

# Void 531

## Chapter 531 Shadow [1]

Damien's body shook as the familiar scent entered his senses. This mana...he knew exactly where it was from.

'The Eclipsing Shadow Sect...'

A memory was vividly recalled in his mind. At that time, he was young and just beginning the process of maturing. Back then, even the smallest loss was something he'd hold dearly in his heart while hoping for revenge.

When Damien was forced into the 3000 Beast Mountain Range after being chased by the assassins from the Eclipsing Shadow Sect, it was the first major loss he was ever forced to endure.

Even if his spatial abilities were suppressed, it wasn't to the degree where he should've lost. At the same time, he wasn't someone limited to just the space element. What was really lacking back then was his mind and his will.

Because of that, he'd been fooled by the Myriad Illusion Veil into believing his abilities were further suppressed, causing him to eat a massive loss to the assassins.

Perhaps this single loss wasn't a large enough altercation for Damien to hold a death grudge against the Eclipsing Shadow Sect, but that was completely wrong.

To someone like Damien, his will and spirit were formed on two desires. One was the desire for survival, and the other was the desire for freedom. If he ever acted in a way that went against his conscience, it'd negatively impact his training.

This was a concept Damien anyways referred to as "Heart Demons," but in reality, heart demons were simply traumas.

His first major loss took a big hit on Damien's juvenile psyche, so naturally it engraved itself as something that would turn into a trauma that hindered his path if he didn't take care of it.

And in this situation, to take care of it meant to destroy it.

Damien's body flashed into the protection of Shadow Garden's isolated space. Without hesitation, he moved back to where he met the six experts of the organization.

When he arrived, the only one he found was Albeus. Still, this was more than enough for him.

"I'd like to borrow a peak 4th class Elder and a few of your disciples." He spoke bluntly, not bothering to hide his intentions.

Albeus quirked his brows in curiosity. Although this request could be considered absurd, as if breaking into someone's home and asking to borrow their kids, Albeus somewhat understood Damien's personality after seeing how he carried himself these past few days.

Damien could be said to have a trustable personality, especially in comparison to the others in this world. In this case, if his goals were agreeable, there was no reason for Shadow Garden to not lend help.

"What do you need our troops for?" Albeus asked.

Damien nodded and quickly explained his encounter with the beast incense eggs. At the same time, he spoke about his connection to the Eclipsing Shadow Sect and their origin.

"I see," Albeus commented after listening to it all. "So this force is subordinated under Niflheim. If the tide is truly their doing, helping you is helping ourselves as well. Very well, I shall have them put together a team for you to use."

Albeus took out his personal device and began sending some messages. While he did so, Damien excused himself from the area.

The reason he came back to Shadow Garden first was so that troops would be ready to dispatch as soon as he returned. While the small unit was being put together, it was Damien's job to actually find the Eclipsing Shadow Sect.

But if there was one thing Damien wasn't nervous about, it was tracking.

Tracking was yet another function of his spatial abilities that Damien rarely used. It wasn't that he couldn't use it, he simply didn't have the opportunity to. After all, if he was searching for something, it usually meant he had no indication of it.

To have a trace of residual mana was an incredible helper.

Damien's senses linked with the surrounding space. His awareness remembered the scent of the residual mana from before, using it as a sort of filter as it spread tens of thousands of kilometers in every direction.

'Found it.'

It truly didn't take long. Judging from the appearance of the area he found, it was only a temporary residence, but it was still another trace.

Damien's figure faded away, appearing a few tens of kilometers away from his desired target. It couldn't be helped. When he reached the edge of his teleportation range, his aim became much hazier.

But that was fine. He could move the extra distance within an instant. And after doing exactly that, Damien used the same method to search once more.

This routine continued for half an hour. Every time Damien found a new trace, it would lead him to yet another location. Judging from this alone, the Eclipsing Shadow Sect had been quite busy.

It was only after that entire half an hour of searching passed that Damien finally reached the end of the rat trail. There, what he saw was a secluded space not much different from Shadow Garden's.

'Well it makes sense why they went unnoticed until now. Even if Shadow Garden had experts, they don't have anyone skilled enough in spatial abilities to see through dimensional walls with ease. Not to mention the distance...'

Damien shook his head. He still hadn't confirmed whether the ones inside were truly from the Eclipsing Shadow Sect, but if the traces led here, it meant the group inside was at least related.

The problem was that although Damien could pass through the Dimensional Walls, he couldn't do so covertly. If so, there was only one option left.

'It always ends up being brute force. Why do I even bother trying to use my head anymore?' Damien mocked himself.

Using Warp, he returned to Shadow Garden and met the team put together for him. The one in charge was a beautiful middle-aged lady with a motherly aura,

"Mm, it's a pleasure to meet you. You can call me Elder Trinity." She said upon seeing Damien.

Damien nodded and cupped his fists in response. Shaking hands was an earthly tradition, so he became accustomed to a greeting without bodily contact. It wouldn't be good to accidentally offend anyone.

Regardless, Elder Trinity was an amiable woman. Despite Damien's status as an outsider, she didn't look down on him or attempt to establish dominance. Since she was under his command during this time, she would act accordingly.

Damien nodded after a small talk with Elder Trinity. During this time, he filled her in on the strength of the Eclipsing Shadow Sect.

Her job in this raid was to kill the Eclipsing Shadow Sect Leader. Everything else would be handled by Damien.

Normally, people would wish to accomplish their revenge with their own hands. This was a kind of cathartic release that would free one's soul from the shackles of their trauma.

But Damien wasn't the same. If there was a problem, he'd take care of it as soon as he found a solution.

Even if he couldn't kill the Eclipsing Shadow Lord with his own power, he was the reason the latter died. This fact was enough for him.

Nevertheless, the first thing he needed to do was invade the isolated space. Everything else came after.

Chapter 532 Shadow [2]

Within the isolated space, an emergency meeting was rapidly arranged.

"There was movement outside the dimensional walls today. This alone isn't anything to warrant concern, but this movement was accompanied by spatial fluctuations. Unless it was a strange natural phenomenon, our location had been discovered."

The man who spoke was large and built like a tank. The aura coming from his body was at the peak of early 4th class.

This man was Luo Sheng, the Vice Master of the Eclipsing Shadow Sect.

As he spoke, his attention remained at the head of the meeting table where a cold and gloomy man sat. He was Luo Tian, Luo Sheng's elder brother and the Eclipsing Shadow Lord himself.

"Have you determined which force is after us?" Luo Tian asked.

"No, sir. However, earlier today, we launched an offensive against Shadow Garden as per Niflheim's orders. The timing is too coincidental."

Despite Luo Sheng and Luo Tian being blood brothers, there was no such love between them. Luo Tian was cold-hearted and indifferent even as a child. Ever since Luo Sheng was born, he'd considered himself more as Luo Tian's subordinate than his brother.

But this mindset was also what made Luo Sheng into Luo Tian's most loyal subordinate and the one he bestowed the position of Vice Master when he established the sect.

And this status held even more weight at this time.

The Eclipsing Shadow Sect was falling. Even if the duo wanted to prevent it, doing so was nigh impossible.

To take the sect and flee to Niflheim was easy to say, but not easy at all to accomplish. Because Luo Tian never acquired a Chaos Rank flight artifact, he didn't have a vessel capable of sustaining itself in space for long periods of time.

This led to many deaths. Any sect disciple under 3rd class was directly shredded by the chaotic space. As for the 3rd class disciples and 4th class elders, a large number of even them were killed during the journey by various dangers.

Whether it be space beasts, the chaotic space itself, spatial storms, spatial lightning, Vortex Spaces, the dangers of the chaotic space were numerous.

Those remaining in the Eclipsing Shadow Sect were those who survived those dangers. Although their sect was much smaller, its power was also concentrated.

And now, after spending close to half a year receiving benefits from the Nox while acting like their dogs, their strength had been further consolidated.

The current Eclipsing Shadow Sect was a dog with only half its teeth. In the first place, the fact that they were told to attack Shadow Garden was Niflheim proclaiming their deaths.



Even if it would've taken longer without Damien's abilities, Shadow Garden finding the Eclipsing Shadow Sect remains was inevitable. At that time, the sect would be destroyed regardless.

But Luo Tian and his group weren't aware of Shadow Garden's scale or power. They'd been settled in the Outer Wilds as soon as they entered the unnamed world, and they'd never been allowed outside of it.

The Eclipsing Shadow Sect was nothing more than a shell of its previous self. Even Luo Tian knew this.

But who could he blame for this fate? Damien who initiated the purge? There was no way for Luo Tian to comprehend this connection. Then, could he only blame himself for being tempted by the Nox?

It had to be known, the other wicked path sects that didn't side with the Nox weren't annihilated. The wicked path was simply another facet of cultivation, but siding with the Nox was betraying Existence itself.

Luo Tian's thoughts were chaotic even though his face was stoic. Hearing that a force would come to attack them, he realized that the battle wouldn't be favorable to them at all.

But that was all.

Even if the conditions were unfavorable, even in a situation where death was inevitable, he, Luo Tian, would never back down.

To fight even after his last breath left his lips. This was the resolve that Luo Tian built in his thousands of years of life.

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The most bothersome part of a raid like this would usually be travel rather than the actual battle. The trek to merely arrive at the intended location would whittle away at mental strength and drop one's guard.

But with Damien, this troublesome process was directly skipped. Using Warp, he could easily transport a large group of people.

Therefore, the group arrived in front of the isolated space in a mere instant. Their senses remained heightened to the max. Each and every one of them knew that their current mission wasn't a joking matter.

People like Damien and Albeus could look at something like this causally, but for these normal disciples, raiding a group that was headed by a peak 4th class being was immensely dangerous.

They didn't have the opportunity to take things simply.

Before the normal disciples could get in their heads too much about the upcoming raid, Damien walked up to the dimensional wall ahead of them and placed his hand on it.

'Passing through it isn't a problem, but I can't shatter it yet. What a shame.'

Rather, Damien could shatter the dimensional wall if he had a few days to slowly do so, but that wasn't an option in a true combat situation.

All he could do was resign himself and wrap his mana around his squad members. Afterward, he flew directly into the spatial wall and passed through it. The spatial mana surrounding the squad pulled them through the wall as well.

And when the group arrived on the other side...

"Halt! Who dares intrude in my Eclipsing Shadow Sect's territory?!"

A booming voice resounded through the entire isolated world. Standing in the sky was Luo Sheng with his twin daggers already in his hands. On the ground below him, all of the Eclipsing Shadow Sect's remaining disciples stood armed and ready for battle as well.

Damien's eyes narrowed when he looked at this group. Although there were only a few hundred of them, they were all late or peak 3rd class beings. There were even a few early 4th classes among them.

Naturally, the strongest one was Luo Sheng.

While Damien faced this crowd, Elder Trinity spread her awareness past them. To her, this group was just a bunch of headless chickens running around wildly without knowing the meaning of death. She deigned to deal with them.

Instead, her awareness concentrated on a certain location. Her body turned into a streak of light and arrived there in an instant, seemingly confronting Luo Tian.

Damien let her do her thing. His attention remained focused on the battle ahead. Looking at the disciples behind him, he realized that none of them had cultivation in the 4th class.

'Since they're all at the late or peak 3rd class themselves, those at the same level will be practice partners and stepping stones for them. Instead of taking out the small fries, I should...'

Damien flicked his wrist and clenched his fist. "Seal."

When the word came out of his mouth, space compressed until it physically manifested. Within the crowd of enemies, the seven early 4th class beings were each confined in their own small isolated space.

This space was constantly compressing, taking them along with it. And with their strength, there was no way for them to break out of it.

This technique was like a miniaturized version of his domain. Damien learned it exactly through attempting to shrink and expand his domain.

It was essentially a pocket space that he could alter at will, and more than that, it was his first true step into manipulating dimensions.

With his comprehension reaching such a level, combined with his monstrous stats after exiting the Primordial Undying Realm and binding both Apeiron and the Cloud Plane, a small early 4th class being couldn't hold a candle to him.

As for his current strength? Even Damien was curious to find out. And to help him with this task...

Damien's attention fell on Luo Sheng.

Right, that guy would be the perfect practice dummy.

Chapter 533 Shadow [3]

"So you are Luo Sheng?" Damien commented as he flew up into the sky to meet his opponent.

The question was rhetorical, of course. Ever since the list of purge targets was compiled, Damien had done a fair amount of research on the Eclipsing Shadow Sect. Whether it be their strength, numbers, or even secrets known to none but themselves, Damien knew it all.

It couldn't be helped. He had a genuine World Core providing him information, so in what world would he be uneducated?

Luo Sheng and Luo Tian. Damien had long been aware of this duo, but seeing Luo Sheng in person, he was once again forced to realize that the 4th class barrier wasn't something to laugh at.

Even if he could compete with Luo Sheng, it wouldn't be an easy battle.

"And you are?" Luo Sheng questioned in response to Damien's rhetoric.

"What, you don't remember me?" Damien quipped back.

Luo Sheng furrowed his brows. In the first place, entertaining a small 3rd class boy who dared to face him was a joke, but Luo Sheng couldn't stop himself from subconsciously taking Damien seriously.

After all, the latter was easily withstanding his aura suppression. Not to mention, he'd clearly seen how Damien entrapped the remaining early 4th class existences without giving them a chance to escape.

But Luo Sheng truly didn't know who Damien was. In the time when the Death Seed struggle took place, he remained at the Main Sect to take care of matters while Luo Tian was gone.

As such, he could only shake his head in response. "I do not know you, nor do I care what your story is. If you have come to eliminate us, the only option left for us is to fight!"

Luo Sheng moved without waiting for Damien's answer. Arriving in front of his opponent, he charged mana into his twin daggers and sprung forth with two diagonal slashes that crossed into an "X" shape.

Damien ducked down to avoid the strike. Although Luo Sheng was moving at incredible speeds, it was still a level Damien could keep up with.

Whoosh!

The twin daggers crossed above his head, letting out a dagger light that sliced apart the air. At the same time that this impact occurred, Damien sprung up, his fist flying perpendicular to the ground as he sent a fierce uppercut into Luo Sheng's jaw.

Bang!

The fist rang true. Luo Sheng's body was flung back. Seeing an opportunity arise so early in the game, Damien naturally didn't wish to waste it. His body flashed, appearing next to Luo Sheng. His hand chopped down at his opponent's neck, aiming to fell him in a single blow.

Boom!

But the results weren't as expected. When Damien's hand hit Luo Sheng's skin, it felt like he hit a block of iron. A dull throb appeared in his hand at the impact point while Luo Sheng was able to use Damien's momentum as a counterbalance to steady himself.

The two separated rapidly and stared at each other from afar. The previous exchange didn't utilize a great deal of mana, but they were able to realize that they were up against formidable opponents.

A layman who couldn't read their auras would assume they were at the same level.

Damien had no plans to miss the initiative again. Since Luo Sheng was able to take the first hit, he'd make sure he took first blood. His arm moved through the air as if he was a conductor, space itself acting as his orchestra.

His body flew through the air following the guidance of the wind, always remaining somewhat incorporeal and elusive. At the same time, space twisted and bent according to his movements, encroaching upon Luo Sheng.

Luo Sheng's face turned serious for the first time. He knew his opponent had spatial powers from the beginning, but facing them head-on was different from simply witnessing them.

Space around him twisted strangely, the concept of distance losing meaning. These distortions attempted to twist both his perception and physical body into oblivion.

But Luo Sheng was an exalted 4th class existence. How could he let himself be beaten so easily?

Xiu! Xiu! Xiu!

Tens of space blades appeared from thin air and rapidly shot at Luo Sheng. These crescent-shaped spatial tears held the ability to tear the world itself asunder.



Luo Sheng realized the danger these space blades possessed, but he also saw his chance. When the tens of blades converged on his location, his body turned into a shadow and slipped away.

Damien's eyes narrowed. Although his vision was blocked by the large amount of mana and spatial distortions around Luo Sheng, his perception was just fine. Losing track of Luo Sheng meant the latter either escaped or died.

And Damien wasn't stupid enough to believe the first option.

Whoosh!

He teleported away rapidly, appearing 10 meters away. Behind where he once stood, Luo Sheng's figure emerged from the void, his twin daggers mid-swing.

Luo Sheng already knew he'd miss when he started the attack, so he wasn't put off by Damien's teleportation. In fact, this was exactly what he wanted.

"Eclipsing Shadow Domain!"

One of the main inheritances of the Eclipsing Shadow Sect, the Eclipsing Shadow Domain was a truly terrifying entity. When Luo Sheng summoned it, tens of kilometers of space were immediately colored in blackness.

As Damien moved through this space, he realized that heavy restrictions were being cast onto his body. His movements were sluggish, his perception range was restrained, and there was even a spatial lock somewhat hindering his elemental ability.

'This fellow was quite prepared.' Damien commented inwardly as he felt his way through the domain.

Bang!

All of a sudden, a dagger appeared at Damien's side and pierced him through! Blood spurted from the gash that opened, but before this blood could even permeate, Damien was stabbed again, this time in his chest area!

The shadow daggers quite literally appeared out of nowhere. Damien wasn't able to sense or perceive them at all. And they didn't stop after a mere two. The daggers stabbing into his body grew in number with time.

The worst part was that the strikes were always random without pattern. Damien had no way of discovering where the next attack would be. Therefore, he was forced to endure the pain and wait for Transcendent Regeneration to get him out of his predicament.

In the meantime, he spread his awareness to its restricted limits so that at least he wouldn't get attacked by Luo Sheng's main body.

Even if these daggers popped out consistently, they couldn't do real damage to Damien. Luo Sheng, however, was a different story altogether.

Damien's eyes hardened. Mirage appeared in his hand. If it wasn't for the sheen the blade gave off after coming in contact with mana, it would've been completely invisible in the darkness.

'Void Sword Art 4th Form: Spatial Collapse'

His blade swung down with an unholy amount of gravity and momentum pulling it towards the earth. The second Spatial Collapse was enacted, Damien was sure this domain would shatter.

And if Damien was aware of it, Luo Sheng was aware as well. Knowing that he was facing his last opportunity to hold an absolute advantage over Damien and deal some damage, Luo Sheng moved with untold precision.

His body melded into the blackness. His twin daggers were covered in an inky light that seemed to corrupt everything around them. Once he got within 10 meters of Damien, the mana concentration around him jumped exponentially.

'Eclipsing Shadow Art: Twilight Moon!'

His right hand moved down in a vertical slash while his left hand snaked and moved in a more unpredictable pattern. The inky coating on the blades intermingled and reacted to his mana, becoming large projections that shot out at Damien, who was currently mid-swing.

The Eclipsing Shadow Sect wasn't named as such just for the sake of being domineering. Their sect was built on an ancient inheritance that the Luo brothers stumbled upon when they were still in their first 100 years of life.

And this inheritance wasn't a joke.

It was an inheritance to a darkness that encapsulated everything. Even light wasn't safe from this darkness.

And Twilight Moon...was a technique that mirrored this desire for darkness to encompass the heavens.

Chapter 534 Shadow [4]

Because they were currently within the Eclipsing Shadow Domain, Damien wasn't able to see the grandeur of Twilight Moon. He could only feel the terrifying energy approaching his back as his sword swung downward.

But for those outside the domain, their entire worlds had just flipped upside down. The sun in the sky was covered in a black veil in an instant. Dark clouds blotted out the skies and shadow crows flew wantonly through the air.

The ground within many kilometers was directly corroded and melted, creating a pit that enveloped the surrounding practitioners and even directly killed a few.

As for those who died, they could only blame themselves for treading too close to a battle between people with 4th class power levels.

The scene within the Eclipsing Shadow Domain wasn't nearly as grandiose as the one outside of it, but the concentration of all the rampant mana that caused the environmental changes outside was currently striking towards Damien's back.

At the same time, Damien's own blade carried a terrifying collision force that could raze the surrounding tens or even hundreds of kilometers with ease.

BOOOOOOM!

Both of these strikes struck true at the same time. Damien's blade created a massive crater in the ground with impact force alone, and those two daggers accurately dug into his back and clawed into his body.

"Keuk...!"

Damien coughed out a mouthful and flew forward. Behind him, a massive black hole formed in the air, cracking the Eclipsing Shadow Domain and consuming it whole.

Because the domain was connected to Luo Sheng, the man was injured by its destruction. He could feel his blood rolling in his body, threatening to make its way up his throat.

But he wasn't nearly as injured as Damien. The effects of Twilight Moon weren't simple at all.

The first dagger was straight and honest. The gash it left ran parallel to Damien's spine, shattering his bones and slicing apart his muscles. This strike alone was enough to inhibit his movement ability.

But the true killer was the second dagger. This dagger snaked through the air fiendishly. When it found its target in Damien's back, it didn't simply aim to slash him apart.

Three fierce jabs were let out first. These jabs were aimed straight at the three Nodes that rested along the spinal cord. The dagger went on to cause a few more flesh wounds and gashes after these stabs, but they weren't nearly as harmful.

What Luo Sheng aimed to do was directly cripple Damien. And if Damien was a resident of this unnamed world, he truly would've been finished with that single move.

Unfortunately, Luo Sheng was an Eclipsing Shadow Sect member who didn't know Damien. If he did, he would've aimed to cause far more substantial damage.

But the damage he caused wasn't light. Even if Damien's Ananta Matrix was still functioning properly, his body was a different story. Until Transcendent Regeneration fixed his mangled spine, he wouldn't be able to move properly.

Thus, using Mirage became impossible.

'Good thing I picked these up. I guess it'll also be my first time trying them in combat.'

Damien ignored his injuries. Even if they were serious, they could still be healed. Besides, his nerves were cleanly cut so he couldn't even properly register the pain.

The Twin Moons appeared in his hand upon his summoning. Along with this, two black gems surfaced on his wrists, shining as they recognized the weapon they connected to.

Damien grinned. 'This is our first battle together, so you better not disappoint me!'

Bang!

Freya let loose a bolt of silver spatial mana. When it appeared near Luo Sheng, who was already midway through beginning his next attack, it directly exploded.

A compressed burst of spatial mana wasn't a joke. The explosion tore space asunder, almost forcing Luo Sheng into the chaotic void.

His mana revolved rapidly as he prevented this outcome. But inevitably, he was distracted by his life-or-death predicament.

Hel fired this time. Matching the black gun, a black ball of mana shot from the barrel, its trajectory to the left of Luo Sheng's head.

"Fuck!" Luo Sheng exclaimed when he noticed the incoming attack, but he couldn't move at all. If he stopped resisting the pull of the chaotic void, he'd be shredded without even bones remaining.

This was the true terror in fighting a spatial practitioner. Even if they didn't personally possess enough ability, if their talent was good enough, they could borrow space itself as a knife to kill their enemies.

After all, there were varying levels of space. The Chaotic Void that appeared when Damien shattered space was the third level, but even this was enough to kill an early 4th class like Luo Sheng.

Perhaps only a middle 4th class being could directly resist the chaotic void.

Nevertheless, Luo Sheng's fierce mana revolution was able to prevent him from being consumed. Yet, he'd used up far more mana than he should've at this juncture.

And it was exactly at that moment that the black ball of mana arrived near his body.

Luo Sheng gritted his teeth and shot a bolt of shadow mana into Damien's attack. Even if he couldn't dodge, Luo Sheng wouldn't let a convoluted mass of compressed spatial mana explode next to his head. That was simply asking for death!

BOOM!



The black bullet imploded, causing space to wobble and ripple. It was like a single-target version of the massive black hole Damien conjured earlier.

Once again, the chaotic void was torn open. Once again, Luo Sheng was forced to deplete his mana to resist it, giving Damien a massive upper hand. And once again, Damien fired a slew of bullets from Hel and Freya, forcing Luo Sheng into a corner.

From the start of this battle, Luo Sheng had been dominated. Even when he was able to give Damien fatal injuries, it didn't matter. In the time Damien spent harassing him with the Twin Moons, his spinal injury had already begun its healing process.

'Damn unkillable zombie!' Luo Sheng spat inwardly. He was truly perplexed to have this kind of opponent. The man in front of him didn't even look 30; how could such a genius exist in this world?

They hadn't fought for long, but at their level, drawn-out fights weren't necessary anymore. A true drawn-out fight would only take place if the opponents were truly matched.

But Damien and Luo Sheng? Even Luo Sheng wasn't shameless enough to say he was Damien's match.

After all, even if their power levels were the same, his actual level was far above Damien's!

Still, Luo Sheng was someone who grew up following his older brother around like a slave. To him, the memories of their lives when they were young and adventurous were his most precious.

Luo Tian's resolve was simple. To fight on even after drawing his last breath. And as his staunchest supporter and most loyal subordinate, Luo Sheng naturally imitated this ideology.

Even if Damien was a genius, even if he held an advantage in elements, even if he held every advantage in the world, Luo Sheng wouldn't run away from the battle.

Besides, his opponent seemed to have a grudge against the Eclipsing Shadow Sect, so even if he ran, he wouldn't necessarily be sage.

Ptui!

Luo Sheng spat out a bullet of bad blood. At the same time, the blood remaining in his body began to stir and boil.

His blood essence had been combusted. To defeat Damien, he used his own life as collateral.

Luo Sheng's daggers flashed as he returned to his stance. His eyes became serene, the rampant emotions clouding his thoughts clearing all at once.

From this point on, he'd make no more mistakes.

'Eclipsing Shadow Art: Entwining Shadows.'

## Chapter 535 Shadow [5]

The attack titled Entwining Shadows held many similarities to Damien's Dance of the Void. When Luo Sheng's mana moved to execute the movement, his body turned into a flurry of afterimages as he went into a fierce offensive.

Hundreds of moves were exchanged every second. Space around the duo was being forced to the extremes as the duo passed through it, razing everything around them to the ground.

If they weren't tens of kilometers in the air at the moment, the battle of 3rd classes taking place below them would've turned into a graveyard.

The Twin Moons had already been returned to Damien's subspace. With the current range of combat, they wouldn't be able to show their full power. At this distance, it was Mirage's turn to shine.

But Damien actually didn't choose this option. Instead, his arms moved rapidly and parried every strike Luo Sheng put out.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The impacts weren't anything simple. Every time the pair of twin daggers clashed against Damien's forearms, he felt his entire skeleton vibrate. Obviously, his current method wasn't sustainable at all.

But he didn't choose this route without reason. The Ananta Matrix raced at full power, circulating and amplifying Damien's mana to its fullest potential. The built-up mana was directly transferred into his arms to increase their defense.

Voom!

Damien's body went through an immense change. His height grew, his skin paled, his hair turned white, his sclera turned black, and his irises were like glimmering red blood diamonds. Across his skin, mysterious runic tattoos surfaced and began to squirm.

'Strength!'

Damien didn't waste any time. He commanded the enhancement runes, causing them to swirl into specific patterns. Damien felt his striking power increase exponentially.

When Luo Sheng's daggers met his arms again, he no longer felt the pain of his bones rattling. His arm swept to the side with unknown vigor, forcing Luo Sheng's blades away. At the same time, his other arm swung at his opponent's head, aiming to cleave it off.

Luo Sheng's eyes widened in alarm. He forcibly canceled his momentum and pushed his mana to backpedal away. This way, he was able to avoid the harrowing claw of death that was hurling towards him.

Haa...haa...

The sound of rough breathing filled the sky. The two opponents occupying it found themselves in sync as they attempted to recuperate as much as they could before clashing.

Unknowingly, a crowd had formed below them to watch their battle. Both sides put down their arms to watch their commanders fight.

But this didn't cause many issues. After all, the scuffles of these small 3rd class characters wouldn't change the tide of the overall battle. Instead, it was the fierce life-or-death match in the air that would determine their fates.

Therefore, they ceased fighting in order to watch.

And currently, the overarching emotion coloring these disciples was awe. Awe and reverence for these powerful figures who they could only look up to. And more than that, awe and reverence towards Damien himself.

Luo Sheng's situation didn't need to be mentioned. He was many thousands of years old already but his power level was capped at the peak of early 4th class. This kind of character might've been rare in a world like Apeiron, but in Niflheim or even the Cloud Plane, Luo Sheng was just a single drop of water in a vast ocean.

But Damien was different. Although nothing could be said about his age since even someone of Luo Sheng's age still looked in his mid-30s, if his aura was any indication, he was still plenty young.

And not only that, but he was also a 3rd class fighter just like them. There were many among the disciples on the ground who had been stuck at the peak of 3rd class for tens or hundreds of years, but even with all the accumulation they did in that time, they couldn't even reach Damien's toes.

The main barrier to entry for 4th class was exactly comprehension. For many, even after reaching level 199 and filling their experience bar to the maximum, their lacking talent or ability made it so they could never receive their Baptism.

In the end, Baptisms were rituals bestowed by the universe. If it deemed someone unfit to even attempt to cross its trial, there was nothing else they could do.

If anything, they could bitterly struggle in order to obtain the universe's approval, but not many were willing to put in the necessary effort.

Damien's case was exactly opposite of the majority. His comprehension far surpassed the requirements, but he was intentionally suppressing his level to the peak of 3rd class.

Even when he received experience from his kills, he'd use the Devour ability to either redistribute this essence to his close ones or return it to the atmosphere.

Nevertheless, it was this very comprehension ability, his abnormal physical stats accumulated through Devour, and the fact that he continuously consolidated and firmed his power that he was able to achieve feats that these smaller practitioners could never imagine.

Naturally, those on the ground would never know these facts. They could only assume that the next era of geniuses was truly filled with those blessed by the heavens while they wallowed in mediocrity.

In the sky, Damien and Luo Sheng watched each other vigilantly as they fought a silent war. Instead of combat, this duel was more spiritual.

They were both taking time to heal. As people who had no good feelings towards each other, this chance naturally wasn't something they wished to allow each other.

But at the moment, it couldn't be helped. For Damien to fight effectively, he needed to heal the holes in his back and spine. As for Luo Sheng, even after combusting his blood essence, he wasn't able to match up to Damien.

The aftereffects of his sacrifice were slowly beginning to surface. His mana was rapidly being drained due to him spending it so wantonly. And this wasn't even mentioning his injuries.

If one had to decide who was warier at the moment, it was without a doubt Luo Sheng. He didn't have nearly enough time. Before he knew it, Damien would...

A figure appeared in front of him like a ghost, but to Luo Sheng, this figure was practically the devil. With Transcendent Regeneration, Damien finally reached a point where he could fight normally again. If so, he wouldn't waste this opening.

When his body appeared in front of Luo Sheng, there was no weapon in his hand, however, the mana coating his fist was a terror in itself.

Damien's fist sat alit like a shining moon. Surrounding it were seven stars created from volatile lightning and fire.

'Seven Stars Encircling the Moon!'

Luo Sheng only managed to move his body back a few inches before the fist reached him. Although he avoided a direct collision, his fate wasn't great regardless.

BOOOOOOM!

The seven stars crashed into each other and created a volatile chain reaction of mana. When this reaction multiplied to its peak and interacted with the moon around Damien's fist, a heaven-shaking explosion rang out.

Space shattered, giving way to the Chaotic Void. Reality twisted as stellar beams of light rained down upon the ground, turning many random plots of land and stray combatants into ash.

And from the center of this explosion, a charred body shot out at insane speeds. This was naturally the body of Luo Sheng.

Damien stood and placidly watched Luo Sheng as he was thrown away. For a second, he thought about letting out a sigh of relief and then leaving to observe Elder Trinity's battle.



But before he could even think about it. A thin, nearly two-dimensional, needle of shadow appeared directly in front of his forehead.

Damien's eyes widened alertly. Vector control was spurred into action, canceling the shadow needle's momentum and velocity, forcing it to halt mere millimeters before it pierced Damien's forehead.

Standing nearly ten kilometers away, his body charred and disgusting, was Luo Sheng.

His eyes burned in fury and hate. His mouth widened as he let out a guttural roar. His fingers traced his spatial ring, withdrawing a...

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'This is...!'

In front of Damien's eyes, Luo Sheng pulled a strange object out of his spatial ring. It looked similar to a whip, but at the same time looked like a rope with a sack attached to the end. Overall, it was a strange weapon.

But even more curious was Luo Sheng who whipped his wrist, causing the line to revolve around him.

"Most likely, you are the last opponent I will face before my death. If it is so, then I shall use every card I possess!"

Mana raged like a mad hurricane flooding into the strange weapon. Luo Sheng's arm waved through the air strongly, and his body heavily whipped to the side!

BANG!

A massive bang rang out as space directly collapsed. The soundwave alone was enough to kill the weaker practitioners nearby.

But more than that...

"Keuk!"

Damien vomited a mouthful of blood. His awareness immediately spread to his side. There, he found that a large chunk of his body was no longer present.

Luckily, the damage stopped at his ribs. If the impact was just slightly fiercer, Damien would've directly died.

His mind went into high alert. The threat of death that he hadn't felt in so long, he felt it from that strange weapon.

BANG!

Luo Sheng's body furiously whipped to the side once more, and space shattered with the momentum of his weapon. The bulbous end of the weapon moved as if it was teleporting, arriving at Damien's chest wanting to pierce directly through.

Damien's eyes widened in focus. This time, since he specifically looked for it, he was able to somewhat track its movements.

His body moved to the side, disappearing as he melded into the spatial layers. When the sack whipped to impact, it was met with empty air.

But Damien wasn't going to let things go so easily. Before anything else, he needed to make sure Luo Sheng could no longer use that strange weapon. Even if he understood how it worked, he couldn't afford to concentrate his attention on such a small object in the midst of a large battle.

If Luo Sheng sneak attacked him while his focus was elsewhere, it'd be fatal, especially in the few minutes before Transcendent Regeneration healed his side.

He appeared back in his original position in an instant. His arm whipped forward and grabbed the head of the strange weapon before Luo Sheng could recall it.

Mana twisted around his hand violently as he clutched his fist, attempting to directly crush the weapon.

But this didn't work at all. No matter how much force Damien put into his grip, the seemingly weak body of the weapon turned into something on par with the most heavenly metals.

"Hahaha!" Luo Sheng laughed at his attempts. "My Phantom Mace Vine is a treasure birthed by the heavens themselves! A weak child like you doesn't have the right to put your hands on it!"

'Right.' Damien thought to himself. He had almost forgotten the existence of heavenly treasures.

These agglomerations of mana and miracle created by the universe itself. In actuality, Damien had never come across a true supreme treasure.

The Primordial Undying Tree was assumed to be exactly that by the White Dragon King and the other sovereigns of the 3000 Beast Mountain Range, but in fact, they were dead wrong.

The Primordial Undying Tree was a natural evolution of the World Tree after Alaric began actively interfering in its development. Its existence can be wholly attributed to him, though a great amount of luck was no doubt involved in the process.

Regardless, the point still stood. Damien knew that the universe could birth treasures on its own, but he'd never seen an example in reality.

But now, one was right in front of his eyes. Although it was most likely the trashiest of trash when compared to other supreme treasures, the fact that this treasure was a weapon alone was enough to give it immense value.

'Is the universe being influenced by human hands? Or were these inventions thought to be human ingenuity actually bestowed upon us by the universe itself?'

It was a curious thing he could ponder in his free time, but that wasn't now. Damien ignored Luo Sheng's earlier shout and continued to pour more mana into his grip.

Though, he wasn't stupid enough to assume he could still destroy the treasure. His goal had changed completely.

'In terms of defense, he trumps me, but if it's physical strength...'

Damien grinned. His muscles bulged as if they would burst, thick veins pulsating under his skin. His mana flared out with such vigor that it somewhat distorted reality with its presence.

Within his body, Void Essence circulated fiercely. Damien was using the Devour ability in a far less showy fashion, activating it internally rather than manifesting it.

But its effects weren't diminished. Drove of mana rushed into Damien's body, attracted by Devour's suction force. Even as he wantonly used his mana, his reserves weren't anywhere near running low.

As for where his mana was going? From his fists, his mana transferred into the so-called Phantom Mace Vine. There were two effects he intended with this action.

The first was to attempt to overload or disorient the mana flowing inside the treasure. This way, Luo Sheng's control would collapse or at least weaken.

As for the second reason, it was more of a stretch. Despite the fact that he didn't believe it was possible, Damien still attempted to claim ownership of the treasure by having it accept his mana.

Treasures of this level were often sentient and able to choose their owners. The possibility of the treasure choosing him was minuscule, but still present.

Nonetheless, only a portion of Damien's mana was being directed into this task. Luo Sheng naturally wouldn't stand by and allow Damien to act as he pleased.

While the two played a game of life-or-death tug-of-war on one side, they constantly barraged each other with attacks on the other.

Shadow manifestations rushed at Damien with speed like spatial transportation. The mana protection covering Damien's body was pierced multiple times, riddling him with injuries.

His grievous side injury hadn't even been fully healed yet, so this kind of accumulation wasn't something he could easily take.

But Luo Sheng wasn't in better shape at all. All the while, he had also been attempting to defend against Damien's attacks. Random spatial collapses and compressions, distance being tampered with on a whim, although Damien's attacks were less direct, they caused far more damage.

The pair completely forwent defense in this moment. Their goals aligned in that all they wished for at the moment was to kill their enemy.

Bang!

A sudden muffled explosion rang out in the space between the pair. Without warning, the Phantom Mace Vine burst from the control of both Damien and Luo Sheng, borrowing their colliding mana to launch itself away.

The two watched silently.

Their battle seemed to pause as they attempted to comprehend what just happened.

Off in the distance, the visage of a strange-looking whip flying through the air could be seen.

BOOOOM!

Explosions from the battlefield below covered the scene. At the same time, it returned Damien and Luo Sheng to their current situation.

For now, neither of them had the capacity to chase after the Phantom Mace Vine. Besides, even if they caught it, they were sure it wouldn't have any use.

Since the sentient treasure decided to flee from them, it meant it wouldn't obey them. It would take a long process of wearing it down and associating with it before they could draw out its strength.

If so, there was a far more important matter for them to attend to.

Mirage appeared in Damien's hand once more. Luo Sheng's twin daggers appeared to accompany it for a dance.

This time, they would truly decide life or death between them.

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Damien's arm moved in a clean vertical slash. Mirage cleaved through the air, but with its nigh-translucent appearance, it almost looked as if Damien was attempting to sever Luo Sheng with his bare hand.

However, Mirage's delicate appearance said nothing of its strength.

When the sword came down, Luo Sheng moved rapidly to parry, crossing his daggers into an "X" to prevent Mirage from escaping their cage. His body twisted, his right hand sliding Mirage away while his left shot a quick stab into Damien's face.



Damien ducked immediately and pivoted his waist. His arm switched positions as if ignoring the laws of physics, escaping Luo Sheng's grasp and sending Mirage slashing diagonally across Luo Sheng's chest.

Haaaah!

Luo Sheng let out a war cry and gritted his teeth, pushing out both of his daggers to block. This was the only way he could offset Damien's fierce momentum.

His eyes shifted rapidly as he observed the scene. Before the collision of blades even occurred, Luo Sheng's foot lifted off the ground and snapped at Damien's ribcage.

'I need to end this quick!' He thought in panic. He couldn't afford to waste any more mana.

Knowing his enemy's situation, Damien grinned and followed through on his strike. Along with the sound of clashing metal, a large boom rang out from Luo Sheng's mana-infused kick impacting Damien's side.

But the result wasn't as he hoped at all. Luo Sheng felt pain like bolts of electricity traveling up his leg from the point of impact. Just from the wild reaction of his nerves alone, he knew that the bones in his leg were shattered.

'Is this guy made of steel?!' He panicked inwardly. His condition already wasn't good. Seven Stars Encircling the Moon left his body charred and flaking, and now that his leg was also shattered, his mobility had fiercely dropped. Even a single lapse in concentration would cost him his life.

The battle didn't pause to give Luo Sheng time to think. The entire time he did so, he was forced to fend off Damien's fierce barrage of sword strikes.

It was truly odd to have an enemy like this. Although his sword was brutish and lacking any sort of fundamentals or order, it was still a sword that struck true.

When it came to swordplay, this was Damien's advantage. His sword style was solely created for survival, and even after he left the dungeon, he never bothered to truly work on the fundamentals of his swordplay or its style.

The only thing he improved upon was the Void Sword Art, but this was an entirely different concept. If the Void Sword Art was subtracted from the equation, Damien would be left with scraps.

But these scraps were what he worked so hard in the dungeon to claw up. Even after reaching his current level, these scraps earned him many victories.

Damien's sword began to vibrate. While Luo Sheng attempted to recover from his barrage, he angled his sword parallel to the ground and stabbed out.

Luo Sheng's eyes widened as he sensed danger. His gaze hurriedly moved to see Damien preparing to unleash a skill. In that split second of time, he could no longer dodge.

The only thing he could do was rapidly push his mana to move his body, hoping he could change the attack trajectory to something less fatal.

'Void Sword Art Second Form: Horizon Break'

Bang!

"Keuk...!"

Luo Sheng coughed out a mouthful of blood. A hole roughly the size of a tennis ball appeared in his stomach.

"Tch." Damien clicked his tongue. Although he aimed for the heart, Luo Sheng barely realized what he was doing and moved his body. Otherwise, he would've directly won.

"Phew..." Damien let out a heavy breath, putting away Mirage. "It'd be nice if I could take your Sect Master, but I don't have that kind of power yet. A Vice Master's head should be enough to sate my hunger."

The battle thus far was truly intense. Although he didn't have to use his full strength, Damien certainly was pushed to the edge quite a few times. But even though Luo Sheng was at the peak of early 4th class, he wasn't at a level that could kill Damien.

It might not have been obvious, but the further Damien went to consolidate his strength, the more of his power he could truly utilize.

Even though what he used was just the regular Horizon Break that he'd long gotten used to, its power was enough to directly pierce a hole through the powerful body of a true 4th class.

This was far different than piercing through a pseudo-4th class like the 11th Elder of the Xue Clan.

While the Void Sword Art merely got strengthened because Damien's comprehension of space was further consolidated, space hadn't even been his main priority in these past months.

He'd already reached the peak of what he could do with space at his current power level. After he established his domain and understood the concepts related to it, he approached this step.

Of course, there was still plenty Damien didn't know about space. If he truly wanted to, he could go on and attempt to comprehend dozens or even hundreds of other concepts.

But that would make him similar to a jack of all trades, master of none. As he went further down the path of specialization, this kind of variety would become a hindrance rather than an asset.

Therefore, Damien only focused on the spatial concepts he was best at and the ones pertaining to Dimensional Magic. In this vein, the only way for him to continue was to pass his Baptism and gain access to the power of Laws.

Luckily for him, though, the starry sky wasn't just a chaotic void of space laws. There was another law that was just as prominent, being two sides of the same coin with space.

And this was where his time was mainly spent.

"Freeze."

The world obeyed his command. Within a 10-meter area that encompassed both Damien and Luo Sheng, everything froze.

The carnivorous plants growing out of the soil of the Outer Wilds were frozen mid-movement, one could even make out air currents that were forced to freeze by Damien's mana.

The only things that moved in this space were Damien and Luo Sheng.

Although Damien's skill in utilizing his Time Affinity was growing, it wasn't quite all-powerful yet. With Luo Sheng being a 4th class existence, he could still use brute force to move in the frozen space.

But that didn't mean his movements weren't hindered. Compared to when they fought in the Real Plane, Luo Sheng's speed was reduced by roughly 30%.

"Y-you...!" He strained to move his mouth. "What...is this madness?!"

If there was ever a time in his life when Luo Sheng was truly frightened, it'd have to be this very moment. His previous injuries already spelled out his death, but now he'd been shackled further?!

Even as he tried to be hopeful, he realized that the only path he had remaining was death.

The worst part was, he didn't even know his opponent. He didn't know what kind of existence Luo Tian had managed to offend.

Over the years, the pair of brothers had their fair share of adventures. Offending others was par for course when one competed for resources and lucky chances. But from all these perilous situations, the brothers rose and became stronger than they were before.

Never did Luo Sheng think...that his tenacious life would one day be taken by a mere brat!

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Luo Sheng's eyes hardened, his sclera turning red from madness. 'Fine! If you wish to kill me, I'll bring you down along with me!'

All of his mana returned to his body and condensed at his very core. Because he was only a 4th class, he didn't have any clear connection to his soul, but he could at least sense its presence.

If his purpose was self-destruction, this was enough.

His mana condensed rapidly into a revolving core near his soul. The core expanded and compressed chaotically as it hovered on the verge of implosion.

A force containing the power of over 150,000 units of mana was on the verge of materializing, but at that moment, Damien moved.

"Accelerate."

His body glitched. Slowly, it melded into the air and faded away. Behind Luo Sheng, he rematerialized.

"Y-you...w-what...?"

Luo Sheng struggled to get the words out, but his voice no longer worked. As his eyes widened incredulously, his body dropped to the floor.

A second later, his head fell along with it, his consciousness exterminated.

With nobody to guide the mana in Luo Sheng's body, the core that almost began imploding directly dispersed. The mana had been primed, but since it wasn't activated, there was no risk of it chaotically exploding even after Luo Sheng died.

Damien breathed out a sigh and withdrew his mana, allowing the surrounding time to return to its normal flow.

Although it was short, this was the first fight where Damien properly used his Time element. He smiled knowing his efforts weren't in vain.

His comprehension was increasing by the day, and his imagination was limitless. The only thing he hadn't done was put his thoughts into reality.

'The main advantage my time element has now is that it's unknown and unexpected. Even if spatial practitioners can be seen occasionally, it isn't the same for time. Even people like Tian Yang who have time affinities usually use it supportively. It's simply too hard to comprehend.'

The only reason Damien was able to comprehend time so rapidly, aside from his natural talent, was due to the fact that he experienced those 100,000 years that Alaric showed him.

After 10 years spent in real-time, the speed at which events moved exponentially increased every few decades. But even then, Damien was able to perfectly understand what took place during that time.

This kind of impossible miracle could only be accomplished by a Divinity, and even including the Primordial Undying Fruit and the Sanctuary, these 100,000 years were most likely Damien's biggest boon from his time in the Primordial Undying Realm.

With this kind of once-in-a-lifetime experience, how could Damien's perception of time be low? If he couldn't achieve outstanding accomplishments in his usage of time, he'd be disappointing his own potential.



Regardless, Damien was aware of this point and thus put his utmost into comprehending time and learning how to apply it. Although this comprehension couldn't compare to his spatial comprehension at all, it was still substantial.

Damien turned his attention to the surroundings. The ongoing battle was fierce, but the Eclipsing Shadow Sect never had a chance from the beginning.

The Shadow Garden's forces were simply too fierce, and the Eclipsing Shadow Sect had already faced massive losses in fleeing to Niflheim.

The early 4th class existences that Damien trapped earlier had already been killed by him. Along with them, plenty of the Eclipsing Shadow Sect's forces were turned to ash as collateral in Damien and Luo Sheng's collision. As for the leftovers, they were being cleaned up by the few disciples that were brought along. Now, the only important battle was...

BOOM!

A heaven-shaking explosion rang out in the sky. Half the world was painted red, while the other half was pitch black.

Damien couldn't hide his awe as he watched the scene. This level of power was far beyond his current capabilities. Perhaps he could barely match it using the Cloud Plane's World Force, but even then he'd be hard-pressed.

As he watched, Damien noticed that the attacks these powerhouses used weren't flashy at all. Whether it be the Eclipsing Shadow Lord or Elder Trinity from Shadow Garden, their moves were somewhat crude and lacking flair.

But this was only to the average observer. To someone like Damien who'd glimpsed upon laws and received a Partial Awakening, the scene in the sky was an eye-opener.

Each attack, no, each movement that these two powerhouses made was infused with the power of laws. At their level, rather than borrowing the power of laws, they were embodying it.

"Amazing..." Damien couldn't help but mutter. He never thought that it would be at this stage in his life when he first witnessed a fight between powerhouses that truly amazed him.

Sure, he'd seen plenty of harrowing battles while he lived Alaric's 100,000 years, but that wasn't the same. No matter how real the experience was, it would never be the same as witnessing something with his own eyes.

Besides, these flashes of laws couldn't be seen through a projection. Alaric could only show Damien laws that he personally had an understanding of.

Fire laws on one side and Darkness laws on the other, these two forces that opposed each other like yin and yang decorated the sky as the experts who wielded them fought. The impact of their clash made it feel like the world was going to explode.

And that wasn't much of an exaggeration. With the fierceness of the clash ever-increasing, the environment was no longer able to stand the rampant mana. Despite the fact that the two were battling

tens or even hundreds of kilometers in the air, the shockwaves still blasted apart the earth like it was paper.

Large craters formed every second. The ground rumbled and quaked so much that it directly killed some weaker combatants.

This mayhem was taking place so far away, so what was it like at the center of that collision? Even though the two experts weren't using flashy moves, the laws imbued in their existences alone caused such intense grandeur.

So then...what would happen if these two fought with techniques?

Perhaps they were aware of how apocalyptic that scene would be, and that was why they chose to fight in such a way. After all, if they alerted or disturbed a Demigod, both of them would die.

Regardless, just because they weren't fighting at full strength didn't mean they weren't fighting a battle of life and death. The two experts were covered in wounds caused by the other party.

Whether it be the flames ever burning on the Eclipsing Shadow Lord's skin or the darkness ever-corroding Elder Trinity's body, the wounds weren't light at all.

'This battle will end soon.' Damien thought to himself as he looked at them. Even if they looked even, Damien could see who had the advantage.

The Eclipsing Shadow Lord gave up his personal achievements and used the Nox's resources, slowly converting his mana into their kind. As for Elder Trinity, she spent thousands of years specifically cultivating a special power created to counter the Nox.

Even if their strength and comprehensive ability were similar, this single difference was enough to tip the scale.

As if to prove Damien right, only half an hour later, Elder Trinity suddenly stabbed her arm out. The Eclipsing Shadow Lord moved to block, but his movements had become far too slow after Elder Trinity's mana invaded his body.

Elder Trinity's hand directly pierced through the Eclipsing Shadow Lord's mana barriers and entered his chest. Grabbing his heart tightly, she directly crushed it without hesitation.

Just like that, the Eclipsing Shadow Lord's body went limp, hanging off Elder Trinity's arm like a rag doll.

Chapter 539 Wrath [1]

"Phew..."

Elder Trinity let out a breath of relief as she saw the Eclipsing Shadow Lord's life force fade away. And as soon as she felt his experience enter her body, she removed her hand from his corpse and allowed it to fall to the ground.

The battle had not been easy for her, not in the slightest. Even though her boundary was at the peak of 4th class and the Eclipsing Shadow Lord was still at the late 4th class, he clearly had more talent and comprehension than her, allowing him to fight well beyond his level.

Once one entered the 4th class, they'd become an Emperor of sorts. As such, the ability to fight across levels was far more difficult to attain. Especially because such power would usually be based on comprehensive ability.

Just being able to fight at his level 350 against Elder Trinity's level 387 made her look at him in appreciation.

"Are you okay?"

Damien's voice suddenly interrupted her thoughts. When she looked up, she saw his figure approaching casually. A glint flashed through the air as he passed an object to her.

When Elder Trinity caught it, she found a strange jade flask, within being a small marble-like pill.

"This is a top-grade healing pill from the Cloud Plane. It should be able to properly bring you back to your peak condition." He stated without being asked.

Even if she didn't tell him, Damien understood the condition of Elder Trinity's body. After such a harrowing battle where the power of Laws infiltrated her body, it was impossible for her to remain healthy.

Looking at the pill bottle, Elder Trinity hesitantly nodded her head and popped the cap, directly taking the pill into her mouth. As the warm energy currents stored within were released, Elder Trinity let out another sigh, this time of comfort.

Afterwards, she sat silently. Although Damien was standing right beside her, she couldn't think of a topic of conversation to start with him.

Instead of enduring the awkward air that began to rise between them, she turned her attention to the Eclipsing Shadow Lord's corpse. From his finger, she pulled off a spatial ring covered in blood and bound it.

"Ah!" She unknowingly exclaimed. "The expedition you've dragged us into has actually reaped such a big harvest!"

There were various top-grade pills, manuals and skills from the Eclipsing Shadow Sect, mountains of spirit stones, and more! From the looks of it, Luo Tian had stuffed all of the Eclipsing Shadow Sect's wealth into his spatial ring before fleeing!

Elder Trinity's harvest could not be considered light, and by association, Shadow Garden would've gained a great deal as well. The rewards from this spatial ring alone were so unimaginable, so what kind of wealth would one accumulate after decades or even centuries of following the Nox?

Elder Trinity couldn't say she wasn't tempted, but this was a level of temptation she could easily stave off. Compared to the family that Shadow Garden built, wealth and treasures were nothing.

However, not everyone thought the same. As Damien watched Elder Trinity intermittently exclaim in joy, his face was sour.

'Fuck...I lost another one...'

Damien warily sighed internally. In truth, there was a problem he'd been having since the very early days of his life, but never addressed since he didn't mind it too much.

That was, almost every time Damien went into battle, his enemy's spatial ring would be destroyed.

Damien had a love/hate relationship with spatial rings. They were extremely convenient and useful, not to mention the high-level application of spatial laws necessary to create them. From this standpoint, Damien couldn't help but admire the artistry and craft.

But at the same time, the "creation" aspect of space within the spatial rings that allowed them to sustain themselves didn't agree too well with the "destruction" aspect of his own spatial element.

It wasn't strange for a spatial ring to combust in on itself when it came into contact with his mana, not that this kind of situation occurred often. Instead, the most prevalent cause of destruction was elsewhere.

Whenever Damien fought, he had a tendency of dragging his opponents into the void to give himself a territorial advantage. And naturally, a rogue spatial ring would never be able to survive the chaotic spatial fluctuations in the void. The inner world within would directly collapse.

Luckily, Damien wasn't materialistic at all. There wasn't a single heavenly treasure or herb that could compare to his Void Physique and its benefits. And even if there were herbs that trumped this card, Damien wouldn't be capable of using them.

Therefore, he didn't mourn the lost spatial rings of the past, he only sighed at the fact that he wasn't able to celebrate his harvest in the same way Elder Trinity could.

After all, not only did he not gain any treasure, he wasn't even allowing himself to level up! Damien had essentially fought this harrowing battle for nothing.

But that wasn't true at all. His gaze panned over the destroyed dimensional realm they stood within. The only ones remaining were disciples of Shadow Garden.

Damien had already helped these lesser disciples herd the weak Eclipsing Shadow Sect members and kill them, so that problem was also solved.

"I guess it's time to go..." Damien asked nobody in particular.

But as he got ready to depart, his eyes caught a sudden glint to the side.

"Not good!"



"Watch out!"

Elder Trinity and Damien yelled out at the same time, but they were already too late.

BOOOOOOOOOM!

A massive explosion rang out from their side, the dust cloud that spawned from it rose into the heavens and blotted out the sky. A fierce shockwave spread, causing many weaker disciples to cough up blood and collapse onto the ground.

Xiu!

A shadowy figure shot out from the mushroom cloud, utilizing the smoke's concealment to slip away. Its speed was incredible, crossing hundreds of kilometers every few seconds. But how could this kind of meager skill fool Damien's eyes?

"Take care of the disciples!"

After leaving the order to Elder Trinity, his figure flashed away in chase of the one running. Although Elder Trinity wanted to take his place since she was much stronger, her words got caught in her mouth.

By the time she started formulating them, Damien was already thousands of kilometers away. When it came to long-distance speed, he wouldn't lose to anyone.

Elder Trinity frowned deeply as she watched the two receding figures. Her brows creased and a dangerous aura leaked from her body.

Something wasn't right. She knew that aura.

She clearly killed him, didn't she? Not only did his life force vanish, but even his experience had also been transferred to her.

Their battle was incredibly fierce. Even if they didn't use skills or techniques, they poured the entirety of their Law Comprehension into their attacks. This wasn't something anyone could casually escape from. Even Elder Trinity herself was still in the process of recovering, though she'd rather die than admit it.

All the facts lined up. No matter what perspective one looked at it from, the situation simply didn't make sense.

Just how in the world did Luo Tian manage to survive while still having enough power to escape so desperately?

Chapter 540 Wrath [2]

The isolated space in which the Eclipsing Shadow Sect once resided faded into the distance. The surrounding winds rustled fiercely as if sensing impending doom.

BOOM!

Space shattered along with everything that existed within it. The one who caused this harrowing scene was a middle-aged man covered in his own blood.

As for why he caused such a scene? It was simply a byproduct of the immense speed at which he was moving.

Xiu! Xiu! Xiu!

"Hah!"

The sound of projectiles cutting through the wind rang out from behind him. The man let out a spirited shout as he watched the approaching weapons. He grabbed his own left arm and directly crushed it into meat paste. The blood from his arm mixed with his mana, disgustingly twisting and reintegrating into his body, providing him with a bout of explosive strength.

Haaah!

Another shout rang out. The man's body twisted in a way that completely ignored the laws of physics, pivoting at a right angle and continuing his fleeing after dodging the projectiles.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOOOM!

Three massive explosions rang out as the projectiles impacted the ground below. Space-shattering explosions lined the Outer Wilds, dragging everything into the Chaotic Void.

'Dammit! Dammit! Dammit!' The figure inwardly cursed as he witnessed this scene. Naturally, the fleeing man was none other than Luo Tian.

'This brat...who the hell is this brat?!'

Luo Tian had always been a calm person. Or rather, he had always been indifferent. Whether it was his sect, his treasures, his cultivation, or even his own brother, none of these things mattered to him.

The only thing he cared for was his own life. The only reason he cultivated was to extend his life. Lording over those weaker than him was just a positive side effect of his efforts.

And roughly 2 years ago, he came across an underground auction held by followers of the demonic race invading the world. He heard that the main treasure of this auction was something that could directly increase his physical qualities and replenish his life force.

With this kind of offer, it was guaranteed that he would attend. Of course, there was a plot behind the entire auction and underground event, but Luo Tian didn't care about that. Since the ones partaking in this plot didn't want to offend him, he wouldn't needlessly cause trouble either.

Not unless they stole what was rightfully his.

But in the end, it wasn't them who stole his property, it was some random boy who barely had any strength! That boy was cornered with just a few 3rd class shadows and forced to enter the 3000 Beast Mountain Range.

At that time, Luo Tian assumed Damien died. Any normal person would've done the same, especially after so many months passed without word of him.

After that, Luo Tian slowly forgot about Damien. Although losing the Death Seed hurt his pride, it was just a small loss at the end of the day.

After all, Luo Tian's fires of life weren't anywhere near extinguishing. The only reason for him to desire the Death Seed was his convoluted obsession with life.

Therefore, when news spread of Damien's antics at the Empyrean Dragon Realm, Luo Tian didn't care much. He simply sent out a few more powerful shadows to deal with him.

But at that same time, the purge began.

It was an odd set of circumstances. Luo Tian and Damien had only met once, and even then they'd only spoken a few words. To Luo Tian, this matter meant nothing, but to Damien, it was a death feud he'd never forget.

Now that Luo Tian was forced to flee with everything he had, he finally understood who Damien was. He finally understood the reason behind his sect's downfall.

"So it was you! You are the reason I've ended up in this state!" Luo Tian's eyes reddened maddeningly.

Even if he was indifferent to everything else, life was an obsession that consumes all emotion he could possibly have. But his cultivation was gone, and his body was crippled; even if he was able to survive this ordeal, what kind of life would he live?

Once the final burst of strength he received from the sacrificial technique he used to escape Elder Trinity wore off, he'd be no better than a common mortal servant. In fact, he'd be even worse!

Luo Tian gritted his teeth in rage. 'Fuck! With my current injuries, I am even weaker than that useless Luo Sheng! This brat will kill me if I face him directly!'

Luo Tian's mind raced. He needed to think of a strategy to save his life. And there was only one viable option he could formulate in this moment of crisis.

Bang!

From his left knee down to his foot, the only thing remaining was a mangled bag of flesh. All the blood within that flesh was sucked out and used to empower Luo Tian's escape instead.

Swoosh!

His direction switched abruptly. Until now, he'd been randomly fleeing through the Outer Wilds, but now he had a destination in mind.

He was too far to see the finish line, but he already understood that if he was able to make it there, he'd survive and Damien might even die!

Luo Tian's speed increased exponentially! Just the thought of Damien's miserable face lifted his spirit and allowed him to continue again.

To fight even after the last breath, this was Luo Tian's code...and this was exactly what he would do!

The chase continued, but not nearly in as disorderly of a manner as before. As for the final destination...?

Evotech Headquarters!

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Thousands of kilometers flew by, turning into tens of thousands of kilometers. Throughout this entire time, Luo Tian rushed at top speed, sacrificing his own body to guarantee his survival.

Behind him, Damien annoyedly followed.

Actually, capturing Luo Tian was only secondary to him. At this point, Luo Tian was already a dead dog who was desperately clawing for his master. However, his master was...

'If there is someone capable of providing that technique to even dogs, they are not an enemy I can take lightly.'

The technique Luo Tian used to escape Elder Trinity might've seemed straightforward, yet it was anything but.

Judging whether someone was dead or not using their life force was never a viable method. Even Damien had an ability to restore his life force and save him from the brink of death.

However, experience was absolute. The process of transferring experience was done by the system itself, which meant it couldn't be done until the kill was confirmed by the system.

Perhaps this didn't mean much without context, but it was a matter of immense importance.

After all, if the system confirmed the kill of someone who remained alive...

'Just what kind of being is capable of fooling the system?'



Damien's mind was plagued by this harrowing thought. Though, he'd never get answers through mere speculation.

So he kept his distance. With his teleportation range, even moving ten thousand kilometers at a time wasn't a problem.

If Luo Tian was at his peak, he could naturally match this speed, but that wasn't the case at all.

The current Luo Tian was a kite at the end of its string. His speed was so slow even Little Xue'er could probably catch him.

But Damien allowed him to continue fleeing.

When it came to pigs and tigers, there were two main ways people emulated them.

The first was to play the pig to eat the tiger. Even a layman understood this concept.

As for the second...

Luo Tian the pig rushed desperately into the tiger's den to avoid the dragon tailing him from behind.

As for that dragon? He was simply using the pig to lure the tiger.