts and actions, but the power of that simple flick was also enough to drill a small hole into the ground. Damien almost leapt with joy.

He honestly couldn't see anyone defeating him now, but he quickly calmed himself by thinking about how Malcolm toyed with him all those months ago.

'That's right. My strength has been optimized and slightly amplified, but it hasn't been raised an insane amount. I need to keep my wits and not get conceited.'

And as he brought himself down from his momentary high, another unexpected event took place. A system window popped up in front of his eyes.

[You have begun pioneering a new realm of mana circuits. Although many have built them in either corporeal or ethereal form, very few have chosen to interconnect both. As your path continues, you might even be able to unlock mysteries pertaining to the soul. Through this monumental achievement, your legends have been enhanced]

[Your mana circuits have been listed as a new 'Trait']

[You have been granted the trait: [Ananta Matrix]. Your legends have been enhanced.]

Damien's eyes widened. It seemed the system truly was omnipresent. It had even realized the grand intent he had behind the creation of his mana circuits and granted him rewards based on it.

He had no idea what the 'Ananta Matrix' was or what it had to do with his mana circuits, but for it to be classified as a trait, it had to be good. All he had to do was continue forward as he always did.

As he finished up, Damien got up and stretched. It had been 5 months since he'd last seen Zara and he was curious what she was up to.

During these 5 months, they had communicated constantly through their mental connection, and Damien could feel that Zara's thoughts had become more coherent.

Even though she couldn't speak yet, her thoughts were basically complete sentences, rather than the bundles of emotion he had received when they first initiated their pact.

The Beast Territory wasn't far from the Zenith Academy, as it was situated in a place easily accessible by all races.

Damien didn't understand why it was necessary to be close to the beast domain as well, since beasts without their 4th class couldn't take human form, but he had learned from Malcolm that it was a sign of goodwill.

After all, if the academy was in the center of every race's domain besides the beasts, what kind of message would it give off?

Anyway, Zara had traveled to the beast domain during the first month that Damien had been training and had spent her time there evolving.

Although the inner areas of the beast domain were developed and not much different from human territories, there were plenty of beasts that preferred roaming free and hunting as it was truest to their nature. This was even more so for 2nd class beasts as their intelligence was still budding.

Zara was a special case, and Damien mused it was due to her bloodline that her intelligence had been high enough for her to understand his words when they were mere 1st classes.

Now that their preparation period had ended, Damien called her back. He didn't mind being separated if he was stationary, but with him going to the tournament, he couldn't bear being too far.

Zara shared this sentiment. The two had been together through many rough experiences and had forged a bond thicker than even blood. Regardless of anything, if someone asked Damien who the person he was closest to in the world was, it would undoubtedly be Zara.

Damien warped back to his house and had his nightly dinner with Katherine as they excitedly talked about various things. However, the topic for today was mainly on the upcoming Nexus Event.

After all, its start was merely a week away.