

Void 63

Chapter 63

After Damien caught up the Katherine, the two began talking about their fights. While Damien's was a normal fight story, Katherine's was on another level.

The fight had started normally, with the dark horse utilizing his darkness element to corrode the surrounding environment and trying to corrode her as well, while Katherine fought back with her wind. She created a field around her that the corrosion couldn't penetrate and attacked at range with her wind swords and bullets.

She hadn't used her illusion affinity yet as she decided to train her wind during combat. As the battle raged on, the dark horse became more confident and went on a fierce offensive. He used his darkness arrows to penetrate her field, allowing the corrosion to affect her.

However, this was when something unexpected happened. When Katherine felt the corrosion affecting her body, she suddenly received an epiphany about her use of illusions. Her thoughts were simple.

'Can I use illusions to mimic sensations as well?'

Once it entered her head, she couldn't get it out. She stopped focusing on her wind and switched her strategy. From then on, it was a one-sided battle. Katherine used her illusions to amplify her attack power as she always did, but she added something new.

With every attack that even slightly nicked the dark horse, he started to feel more pain than he should have. It didn't work very well at the beginning, but she had a whole fight to improve herself.

At first, it was a slight change, turning a pinprick into a paper cut, but as time went on, her mastery over the concept intensified. Katherine's illusion control was already at the Master level, as she had started on a path to affect reality, so it wasn't like she was starting from scratch.

Rather, what she had to do was figure out how to use the same concepts she had been constantly training on a more ethereal thing like sensations and pain. All the while, even as she bombarded the dark horse, she was also testing her abilities on herself.

She made small cuts on her skin and attempted to amplify the pain. Her master had taught her something crucial regarding illusions, which was that they always tend to hold more power if the caster had more understanding towards what they want to portray.

If Katherine wanted to create an average chair out of her illusions and sit on it, it'd be possible. The chair would feel real even if it wasn't. But if she wanted to create a sun, it was impossible. It'd only be a projection that didn't contain the power or properties of a star.

When she thought like this, she realized something else. She had already been subconsciously affecting sensations by attempting to make her illusions feel real to the touch and the eyes. It wasn't a new concept at all, rather it was a simple change in direction.

With this, she knew her path. Her advancement speed became rapid and the small cuts she created on her skin were hurting like deep gashes.

By this point, around an hour and a half had passed since the fight started. When Katherine started utilizing illusions, the dark horse lost his chance to win. His attacks would reach Katherine, only for him to find that she wasn't there in the first place.

To make it worse, his whole body was aching. The small wounds he'd built up throughout the fight were causing him more pain than he thought normal. Suddenly, a wind blade sped past him as he narrowly dodged, escaping with only a flesh wound.

But this was enough. The dark horse felt like his entire left side had been gouged with a massive claw. Katherine didn't stop, relentlessly attacking him as the pain in his body was amplified past his limit. But she wasn't done. For her final experiment, she decided to test the corruption she had felt earlier.

Although it didn't work on the same scale as the dark horse's attack, it was truly overkill. Added onto his previous pain, the slow spread of corruption and decay he felt within his body was the final straw. Without even the ability to speak, he passed out.

It was only after being teleported back to the stage that he had woken up, feeling only slight pain in his body as it should have been. This was the reason for his terrified face. The fact that it seemed like it was all a dream, but he knew for a fact that it happened was terrifying.

Even Damien was slightly terrified hearing this. Even though his eyes could cancel any physical illusions used on him, he had no idea if it'd work on sensations. He casually asked Katherine to make him a chair, wanting to test his theory.

Sitting on the illusionary chair, Damien felt all the small hairs on his body raise. Although his eyes did warn him that the feeling of touch he felt was an illusion, it didn't block the illusion itself.

Now he knew. When he faced her, even if he knew his pain was an illusion, he'd still feel all the pain.

'Well, I'll deal with it as it comes.'

The day passed quickly as the finals approached. The talk of the whole continent revolved around the two geniuses competing for the top spot in the tournament.

The common populace was incomparably excited. They had even given Damien and Katherine the nicknames of 'Spatial Lightning Prince' and 'Illusive Wind Fairy' respectively. It seemed that their naming sense was especially terrible.

Most people were aware of the cringe that those nicknames held, so once they found out about Damien's adventurer days, they opted to continue calling him the 'Grim Reaper' instead, while Katherine's was just shortened to 'Illusive Fairy'. Now that it was time for the finals, the betting houses were packed.

"100 gold on the Grim Reaper!"

"What are you talking about you idiot! Obviously, the winner will be our Illusive Fairy!"

Suddenly a new voice rang out. "1 white gold coin on the Grim Reaper!"

All eyes turned to this voice to find a bulky wolf demihuman. He ignored all these gazes as he placed his bet and left the area. Ethan smiled lightly.

'Let's see what kind of battle you show me today.'

At this time, Damien and Katherine were already on the field. It was a lush forest this time, as opposed to the flatlands of the semifinals.

The two possessed excited grins on their faces as they watched each other intently. It had been an entire year since they met and both of them were itching to battle ever since that first meeting. It was now that they'd finally get the chance.

And then, the battle began.

Neither of them wasted any time. A sword appeared in Damien's hand while a scythe was in Katherine's. They took distance and began their fight.

However, it looked more like a choreographed dance, a deadly one. Katherine danced gracefully as the environment around her became illusions. Countless wind blades surged forward, attempting to cut Damien into pieces.

Meanwhile, Damien's dance was more efficient and cruel. His figure flickered in and out of reality as every swing of his was accompanied by large gashes in the ground.

This was the result of Damien's hard work on his sword art. He'd finally obtained the ability to fuse and flow between his different sword arts.

Wind blades were met with spatial blades as the area between the two turned into a minefield filled with explosions. Through that field, many small wind bullets whizzed by and rushed towards Damien.

For the sake of the battle, Damien didn't have his vector field around him, but he found that his decision was the wrong one. The second those wind bullets hit his body, Damien felt like he was a mortal getting repeatedly smashed with a hammer.

Knowing Damien's toughness, Katherine didn't hold back on the pain amplification.

Damien grit his teeth and powered through it. He'd already had his arm ripped off, his body structure forcefully changed at the cellular level, and his entire left side burnt to a crisp. If he couldn't handle this much, he should just give up his pursuit of power.

Damien still didn't activate his vector field as he felt that an absolute defense within his power range was a cheat skill, so he endured the multiple doses of pain amplification that continuously berated him. All the while, Damien kept attacking. Shortly after, he added plasma beams that were a combination of his vector control and his lightning to the mix.

After his training with Malcolm, these plasma beams were much more powerful than they were when he first learned how to use them. They ripped through trees like butter and flew straight for Katherine. Sensing danger from those beams, Katherine raised multiple illusory earth walls as she used propulsion to blast herself out of their trajectory. This was a good decision, as the beams pierced through those walls and continued into the expansive forest.

Katherine gritted her teeth. 'My attack power isn't on par with his, I need to find another way to win.' She then thought back to the move she used in the first round to defeat Evan. 'That's it!'

She immediately implemented this strategy. Every wind attack she threw at Damien now contained the properties of sound, affecting his balance and making him nauseous. He still gritted his teeth and endured, but judging by the blood that seeped out of his mouth and ears, it was clear that her strategy was effective.

Although they had been tempered, Damien's internal organs weren't nearly as sturdy as his flesh, his muscles, and his bones. This was the first time someone had used that weakness against him.

The battle continued, with both of them approaching their limits. Kathrine's mana was close to running dry, and her stamina wasn't great either. Meanwhile, Damien still had around a third of his mana, but his consciousness was fading in and out as he struggled to keep himself awake. Just as he had thought before, Katherine was the only one in his generation that could challenge him.

Suddenly, Damien sensed immense danger. Looking over at Katherine through his blurry vision, he saw her taking a deep breath. He knew what this signified, as he had done it countless times before. She was charging up for a breath attack.

Indeed, Katherine had gotten the idea from a fictional monster she had read about called a Banshee. Their screams were said to even cause the souls of their victims to be damaged. She focused on amplifying the sound within her voice, keeping any offensive properties of wind away from her internal body. In front of her mouth, a small tornado began to form.

Then, when she felt it was enough, she let out a high-pitched screech. Accompanying this was a massive horizontal tornado of wind that she strengthened with illusions.

Not wanting to lose out, Damien let out a resounding roar. His dragon's breath was released, directly clashing with Katherine's banshee scream.

A massive explosion ensued. The trees in the surroundings were ripped to shreds by rampaging wind before they were burnt to cinders by wild lightning. The ground couldn't bear the pressure and directly caved in more than 10 meters deep. Both Damien and Katherine were flung away.

Damien was barely conscious, but he held onto his reasoning while he endured the ringing in his ears. His training in the blood world back in the dungeon was the only reason he could do so.

Teleporting over, he saw Katherine sitting on the floor, similarly teetering on the border between passing out and staying awake. He slowly regained his bearings before putting his hand on her shoulder.

“I win.” He declared with a weak grin.

Although she wanted to refute, she couldn’t. She was truly burnt out at this point. Damien helped her up as both of them used each other for support. Even though he had won, he wasn’t any less exhausted than her.

Outside, the crowd was roaring. Nobody could contain their excitement after seeing such a spectacle as those two breath attacks clashing. Within that applause, the announcer’s voice rang out for a final time.

“The winner of the 100th-anniversary Nexus Event is....Damien Void!”