

Void 51

Chapter 51

Apeiron was structured in a very classic manner. There was the human domain, the massive Helia Forest, and many smaller domains existing between them.

The structures of these domains were also simple. Within the human domain, there were 5 empires. Namely, the Adelaire, Stanton, Lennon, Wolford, and Gerard empires. While they had minor power struggles, their overall balance was always maintained due to each having a separate specialization.

Each empire had 4 major clans below their royal family and many smaller clans and families below them. This was in accordance with an agreement made so the balance between them wouldn't crumble.

The Adelaire empire was the strongest and largest of the 5 empires. It covered the majority of the central area of the human domain, consisting of many mountainous and grassy plain regions.

The Stanton and Lennon empires were situated in the far north and south, with the Stanton empire in a massive snow-covered flatland and the Lennon empire closer to the sun. This led to cultural development where the Stanton empire became similar to Eskimos and the Lennon empire adopted a more traditional eastern culture.

Meanwhile, the Wolford and Gerard empires were on the east and west of the human domain. The Wolford empire was surrounded by forests and mainly specialized in hunting with their culture revolving around this concept as well.

The Gerard empire was by the Boundless sea that surrounded the entire massive continent that made up Apeiron. They naturally focused on sea trade and exports.

The Boundless Sea essentially made the entire continent into a giant island, and many people had wondered whether there could be other continents or landmasses floating within it, but nobody had ever explored the entire sea to find out.

It was too expansive for even a 4th class to cover it, and even in space, it would take a large amount of time to circle the entire planet to explore. Perhaps some demigods who ascended to the Heavenly World knew the truth, but it was never shared with anyone else.

The Helia Forest was home to both the Beast Domain and the Elven domain, as both coexisted and shared the land. The Helia Forest alone took up around 1/3rd of the space on the entire continent, so the two races weren't cramped for space.

The Elven domain was ruled by the Kiria royal family and didn't follow the same system of clans and smaller powers as the human domain. Elves were typically more united as a race due to their nature and didn't tend to enjoy conflict. However, this didn't mean they couldn't fight.

Elves were always known as a peaceful race, leading many ambitious people in the past to attempt to conquer them, but this was a terrible idea. When they were forced to enter battle, the usual peace-loving elves became bloodthirsty war gods.

The duality of their nature was never explained, as nobody dared to ask, but once it became known nobody wantonly picked fights with them. This demeanor only came forth in life or death battles or moments of extreme stress, making many people wonder if it was controllable or a subconscious defense mechanism.

The Beast domain was also ruled by a royal family, but not much was known about them. They tended to stay secluded within their domain and watch over their subjects. While the various other ruling class individuals knew their names and strengths, it was never disclosed to the common populace.

Beasts weren't the only ones living in their domain, though, as demihumans also chose to make their home there. Demihumans were the product of a union between beasts and other races and were shunned heavily before the Great War. This was due to some more disgusting individuals mating with beasts before they received their human forms to produce children.

This kind of practice was extremely frowned upon. Until a beast gained its human form, it was absolutely forbidden to mate with them for obvious reasons. Nowadays, the discrimination isn't as high, as many demihumans are born from demihuman parents, but their race still decided to stay within the beast domain as it had been their home for many years.

In the Nexus Event, the beast domain's participants were usually demihumans, as beasts who fit the age range were usually unable to verbally speak. This was a requirement as well that was set so there wouldn't be any misunderstandings during the tournament.

The final major domain within Apeiron was the dwarves domain. The interesting fact about them, however, was that they lived underground. Dwarves were a race of scientists and blacksmiths who naturally preferred heat to the point that they built their empire close to the molten core of the planet.

The royal dwarf lineage was called the Temor family and with their citizens, they built a massive underground empire that spanned roughly the same distance as the Adelaire empire of the human domain.

Dwarves were naturally weaker in combat due to their smaller physiques, but it wasn't that they didn't hold power, or rather, their power couldn't be mobilized offensively.

Their strength usually came from artifacts and technology that they invented. For this reason, they tended not to participate in the Nexus Event, but they still attended it.

They could both sell artifacts to gather more raw material and form connections and long-term business relationships with the major empires on the surface. Their intelligence was their strong suit, and business was almost a natural instinct to them.

All of these various races and various powers were now congregating in a single spot that Damien was gazing upon at this very moment. It was a massive arena that seemed capable of housing hundreds of thousands of people and on its exterior, countless massive screens showcased the view within to those who couldn't enter.

Damien didn't understand how such a massive event that would have thousands of participants could efficiently be hosted within such an enclosed space, but his doubts were soon answered.

Within the arena he could sense countless spatial fluctuations emanating from various spots, seemingly holding subspaces to host the events. Most likely, those screens he saw earlier were going to be used to broadcast what was happening to the spectators.

Damien followed Malcolm into an elevator-like structure that took their group to a huge penthouse that overlooked the entire arena. Within this penthouse, there were various figures already gathered.

On a raised platform, 9 people sat together with grand auras emanating from their bodies. They were 7 men and 2 women, the leaders of the various nations of the world.

The 7 men were the 5 emperors of the human domain, the dwarf king, and the beast emperor while the 2 women were the Elf queen and the beast empress.

The human domain was largely patriarchal and the elven domain matriarchal, while the beast domain was ruled by the emperor and empress who wielded equal authority. The dwarf domain's ruling was based on mastery of their craft, so the gender of their ruler was always subject to change.

"The geniuses of this year's competition sure are interesting." The beast emperor said.

"Indeed, I see you've brought an especially talented youth this year." The Lennon emperor, Jonas Lennon said.

"Yes," the Elf Queen chimed in, "not just the Demi-human kid but also that girl from the human domain isn't bad."

"Those from the Zenith Academy still haven't shown up. I heard they have many good seedlings this time around." The Dwarf King added.

The 4th class beings that stood at the top of the world conversed lightly as they waited for the event to start.

At this time, Damien's group arrived at the penthouse. All eyes turned on them for a second as silence reigned. Then, as if nothing happened, everyone went back to their conversations.

"Come on," Malcolm said with a smile, "time to make your debut into the world."

Damien and the others followed. In their group, Damien and Katherine were the only humans, with one of the girls being a demihuman and the other boy and girl being a pair of elven twins.

The diversity of their group was unintentional but still gave off a good impression. The academy was prided for being unbiased, so having too many people of a single race would raise brows whether their qualifications were fair or not.

The group walked through the room and reached the elevated platform. It was common courtesy to greet these emperors and empresses before moving on to anything else.

Malcolm only gave a slight nod as a greeting, being an individual on their level, while the rest bowed.

“We greet seniors.” The others said in unison. This time, Damien also followed the same customs. He could be as wild as he pleased in front of Malcolm, but these were beings who could toy with him as they pleased that he didn’t know. Offending them on accident would take his life far earlier than he’d like.

His bow was still not as low as the rest though. Maybe it was a matter of pride or maybe it was a matter of habit, Damien didn’t know. All he knew was that the only people he’d ever bowed before were his mother and his teacher. He didn’t enjoy giving his respect to people who hadn’t done anything to earn it.

Receiving affirmation from the leaders, the group raised their heads. The first to speak was the beast empress.

“You boy, what is that girl doing in your shadow?”

Damien was surprised at first but quickly calmed down. How could Zara even think to hide from 4th class beings?

However, she still prided herself on her concealment. Seeing that she was discovered so easily, she warily glared at the beast empress without leaving his shadow. Her boldness only existed when she was in her safe space.

“Ah, I apologize for her rudeness senior, it’s just that she doesn’t really enjoy crowds and tends to find comfort there. Though I have no idea why.”

The beast empress smiled. “You must’ve gone through many life or death situations together. You’re around the same age too, so it isn’t surprising that she’d get attached to you.”

“Eh?”

Damien didn’t know how old Zara was, but finding out that they were of similar age truly surprised him. Considering her behavior when they first met, he thought she was much younger.

As Damien was thinking of how to respond, he noticed a fierce gaze on him. Looking over, he saw a large pink-haired man with ruby eyes on one of the central thrones.

‘Pink hair?’ Damien slowly became drenched in a cold sweat. He and Katherine were standing shoulder to shoulder as opposed to everyone else who had a healthy amount of distance between them. Sneakily glancing at her, he once again saw the pink hair and ruby eyes under Katherine’s disguise.

His cold sweat intensified as he covertly took two steps to the side, putting a comfortable distance between him and Katherine.

‘Fuck! She was a princess this entire time??’