

Void 681

Chapter 681 Finale [4]

Zara walked through the mysterious underground space alone. The only other people who could access this area were either currently conversing with Damien or being held back by other forces.

Her goal was clear.

She couldn't destroy the machines around her, as that would alert Tephit of her presence and ruin her entire plan. Instead, she had to precisely manipulate their systems to force them to malfunction.

Naturally, Zara wasn't anything like a technological expert. She didn't have the necessary knowledge to collapse such an intricate system with her mana.

But what she did have was guidance from someone who did.

Even Damien was a plebeian when it came to machines, but the memories he devoured gave him an extreme understanding of how these specific machines functioned.

As for where he got the memories from? In truth, it was a strange bit of coincidence.

None of the elders he devoured had the authority to enter this space. Other than Tephit and the two Great Elders, nobody else had this authority.

The one who provided him with this information...was none other than Tilis.

Two days prior to the start of the war, while the allied force was in the midst of finalizing their attack plans, a sudden sound transmission entered Damien's head.

It was a request for a meeting.

Naturally, Damien found this strange. Not just the sound transmission itself, but also the fact that nobody could sense the transmission's existence except him.

Sound transmissions, at the end of the day, were applications of projected mana. As long as one was much stronger than the person sending the sound transmission, they'd be able to sense its existence, though intercepting it was a different story.

The fact that nobody among the multiple high-level 4th class beings in their group could sense this mana only meant that the person sending the transmission was far above their level.

Out of sheer curiosity, Damien answered the call. He didn't stop to think about the risk.

When he arrived at the meeting location, he found himself face to face with an unassuming old man.

"Are you the one who called me?" He asked curiously.

"Is there anyone else around but me?" The old man replied casually.

"Fair enough," Damien said. "Well then, you said you had important information to give me, no? Let's get to it then."

The old man smiled slightly as he spoke, "child, you're a bit too enthusiastic, aren't you? Since I called you here, I will naturally give you the information you seek. But before that..."

The old man's arm waved through the water, causing the surrounding water to flurry into a massive vortex that entrapped Damien.

"Show me your skill. Can you prove that you are worthy of my help?"

Damien's eyes hardened. Though the surrounding vortex wasn't too terribly difficult for him to break, he didn't like the feeling of being tested.

At the same time, the old man gave him a strange vibe that he couldn't quite pinpoint.

His eyes darted around the vortex, then back to the old man.

"I see, so it's you." He muttered. He'd heard from Maximus and Ria the identities of the Tephit Clan's Great Elders.

"I've been wanting to talk to you for a while now as well. What a strange coincidence." Damien commented.

Void Mana materialized at his fingertips, snaking off in different directions and sealing off the surrounding space.

'Phase Shift'

If Material Shift was meant for physical constructs and Dimension Shift was meant for the fabric of reality itself, Phase Shift was more meant to influence the "state" of a target than anything else.

Living beings could be regressed or progressed in age, and the state of an object could be equally shifted.

In the case of water, this shift took place in its phase of matter. The terrifying vortex that entrapped Damien was forced into Phase Shift's range. As Damien's mana continued to spread? The vortex shifted into a layer of steam that clouded up the atmosphere.

When Damien's display of power ended, the waters of Aquazyl smashed against each other as they attempted to fill the gap he created.

Through the resulting explosion, Tilis' smile was especially clear.

"Mm, so he wasn't wrong. Someone bearing 'that' has finally come..."

Tilis waved his hand and calmed the water. Looking at Damien, a light of admiration colored his eyes.

"For you to reach this level despite your age and background, you must've trained extremely hard. Mm, he must be proud." Tilis said.

"What are you talking about?" Damien asked. Tilis' words made no sense to him at all.

"Hahaha," Tilis chuckled at Damien's confusion. "Worry not. When the time comes, I'm sure you'll understand everything that fogs your mind."

"Tch."

"Nevermind that," Tilis said. "Haven't you come here to receive information? Now that I've confirmed your identity, giving you information is a given."

Tilis and Damien's conversation began there. It wasn't just Aquazyl or the Nox they spoke about. Their conversation mostly revolved around many broader topics, topics that made Damien endlessly interested in what the man had to say.

But of course, it began with the information Damien sought.

"I see, so it's something like that. I figured it'd be along those lines, but nope. That boss of yours is extremely bad at his job."

"He is the reason the Tephit Clan has been able to thrive for many hundreds of thousands of years. Is he truly inadequate in your eyes?"

Damien grinned at the question. "Not at all. In fact...that's a very rare talent he has. Most people would go insane after the first or second possession."

"His power can't be underestimated, his genius mind is still growing, his talent is through the roof...anyone who doesn't have the idea to recruit him is incompetent."

"Oho? You have bold dreams. It's no wonder the universe loves you..."

Tilis led Damien on a walk through the barrenness of Aquazyl's daytime scenery. At that time, Damien suddenly noticed something.

"You...are not one of them."

"Hm? What do you mean by that?" Tilis questioned back.

"The residents of Aquazyl avoid the sunlight like a plague. Even if they're threatened with death, they won't step into its vicinity. How is it that you're still fine?" Damien asked suspiciously.

Tilis grinned. "Good question. But if you want to know why they do such a thing..."

"Do me a single favor. If you can complete it with precision, I will tell you everything you could possibly want to know about Aquazyl and the Emperor Bone Sea. "

Damien furrowed his brows in thought. A favor from an expert could never be simple. Owing someone like Tilis a favor would usually only end in downfall. After all, at their level of strength, favors weren't something that could be denied. Especially when one achieved Divinity, the weight of their words began to directly impact their power, making it dangerous to act as brazenly as one did in their youth.

But instead of following the most natural scenario, Tilis used his favor for a single matter.

Back in the present, Zara worked to fulfill this wish. Her shadows blanketed the whole underground space and in the next instant...

She began to work on sabotaging everything as she was ordered.

Chapter 682 Finale [5]

Suspense was thrown out the window thereafter.

The Sanctuary forces slaughtered the remaining High Elders easily and exited the Dimensional Cage, joining the others in destroying the rest of the Tephit Clan, Lunaria was soon to finish her Baptism, which would add another wave of power to the already overpowering allied force, and the number of Tephit soldiers dwindled until even calling them a resistance was no longer possible.

The only people remaining on the Tephit Clan's side who could change the results of this war were Tephit himself and the two Great Elders, however, neither side seemed to have any intention of aiding the falling clan.

Raka and Tilis stood with Ria and Maximus, taking a break from their fight. While the two elders stood unscathed, both Maximus and Ria were covered in bruises and scratches from the previous altercation.

The only reason their injuries were so light was because Raka and Tilis never fought with the intent to kill. Instead, they refined the two Clan Heads' fighting styles until they were able to stand on their own even against the two elders themselves.

"...why did you join the Tephit Clan?" Ria asked during this moment of respite.

The question had bothered her for an incredibly long time, but she had resigned herself to never knowing the answer back then. Now, however, she wanted to know more than ever.

Raka and Tilis clearly weren't in the Tephit Clan to aid them or use them for protection. The former was disproven by their current attitude and the latter...neither of the two Great Elders needed anyone's protection.

Just based on the previous fight alone, these two were the strongest beings in Aquazyl.

Then, for what reason did they have to pick an affiliation?

Raka smiled lightly. "Why, you say? The flow of fate led us this far. The purpose of our existence has always been unknown, but perhaps...we've found some clues recently?"

He gave Tilis a knowing look as he spoke. Though he hadn't been there himself, he trusted Tilis absolutely when the latter claimed he found traces of 'that' thing in Aquazyl.

Tilis shook his head wryly. "Children, we are not so grand as you believe us to be. In the end, we are mere tools set to carry out the machinations of fate. If fate wishes for our deaths, that will be the day we die. For you to understand our reasoning, you must at least become stronger than anyone else in Aquazyl."

Maximus' eyes narrowed. "You...the two of you aren't mortals, are you?"

"Mortals? Everyone is mortal. Even the strongest being can die if he meets someone better than him."
Raka replied.

Maximus shook his head in rebuttal. "You understand what I mean. Teachers...are you both Divinities?"

Tilis smiled curiously. "Oho? And what makes you think that?"

"You're so strong!" Ria immediately blurted out. "Even if we're much weaker than you, if you were 4th-class beings we'd at least be able to injure you! But even after taking a full-powered attack from me, you took no damage!"

Ria felt stupid when she said it out loud. Until Maximus voiced his thoughts, she didn't even consider the possibility of her two mentors being Divinities. But, thinking about it now, wouldn't everything make sense if they were?

The question remained, though: for what reason were these two incredibly powerful beings trapping themselves in Aquazyl? And what could possibly justify their actions?

"Well, I think the answer to that is pretty simple." A new voice appeared behind them.

This was naturally Damien, who had come down from the peak of the Tephit skyscraper with Tephit now that the ongoing events were reaching a close.

Their first stop was the Great Elders. This fight was the only one that hadn't been completed yet, after all.

Looking at Raka and Tilis, some of the final dots in his mind began to connect. When he met Tilis previously, he didn't have any surety about the latter's identity. Now, however, especially with the conclusions made by Maximus and Ria, his assumptions became more complete.

"I didn't think there would be something like this, but I guess it makes sense. I don't think anyone has enough trust in autonomous systems to just leave them operating such a massive project without supervisors." Damien said.

"Isn't that right, subordinates of the Sea God?"

It was a wild conjecture. It was a question that acted on the assumption that the two Great Elders had been alive for countless millions of years, existing from when the Sea God's reign was still true.

But to Damien, it only made sense. The lifespan of a Demigod was extremely long, but it didn't cross the threshold of one million years. To live for such an extensive period of time, the two Great Elders must've connected their very souls to Aquazyl's foundation.

Only, that would mean they became a part of Aquazyl. Leaving its premises became an impossibility for them.

What other individual would be willing to go so far besides the Sea God's own subordinates?

While Damien's guess was made after a good amount of analysis, Raka and Tilis were still shocked at how close he was to the truth.

The Sea God's subordinates...this title didn't fit them too perfectly. But their connection with the man who earned that grand godly title wasn't a small one. And...they did indeed know him during his lifetime. They weren't like the rest who only learned of his existence through legends.

They had existed in Aquazyl for so many years that it was surprising nobody else noticed. However, it made sense when they considered how secluded they lived their lives before the previous Prominence War.

Nevertheless, the fact that an outsider was able to piece together so many facts after staying in Aquazyl for a little less than a month was extremely surprising, almost to the point of rendering them speechless.

"You...are quite the interesting fellow," Raka said with a sigh of astonishment.

"Indeed, to think you would guess it so easily. It feels like keeping up the facade was just a joke." Tilis continued in the same tone.

They had a mission to complete in Aquazyl, and they'd stayed for so long to complete that mission. Although they weren't stupidly secretive about their identities, they never made it obvious who they were.

The facade they had kept for so many years was peeled away just like that, no less by a boy not older than 30.

It felt strange knowing that the final objective of their mission was possibly arriving in front of them.

"It's quite funny. We were given a list of conditions one needed to fulfill to perfectly pass the trial set in this realm, but you've completed almost all those conditions before even becoming aware of the trial. Tell me, boy: would you like to hear the truth of this world?" Tilis asked solemnly.

But rather than the answer he expected, Damien gave a stern refusal.

"That conversation can wait. The main event is almost over, you see."

As he spoke, a fountain of blood shot into the air many tens of kilometers away.

Lunaria had completed her Baptism, and upon her entrance...

The requirements for Tephit's sacrificial ritual were all met.

Chapter 683 Wrap Up [1]

All things returned to silence.

Despite the heat of the ongoing warfare, no sound was transmitted through Aquazyl's waters. The sudden change reflected greatly on those present, forcing all combat to a halt.

"This is the moment of truth," Tephit murmured to nobody in particular. Despite his personal confidence, Damien's words had truly shaken him. His anticipation for this moment was more than just great.

Aquazyl rumbled from its foundation as a frightening fluctuation of power spread from below the Tephit Clan's main headquarters.

Rumble!

Cracks spread through the sky. A reddish brown color painted the realm as a large formation circle slowly formed in the air.

This formation was called the Blood Sacrament God Array. It didn't have a set purpose, but rather was an all-encompassing formation whose use would change based on its growth and the method by which it was used.

In this case, Tephit merged the Blood Sacrament God Array with the technological portal outline and other machines below the Tephit Clan to break a hole in the realm.

Aquazyl's foundation shook for this very reason. The massive amount of energy Tephit had gathered for the past hundreds of thousands of years was dispersing into the atmosphere in accordance with the formation, latching into Aquazyl's foundational laws and forcing them apart.

This process would take at least a day to finish, but whether fortunately or unfortunately, it wouldn't be allowed to get that far.

For 5 hours, the formation worked as planned. Cracks spread through the air and ground, the atmosphere seemed to be on the brink of apocalypse, it was a precursor, a peek into what would've happened if Tephit's plans succeeded.

But Damien wasn't just guessing when he confronted the Clan Head. His words were based on fact, assurance that he couldn't share without revealing Devour's true power.

After the fifth hour passed, the violence came to an abrupt halt. The cracks that tried to spread and thicken slowed their growth until they barely moved.

And then...the destruction reversed.

There was an inherent difference between the mana of a lower existence and the mana of a Divinity.

The process of gaining strength was relatively streamlined, especially with the existence of the system, but beneath the universe's natural devouring and evolution method of growth, there was another system as well.

This was the system of Laws that people followed after achieving 4th class. But in reality, the growth towards entering this system began far earlier than that.

Classless beings were aware of their affinities but unable to properly utilize them. The first 10 levels they gained would familiarize them with mana and strengthen their bodies to handle it properly.

After that, 1st class was a matter of understanding mana at a beginner level. The journey to level 50 was one of learning the class system and how to utilize it, growing in the direction one believed best suited them.

2nd class was where a practitioner finally came into true contact with their elements. Unlike the previous two classes that didn't allow much versatility, 2nd class was one where a practitioner could truly understand what it meant to be strong. Damien gaining access to vector control at this level was merely a single example of this phenomenon.

3rd class was where affinities turned into elements. One's connection with their element would greatly heighten, their ability to manipulate it at a conceptual level becoming more prominent. Before one could become worthy of Baptism, one needed to achieve a level of connection with their elements that they never had before.

4th class was a true dividing point. Here, rather than the elements that stem from them, one would interact with the Laws themselves, building connections and understanding them to the fullest.

However, to achieve Divinity, one couldn't just have a connection with the laws. They needed to embody them.

Divine Mana, Divine Essence, Higher Mana; the power source of the higher existences took many names, but they were all the same essential energy source. This energy, rather than being derived from mana or derived from laws, was drawn directly from them.

Just as a practitioner embodied their law, their law would begin to embody them.

Aquazyl was a realm built on this relationship. The foundational laws of this realm weren't just regular laws found in nature, they were laws that embodied the Sea God himself.

In essence, Aquazyl was the remnant will of the Sea God. Even if Tephit used billions of years to refine as much essence as possible, he wouldn't be able to break through Aquazyl's laws unless he understood this fact. At least, not with his current methods.

Aquazyl began rapidly repairing itself not long after the destruction halted. In fact, the realm even used the excess energy from Tephit's blood sacrifice to strengthen itself, becoming firmer and less susceptible to future repetitions of the same situation.

"Hahaha..." Tephit laughed wryly. "Not only was it a failure, but it was also a failure that accomplished the exact opposite result compared to my purpose..."

He couldn't believe it even after seeing it. He'd braced himself for this moment, but no amount of bracing could help him accept that hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of years of effort went down the drain so easily.

"Is this...how it ends?" He wondered. What was he to do now? Because of their previous agreement, wasn't he practically becoming Damien's slave now that his plans lost value?

What was the point of his life?

"Don't."

Damien's voice halted his dreary thoughts. He turned around with dull eyes, gazing at his new master.

"There's no benefit in acting all suicidal now. In the end, didn't you want freedom? You might be subordinating yourself to me, but you'll get the freedom you desired by doing so. At that time, what you do with your life is entirely up to you. Whether you want to build a new influence like the Tephit Clan, lead troops into war as a great hero, or even just relax in the Sanctuary for the rest of your life, it's completely up to you. The only thing you have to do is answer my call when I need aid."

Damien's words were truthful. He was never a stern ruler who micromanaged the actions of his subordinates. In fact, even though the entirety of the Sanctuary's population was subordinated to him, the only ones he truly considered his followers were the Clan Leaders, those who actively submit to him.

The rest were merely citizens of a new world. Their lives were their own, and as the Sanctuary grew, the number of those like them would only increase. Worrying about them was useless.

Tephit would become a valued subordinate, someone on the level of the five Clan Leaders. He would be the dawn of the Sanctuary's aquatic civilization, and hopefully, its leader.

Damien had big plans for Tephit. In order to carry these out, he couldn't let the latter submerge himself in despair.

"Come with me," he finally said after some thought. "I'll show you the Sanctuary, and after I finish up a few more things, I'll show you the world beyond. At that time, let's see if you can keep this same dreary atmosphere."

He grabbed Tephit's shoulder and immediately willed his mana, causing the two to vanish from existence.

In the next instant, the Sanctuary's breathtaking landscape revealed itself to their eyes.

Chapter 684 Wrap Up [2]

The Sanctuary of today was a completely different monster than any of its previous forms. The world Damien and Tephit materialized into...was truly a world.

Four continents were separated by a vast and empty sea where life was only beginning to bud. Each of these continents was home to a different biome, each biome home to a different race of people.

The core groups from each clan still lived on the original continent in the center, with the orientation Damien had seen when he came to the Sanctuary to pick up Jiao Mei, but these were only the elite few hundred from each clan.

This was because the main continent had flourished into a mana-filled holy land where comprehending the laws became almost streamlined. Training here would provide extreme benefit to those who did,

thus, the five clans decided to leave it for only their elites. The rest would have to earn their spots on the central continent.

The other three continents surrounded the center in a triangular formation. The Fire and Ice Phoenix Clans inhabited the scorching desert and freezing tundra environments, and White Dragon Grotto and Lucius' Demon King Clan lived in a more moderate climate. Perhaps because the Sanctuary's growth was influenced by its inhabitants, the environments it spawned as it grew matched them perfectly.

These four continents surrounded each other and made up the world's center, but even then, roughly 60% of the world's surface remained uninhabited.

This was because, other than the oceans that occupied most of the world's space, another 20% was taken by another, far more mysterious, continent.

The Storm Heavens Continent, a death zone where young elites went to train and temper themselves. This land was uninhabitable due to the terrifying lightning that continuously struck down, lightning that even reached the level of Black Demon Lightning. Other than some special lifeforms that thrived in such a lightning-clad environments, the only beings on this continent were those who came temporarily to train.

Nevertheless, this continent was extremely important to the world's residents. It was the best possible place for one to temper their bodies.

This world, the combination of new and old that formed the first celestial body of the Sanctuary's budding universe, had already been named in a conjoined effort by the five clans.

Theavel.

A word that mixed Dragon Tongue, Elven Language, Demon Tongue, and Phoenix Tongue in one, melding them to fit a single definition:

First.

The first of its kind, the first under the heavens, the first step forward, Theavel.

Damien quite liked this name, and it seemed his subordinates did even more so. The status of being the first inhabitants of a budding universe wasn't light, and it was clearly something they took pride in.

While Damien admired the Sanctuary's completeness, Tephit's amazement came from an entirely different source.

How long had he lived?

Hundreds of thousands of years? Millions of years? After so long, he'd lost count. But...in all those terrifyingly long and dreary years, he'd never seen a scene like this; a scene that was completely independent of Aquazyl.

"Amazing..." he muttered to himself. A spark seemed to light in his eye. He felt like a child again, seeing such wonder that he never thought he could experience.

The cleanliness of the air, the landmasses that existed above sea level, the different biomes that simply didn't exist within Aquazyl. While Aquazyl was a strange sea realm that mirrored the land above far more than any other area, it was still underwater at the end of the day. Something like a tundra or a desert was impossible to find.

"This is Theavel, the first world of my Sanctuary, and your new home. While it is still an independent realm, it is much freer than Aquazyl and I won't set any rules for you to follow other than the usual rules to not get in conflict with your allies. When the time comes, I'll also show you the universe outside Aquazyl, the Grand Heavens Boundary. It is a wondrous place filled with a myriad of races and beautiful sceneries unlike anything you could ever imagine. Stay excited." Damien explained with a grin.

Tephit took it all in with fervor. Even the Sanctuary was enough novelty for him to never wish to leave. Just the fact that they were flying in the sky above this world, completely without the aid of water, was a shock to him.

If he was given the chance to take control of this world's waters and grow its population as he wished, how great would that be? He could raise a perfect army of soldiers as well as a family unlike what he'd ever had before.

At that time, serving Damien would've been the greatest decision he ever made.

Tephit took a knee where he stood, immediately making his decision. "I, Tephit, swear on my blood and mana to serve you, Damien Void, for eternity."

Damien smiled in satisfaction. The process of acquiring this new slave— servant was much easier than he expected it to be.

Honestly, those people on Aquazyl were bumpkins. They didn't know anything about the outside world and even the concept of it was enough to fascinate them. With Damien's means, subordinating them was light work.

Nevertheless, it wasn't quite the time for Damien to pat himself on the back. Before that, he needed to finish up his work in Aquazyl.

While Tephit remained in the Sanctuary to familiarize himself with Theavel's environment, Damien returned to Aquazyl.

His personal tasks were mostly done. Now, he simply had to oversee the battlefield in case of any extraneous circumstances. For instance, an event where Ria or Maximus decided to rebel.

Whether fortunately or unfortunately for him, though, everything went incredibly smoothly. He almost felt strange bringing events to such a proper conclusion. He'd gotten too used to every event ending by being blown out of proportion, the environment being completely destroyed

Damien looked over the Tephit Clan main headquarters. More than anything, he wanted to see Zara. If the task she'd been assigned was completed properly...

While Damien was in thought, Raka and Tilis walked up from behind him.

"Finished your work?" Tilis asked. The elder had been waiting for Damien's return. There was still much for them to talk about.

"Mm, this and that. There's still some more I have to do before I can say I'm really finished. Did you need me for something?" Damien questioned back. Ever since their first meeting, he had a feeling that these two elders wanted more from him than they led on.

He was being kind not bringing it up directly, but at the same time, he was well aware that he couldn't beat them regardless of how many strength-boosting abilities he used.

Tilis smiled seeing Damien's aggravated expression. Naturally, he was aware of the strange youth's inner thoughts. It wasn't like Damien tried to hide them in any way.

But still, he truly did need Damien for something. And now that Tephit had seemingly been taken care of, the time was right for them to speak.

"I did, actually," Tilis responded straightforwardly. "After all, why wouldn't I want a word with Aquazyl's future successor?"

Chapter 685 Wrap Up [3]

"Hm?"

Damien was flabbergasted by the form of address. Of course, becoming Aquazyl's successor was indeed his end goal, but he didn't expect to be called by the title quite yet.

After all, he hadn't done anything to earn it.

"Is there a reason you're crowning me so early?" He asked Tilis curiously.

"Hahaha, whether it's early or not merely depends on perception. To me, your existence alone is enough to validity that title." Tilis replied.

"I see..." Damien said. He didn't really know how to respond, nor was he in the mood to entertain these two elders.

Knowing their backstory, it was a sure case that they could give him all the answers he possibly wanted, but knowing their type after meeting characters like Tian Yang and Malcolm, he knew those answers wouldn't come easy.

Now, Damien was through with Aquazyl. He wanted to return to Hidden Death Valley and begin his training regime before focusing on the true great issue at hand.

Aquazyl's matters could wait until the Prominence War ended.

"Don't be so hasty to turn us away," Raka said with a smile, as if predicting Damien's thoughts. "While it's true that we can't tell you everything you wish to know, we at least wish to tell you one thing."

"Do not fall victim to the Void." Tilis finished.

Damien's eyes widened. No matter how many times he used Void Mana, those who could recognize it could still be counted on one hand. Even looking at those in the Human Domain who'd heard legends of the "Seed" weren't completely aware of the Void. They only knew it as a mysterious and powerful power.

"What do you mean by that?" Damien asked. His interest was more than just a little piqued at this point.

Tilis shrugged. "What we mean can only be discovered by you. If you're told the answer at a time like this, it'll only negatively affect your growth. Is that what you wish for?"

"Of course not," Damien said begrudgingly. He understood, but that didn't mean he wasn't put off.

"To not succumb to the Void...I think...I can somewhat relate..."

When he thought about it, Damien realized that he'd always been playing a mental game of tug-of-war with his Void Physique.

The reason his journey as a practitioner didn't start until he was 17 was solely due to the Void Physique's interference. Even after that, he'd been constantly led by the nose by his physique, being tested again and again to prove his ability to use it.

Now, devour had evolved and the Void Physique had somewhat integrated with his body. Through this, he gained access to Void Mana.

But did Void Mana listen to his command?

When he used it as normal mana, it acted like normal mana. At least in this regard, it didn't cause him any problems. But when he attempted to utilize the Void's power, his mana would always disobey him.

It was strange to have mana that behaved semi-intelligently, but after getting used to the Void Flames, Damien was somewhat acclimated to the situation. Still, that didn't change the strangeness of it all.

And on top of that, everything he devoured would be fed to his Void Mana. The mana itself would grow stronger, but Damien wouldn't see any of those benefits himself. It was like he was being enslaved by it slowly.

His eyes hardened when he realized it. To control the mana and not let it control him, while it sounded easy, could it truly be called that?

And even if he understood what he had to do, how would he go about doing it?

'Another troublesome task has loaded itself onto my plate, huh...'

This wasn't a new problem, but rather an old one that he was only just becoming aware of. Rather than saying it was being added to his plate, it was better to say that this was the task making up the plate itself.

'Every time I feed the Void Mana, it feeds me comprehensions in return. Only, I haven't had the time to sift through or even try to grasp these comprehensions. My understanding of the Void is negligible to say the least, but if I want to control it, I first have to understand it in full...'

Damien shook off his thoughts and looked around. Raka and Tilis had left at some point, apparently only finding him to deliver that singular message. When he sent a mental transmission to Zara through their link, he learned that she was still in the process of collecting everything from the underground space as he'd asked.

Within the Tephit Clan main headquarters, the scenes of carnage had come to a complete halt. The allied forces were busy cleaning up the aftermath and making sure there were no survivors.

'Lunaria had a Baptism during that mess, and Qing'er seems to be on the precipice of one too. I should go meet them later...but for now, it seems like I have time.'

Damien teleported away from his position and arrived atop the massive skyscraper where he met Tephit hours prior. Here, with complete peace and silence, he submerged himself into his spiritual world.

The usual scenery revealed itself, countless dead stars and the four true worlds he'd bound, a blazing sun, a starry sky, and the spiritual continent he spent so much effort piecing together in the Primordial Undying Realm.

And on that spiritual continent was a black egg. It was sleek and metallic, its shell covered in beautiful mysterious patterns that made Damien's eyes sting just looking at them.

'This is...a comprehension egg?' Damien wondered. He'd never heard of such a concept, but the random name he gave the egg didn't do it any justice.

The egg had not a single fluctuation of aura or power. The way it sat made it look dead and incredibly useless. If any normal person saw this egg, they'd likely ignore it completely even after seeing its unique appearance.

But...it also gave off a feeling of destruction. A feeling of endlessness and calamity, a feeling of nothingness within existence, a feeling of genesis and nihilism.

The myriad of feelings projected by this egg didn't come from physical aura or even some sort of mental pressure, rather, it was quite literally just a feeling Damien got when he looked at it. He had no idea how it was actually transmitted to him.

'It's dangerous...incredibly dangerous...' a mad grin lit up his face. Because he'd been carefully planning his steps for a while, it had been a truly long time since he met a situation where death seemed to stare him right in the eyes.

Why did this feeling always make him so excited?

His body flashed over to the egg without hesitation. His hand reached out and brushed against its surface.

In the next instant, his mind vanished from his body, transported to a different dimension entirely.

And while it was a harrowing experience, a true land of nothingness that could drive any normal man insane, Damien only had a single thought in mind...

'Why is it always darkness when I get transported to different dimensions? Can't it be something more creative? Like damn...'

Chapter 686 Wrap Up [4]

The space Damien found himself in was yet another space of blackness. Yet, this one was quite different from the rest.

This blackness didn't come from the excruciating presence of darkness or any abyssal substance, it came from the literal absence of all else.

The space Damien stood in was best described as nothingness, the Void.

But Damien knew that the Void wasn't just something as simple as nothingness.

Whether it be existence or nonexistence, these concepts were contained within the laws of the universe. Without one, the other simply could not be conceptualized.

When Damien was young and came in contact with the Void, he originally thought it was something like the power of nothingness, but that was just a naive thought.

The Void...was far more esoteric and profound than just that.

The current space he found himself in was an example. Yes, it was a space filled with the air and essence of nothingness, but didn't he still exist? True nothingness was still impossible.

Existence within nonexistence; nonexistence within existence, the duality between these two was only a single concept of the Void.

And this was the concept Damien drew upon after coming in contact with the comprehension egg.

His eyes closed on their own as he sunk into his own thoughts. In the Real Plane, currents of Void Mana began swirling around his body, dancing as he became more and more familiar with their origin.

What was the Void?

The Void was what existed before anything else. All creation existed within the Void.

But then, what difference was there between the Void and regular space?

Naturally, just like all others, space was a concept birthed from the Void. But unlike the rest, it was one of the most interlinked with it.

Space and Time were born not long after the universe sparked into existence. These two concepts allowed beings to exist and have them a flow to follow. They were personifications of Order and Chaos.

The Void didn't have such personifications. When Damien felt its raw essence around him, he realized that there was no such thing as "flow" within the Void.

'Do not succumb to the Void.'

Damien remembered Tilis' warning advice. Feeling the Void so closely now, he felt he somewhat understood those words.

This power had no structure. When one believed it was chaotic, they'd find order, but when they believed it was orderic, they'd find chaos. These two were only concepts birthed from the Void, so how could they encompass its existence?

The blackness of the Void was like an amalgamation of every law or idea to ever exist. If one wanted to, one could look at the Void as a sum of these parts, and while this viewpoint would allow one to view the Void much easier, it would also skew their perception in a way where comprehending it would become exponentially harder.

Damien didn't choose this method. He already understood from long ago the significance of the Void. Just calling it a sum of its parts didn't do it even the slightest bit of justice.

All things were birthed from the Void, but all things did not limit the Void. The only reason existence and nonexistence weren't continuously expanding and being evolved was merely because the Void had no desire to continue building the universe.

Was it bored?

Damien always viewed sentient beings as sentient beings, never putting one above the other merely due to their physical presence. This was because he was well aware of how much more powerful a weapon spirit could be than a human if it was given the time to train.

That kind of discrimination was simply asking for death.

The Void was also a sentient being. When Damien watched his Void Mana, it always seemed to be in an excited state. It always seemed to be looking for fun, for a challenge, for a reason to rebel. This quality always caused him harm, but was there truly a good reason for it?

If the Void was bored and decided to send a portion of its power into the world, if that power landed in a boy who misused it and didn't bring it justice, would the Void be happy?

Naturally not!

While Damien did his best to understand and adapt to his power, it was true that he spent many years idling! If he thought of his current predicament as something like petty revenge from the Void, it would make his mana's mischievous behavior that much more understandable.

Nevertheless, it was true that Damien somewhat understood now.

The "something within nothing" and the "nothing within something."

The meaning of these phrases was simple. It was almost so simple that Damien wanted to slap himself across the head for not realizing it earlier.

But this simplicity...

The darkness around Damien faded. He found himself back in his spiritual world, facing the pitch-black comprehension egg in front of him.

The egg still retained its beautiful metallic sheen. It still retained that deathly aura it carried. However, the profound patterns decorating its surface had already disappeared.

'I see...I guess I'll have to do a considerable amount of devouring to experience that again...' Damien thought to himself,

His mind returned to his body thereafter. The first thing he saw was the swirling Void Mana.

"What, are you that excited to see me?" He asked with a smile.

Xiu!

The mana whirled as if voicing agreement. It swirled around his body even faster, dancing up and down like a little sprite meeting its first human.

"Hahahaha! Interesting little thing."

Damien reached his hand out, causing the mana to fly into it and swirl around his fingertips. Looking off into the distance, Damien spread his hand wide.

'Genesis'

Voom!

The waters of Aquazyl shook. Where Damien's intent was targeted, a large structure erected itself from the ground. It was a castle of pure sand and limestone, dragged to the surface by a mere thought.

Within this palace was a fully decorated set of halls, functioning lights, anything else one would expect from a true residence. It was hard to believe Damien erected it only moments ago.

'Disperse'

The castle drifted into the proverbial wind. Its existence was broken down into chunks and then dismantled, completely taking it off the face of the earth. This wasn't a surface-level disappearance either, no, it was a complete erasure from existence.

Something within nothing and nothing within something; while Damien didn't have access to the peak abilities of these two concepts, he could at least begin to manipulate them.

"Aha..." Damien exclaimed in interest, "this power...will be a lot of fun."

A savage grin lit up his face. It was just coming time for him to leave Aquazyl, and he'd received such a good gift. He really didn't expect it.

After all, the main reward from his stint in Aquazyl would only reveal itself many years in the future. He didn't expect to make any short-term gains here.

But that didn't mean he didn't welcome it.

This new powerup was sudden, but wholly needed. When Damien thought about it, he had so many more options available to him.

Especially when it came to preparing his second present...

A present that was currently waiting patiently for him in the Emperor Bone Sea.

Chapter 687 Wrap Up [5]

Events proceeded easily from that point on. Now that Tephit was tucked away in the Sanctuary and his clan was in shambles, the biggest threat in the Prominence War had been totally eliminated. It was now a stage for the remaining four clans to battle it out.

Between the Ruvia and Oga Clans, the relationship was still unknown. Now that they'd gone through such an experience together, the members of the two clans had formed bonds that were extremely hard to break. Something like betrayal in the face of power was still difficult for them.

As for the Hubo and Verxis Clans, they likely weren't even aware of the massive war when it first broke out. Information about the Tephit Clan's defeat should've just recently reached them, their reactions still in the midst of taking place.

The question was, who would take the central position of this war from this point forth?

The Oga Clan was different from the rest. Despite how others still lumped them together, the higher-ups of the Oga Clan were well aware of their separation from the remaining clans.

After all, they'd sword loyalty to a different leader, an outsider. To others this looked like a hasty and stupid decision, but to those who'd felt Zara's bloodline pressure and seen what it did to the former Great Elder, this choice wasn't just smart, it was genius.

Someone of Zara's caliber would go incredibly far in life. Perhaps, she would one day even surpass the universe.

And that wasn't even mentioning the people she surrounded herself with. If Damien was any example, it was clear that Zara didn't make friends with anyone normal.

The Oga Clan's lower members were incredibly reluctant to accept Zara as their new Clan Head before the war, but after seeing the carnage the Sanctuary's forces wrought, they changed their minds.

They wanted to be like that too. They wanted strength like that too.

Now, the Oga Clan's fierce loyalty to Zara was already established and set in stone. They would from now on be inseparable from her...

At least in some form.

Zara didn't have a method to keep a large number of people for a prolonged period of time. Her shadow realm ability was only meant for short-term inhabitation by outsiders. Unfortunately for both her and the Oga Clan, she didn't have the facilities to keep them with her.

It was a conundrum she faced for many hours. She didn't want to throw away her first followers just after receiving them. It felt like she'd finally taken a step towards her goals, and she didn't want to lose that feeling.

Zara stood with Damien, handing him an assortment of technological parts and a few stranger fantasy-like items. These were the machinery Zara stole from the underground space. The base structure for a realm-breaking teleportation device, a rudimentary version of the Blood Sacrament God Array, and many other useful trinkets were stored there.

It wasn't just any day when one got the chance to raid such a vastly beneficial treasure chest.

Nevertheless, as Zara handed the items to Damien, she actually voiced another request. It was the final solution she came up with after so many hours.

"Can I...house the Oga Clan in your Sanctuary?" She asked hesitantly.

She knew that the Sanctuary was Damien's life's work. Even when compared to his Void comprehension, the Sanctuary was still a better representation of him as an individual.

Zara didn't want to taint that land he was growing himself with troops that weren't his own.

But contrary to her expectations, Damien just shrugged. "Why not? Tell me when they need entrance and I'll help you out."

"Really?" Zara exclaimed with excitement.

"Of course! Not even counting the fact that you're my precious little beast companion, the Sanctuary has always been its own isolated world. You know how little I interfere in its growth." He continued.

"I'll let people into the Sanctuary and later, once they've been acclimated and have sworn their loyalty, let them out. Besides the people I'm actually close to, that's the extent to which I interfere in the Sanctuary's happenings."

"The Sanctuary has always been strange in my heart. I've always been aware that it's my world. If I wanted to, I could slaughter every single existence living within in a few moments. But still, I don't like being too involved in it."

"That place is its own world, after all. Especially now that it's evolved, it's looking more and more like a true world in outer space. I don't want that world to take on my characteristics. I want it to grow through its natural course of action until the Sanctuary universe would become so independent that it's nearly inaccessible to those who aren't accepted by its residents."

Damien's spiel wasn't completely meant for Zara, more for himself. Seeing the Sanctuary again with Tephit made him desperately want to change many things to make function better.

Unfortunately, he had to remember his own ideals.

He was letting the Sanctuary grow on its own for a purpose. Rather than a conscious thought, it was more of a hunch; a hunch that would only come true far in the future, if ever.

Nevertheless, his opinions about the Sanctuary didn't have any place in his mind at the moment.

After his conversation with Zara, the Oga Clan naturally settled in the Sanctuary. They decided to live nearby the continent of White Dragon Grotto and the Demons.

Their belligerent personalities fit well with White Dragon Grotto's ideals. With them in the ocean and the grotto on land, the two were an invincible duo.

Left in Aquazyl were 3 clans. And of the Oga Clan, only Ria remained in the Real Plane.

She stood facing Maximus, her mouth moving but no words coming out. She didn't know how to explain the situation to him at all.

"You're leaving?" He asked. He had known Ria for too long. He could easily read her thoughts through her face.

"M-mm. The Clan is leaving. I...might stay," Ria said with difficulty

Unlike the others, she had things she didn't want to leave behind. Mainly...

"Just go," Maximus said softly.

The man in front of her. He was always quietly supporting her and making sure everything went her way. Despite his cold attitude, she was well aware of his heart's warmth.

If he annoyedly spat at her to go, it only meant that he'd be disappointed if she wasted the opportunity.

In the end, she took the offer. As she turned to leave, she found herself incredibly reluctant.

She looked into Maximus' eyes and in the next moment...

A pair of lips firmly pressed onto his. Maximus' eyes widened in shock as he watched Ria passionately kiss him, eventually joining her in the fun.

"I...don't want to go yet..." Ria muttered.

"But if you don't go, will you have time later? Your entire clan is going. Even if you've chosen to serve a different leader, you're still their central point. You can't just leave." Maximus said realistically.

Ria already understood. He didn't want her to miss something so major simply because of him...

Especially since he might not survive until the end of the Prominence War.

In their current society, the coming of a Prominence War cut off any possibility of a relationship.

Because it was entirely possible for those clan members to die instantly, their relationships meaning nothing but empty comfort in the end.

And Maximus...he didn't want to devalue Ria into a mere empty comfort.

Chapter 688 Wrap Up [6]

The relationship between Maximus and Ria was a strange one, but also somewhat inevitable. Ever since young, they and the Hubo and Verxis Clan Heads had been good friends who studied under the same teacher.

The reality of the Prominence War drove them apart years later, causing the Hubo and Verxis Clan Heads to become distant and hostile. Maximus and Ria, however, didn't follow the stereotype.

Their closeness transcended the bounds of their circumstances, and through each other, they were able to find some solace in the dreary atmosphere of Aquazyl that only these Clan Heads knew.

Still, this kind of peace couldn't last forever.

In the vast and chaotic river of life, there would be just as many partings as there were meetings. All people had their own paths to take, their own goals to chase. In this environment, it was completely natural for people with extremely close bonds to become distant simply due to circumstance.

Maximus and Ria's case wasn't too special. Stories of lovers who transcended the hostility of their clans to be together, of couples who survived the chaos of war by holding each other tight, were exceedingly popular. Humans, no, sentient lifeforms tended to seek comfort in each other when times became too rough to handle alone.

Damien had seen plenty of examples of this with his own eyes. Hell, he'd even been a part of this example.

This was exactly how his relationship with Rose began. The two of them were struggling through their own circumstances without help, but found each other to seek refuge in.

Even these fairytales of perfect couples could end in tragedy. And even if they didn't end in tragedy, they'd certainly end in parting.

Those who could stay together forever were only those who didn't have any goals to accomplish. People who could remain sedentary while enjoying quiet lives were those who either had nothing or wanted nothing.

Damien wasn't one of these people, thus he was forced to continuously part from his wives. And neither Ria nor Maximus was this type of person, so they were inevitably forced to do the same.

It was just...that inevitability came far faster than they'd expected.

"Parting is inevitable, yes, but what matters is how one behaves once it's happened," Damien muttered to himself.

"What?" Zara asked, confused.

Damien smiled and shook his head. "Nothing, just thinking about this and that."

His awareness still covered the two Clan Heads. His curiosity about their decision was still as high as ever, and he didn't want to miss this conversation.

Still, he wasn't going to blatantly barge into their personal space. He only wanted to understand how people reacted to situations like this one.

After all, Damien had undergone this sort of parting many many times, far more times than he wanted to admit.

Every single time, he was forced to accept reality and move forward. He didn't spend too much time on missing his loved ones, because if he did, he knew his progress would be slowed.

Damien was always curious about emotions. The way they functioned was so strange, and when he was younger, he even contemplated getting rid of them entirely. The Mind Prison that still resided on his spiritual continent was proof of this.

Nowadays, Damien's emotions were quite muted. His general demeanor was indifference, he wasn't able to joke and tease like he would when he was younger, and it felt like any action that didn't guide him closer to his end goals was completely useless, even if this action was something like entertaining his friends and companions.

He didn't like this change much. It felt like the burden on his shoulders was forcing him to change into a different person.

When he realized this, he got into the habit of becoming curious about the emotions of others. He wondered how others would react if they were put in similar situations as he'd been in the past, to see just how strange his own reactions were.

So far, he could only see that his rationality outstripped his emotional reactions considerably. When he was to make a choice whether to leave for a greater purpose and come back later or stay back and ignore that opportunity, he'd choose the former in a heartbeat.

It wasn't that he didn't love his wives or his friends, it was just that his love didn't translate in the way others' love did.

He was still trying to figure out how to show his love properly, in a way where everyone could understand the depth of his feelings without him having to completely change his person.

His wives were people who understood this side of him. They'd spent prolonged periods of time with him and each of them had seen him at a different low point. Even through all his bullshit, they'd stuck with him. Even with him leaving so often, they'd stuck with him.

Because they were people who understood his complicated heart and the emotions he couldn't showcase the way he wanted to.

If it wasn't for that, would any sane woman want to stay with a man who barely spent any time with them? A man who continued to leave them and come back with new wives?

That was simply a joke.

There was a reason why despite Damien's constant flirting with woman after woman, the only ones that truly stuck and fostered a relationship of mutual love with him were three.

Even Elena, who'd left to find her own path, was the same. Years ago when their separation took place, Damien was despairing and didn't realize much of the truth of her actions.

Their twisted relationship couldn't be fixed by mere time together, and neither of them were the type to sit still and try to fix said relationship.

They both knew of each other's feelings.

They both knew they would never betray each other for another.

With that kind of assurance, they didn't need to worry about how they acted. They both went to complete their own goals, using the best means they knew to help the other party cope while they did so.

And in the end, did their love fade? Damien was sure his didn't, and even though he couldn't see Elena, he knew she was waiting for him somewhere across the universe.

Maximus and Ria's love story was cute, it was a story of rivals who fell in love and decided to fight fate. But when Damien looked at it, he didn't think it could compare to his own.

He had three beautiful and understanding wives, three women who didn't just sit around and wait for him or act as his yes-men at all times. He had the three best women in the universe as his partners, women who would work as hard as they needed to in order to grow at their fastest speeds and develop.

Watching Maximus and Ria, Damien's thoughts switched away from his own emotions and focused on the emotions of these three instead.

He ended up thinking about them for a long long time, slowly coming to appreciate every facet of their personalities, ingraining every tiny detail of their faces into his mind once again.

And he wondered...what were they up to now?

Chapter 689 Them [1]

The Human Domain.

It was a place that birthed many heroes in the past and a place that many adored as the most prominent force in the war against the Nox 10,000 years ago.

In that Great War, humanity was the sole reason the universe was able to survive and keep 9 Sectors of space. The other 8 dominant races could only be thankful for humanity's presence in the universe.

This was the reason why humans were never mistreated in different sectors of the universe. Even if they had low status or were enslaved, they'd never be placed in those horrifying conditions that some slaves were forced into.

Even if these human slaves couldn't appreciate this grace due to their thankless circumstances, it didn't mean that it didn't exist.

The Human Domain of the current era couldn't match the one of old, but that didn't mean it had changed. It was still a place where heroes rose to any challenge that appeared.

And currently, there was another Great War about to begin. The Nox had destroyed the Elven Domain and they'd destroyed Eden. While a war continued in Eden, the Soul World and Beast Domain were slowly being targeted by the Nox as well.

For this race's end goal was merely destruction. They didn't care to conquer, and thus had no reason to fight for territory with the universe's denizens.

This put the universe's forces in an objectively worse position that was hard to overcome with strength alone.

The Human Domain, unfortunately, was heavily disconnected from the rest of the universe. Only through Parciel had they recently gained access to the universe's information, but they were still a long way from becoming a part of it again.

After all, the Dimensional Leaderboard still hadn't shown up, nor were there any teleportation arrays connecting the Human Domain both internally and externally.

After the raid on Niflheim and the destruction of the sector's Infected Source World, the main forces of the Human Domain gathered in the Cloud Plane, using it as their main headquarters.

Tian Yang took the lead of this new cumulative force as the Void Old Immortal and organized the Human Domain's forces into a true army.

After that came the training.

It was a hellish training that even caused death for some weaker trainees. It was a terrifying experience that none ever wanted to experience again.

But it granted strength at unimaginable speeds. Tian Yang's methods ignored personal safety and prioritized power leveling and elemental comprehension above all else.

And among the training zones he'd picked, there was a certain location that was all too familiar.

It was a zone of pitch blackness that stood out even in the darkness of outer space. It was a place where nothing could exist, not life nor mana or even the Laws of the universe.

This was a Dead Zone, specifically, the Dead Zone created by Damien and the Fifth Primal Sovereign at the end of their clash.

Here, two women sat silently.

The atmosphere was still. Their bodies embraced this stillness as if they were in stasis, not even a single hair moving out of position.

These two women, one white-haired and the other pink-haired, were in the midst of what must've been the most dangerous training regimen Tian Yang had designed.

The Dead Zone was a terrifying place. Without the lack of natural elements, it was impossible for life to survive. There was no air for humans to breathe. In a situation like this, only coating the body in mana could allow one to survive.

Yet, in a Dead Zone where mana ceased to exist, it was impossible to replenish one's mana supply. This meant that entering a Dead Zone was only a slow walk to death.

A walk that couldn't be avoided.

The lack of foundational laws in a Dead Zone erased concepts that all beings took as commonality. Concepts like distance, time, or even life and death were extinguished entirely.

And this was exactly what Tian Yang's training was modeled around.

The concepts of life and death were equally missing, the concepts of all things were missing. In this empty space, no matter how close one got to death, as long as one believed they were alive, one would never truly die.

It was a mysterious phenomenon, something that could never be understood by someone who hadn't experienced it personally.

As for the purposes of this training? There were two.

The first was the most simple mental training. This empty environment left one alone with their thoughts in a situation where they needed to constantly exercise complete control over their psyche. This was an incredible mental exercise that could boost one's spiritual world to a completely different level.

As for the second benefit, this was more esoteric. It was a matter of elements,

Comprehension of Laws and elements didn't come easy, and while universal forces were great for grasping the foundations of elements, they didn't quite help as one's path diverged to become more personal.

At that point, the commonness of universal law would actually become a hindrance. If one focused too much on it, their own laws would be convoluted.

In a Dead Zone where laws didn't exist, the only fluctuation of elements that one could sense was their own. This gave a far more personalized comprehension experience, allowing one to look deep within themselves and truly realize what their path to strength would be.

Every practitioner was different in that regard. Even if two people practiced Ice Laws, furthered their Ice Laws to specifically focus on the permafrost concept, and then fought using the exact same skills with the exact same comprehension, the results they outputted would still vary.

Rose and Ruyue, as they sat in the Dead Zone for months at a time, were finding their paths.

The two of them didn't have it as easy as others. Just like Damien, they didn't have streamlined paths.

Ruyue's yin element was vast enough to encompass all negative forces. Instead of a single element, it was more an amalgamation of countless others. For her to find a path with this element was exceedingly difficult, not to mention the ever-elusive moon affinity that gave her Celestial-like powers.

Rose, on the other hand, had illusion and wind affinities. Neither of these affinities were particularly special, but when they ended up in Rose's hands, they were transformed entirely.

Rose mostly stopped utilizing her wind element. As she grew, its use decreased to a negligible level, becoming something she only used occasionally when she needed a quick offensive counter.

Her illusions, however, were far greater. And unlike Ruyue, Rose had been moving towards a goal from the very beginning of her journey.

To turn illusion into reality and vice versa, to become someone who could manipulate reality at its seams using illusions as a medium.

Despite the differences in their journeys and end goals, the two were both chasing goals of extreme difficulty, goals that prevented them from receiving Baptism even until now.

But at the same time, this left one thing certain: when the two women finally received their Baptisms, they'd become monsters unlike any before them.

They might even reach a level where they surpass the Human Domain entirely.

Chapter 690 Them [2]

The Dead Zone training wasn't a new part of either Rose or Ruyue's regime. They'd been stationary within this space for many months already, edging closer and closer to a breakthrough with every passing second.

Usually, when it was time to make a major leap in power, one would need to level up profusely and consolidate their power. However, this same case didn't apply to the two of them.

After all, they'd been fighting with their lives on the line for many years after reaching 3rd class. They weren't just trophies who stood around and waited for their husband to finish work and come home.

When it came to wars, Rose and Ruyue had participated in them more than even Damien. They were key players in the purges of three worlds that took place while Damien was busy training.

The problem was still the complexity of their elements. It was a blessing and a curse, providing them with the power to stand above their competition while also holding them back and making their path to strength that much harder.

Even with this, only Long Chen and a few other geniuses from the Human Domain were able to match up to them. The two women and Long Chen were the Human Domain's premiere geniuses.

They were the Human Domain's greatest stars, along with one other name.

Damien Void.

Some believed he'd died while some believed he'd been sent to a different part of the universe. Regardless of opinion, though, all people agreed that his talent outstripped almost everyone they'd ever seen.

It was an insane level of talent, a level of talent that wouldn't die easily, even the non-believers were well aware of their fact, but they acted based on emotion alone.

Nevertheless, the Human Domain remained trapped in an endless training regime. Whether it was the lowest 1st class being or an extreme peak 4th class being, none were safe from it.

Through this regime, they would rise into becoming the heroes who saved the universe once more.

The starry sky was a vast and endless place filled with a myriad of beautiful sceneries that barely anyone would have the pleasure of witnessing.

The 9 Sectors were only separated due to the classification systems set by sentient beings. In reality, it was all just a part of the vast Grand Heavens Boundary, the universe's shell.

Deep within the starry sky, in one of these areas that'd never been discovered or explored, there lay a Mystic Realm unlike any other.

In terms of concept, the Mystic Realm was similar to Aquazyl. It was a hidden realm where many sentient lifeforms lived and served a purpose. Their lifespans became irrelevant when they connected their minds to the spiritual pillar that maintained the realm.

However, the realm didn't bear any similarities to Aquazyl at all.

It was white everywhere. When one entered the Mystic Realm, they'd be met by a pure white walkway surrounded by puffy translucent clouds that seemed to flow downwards into the Void like beautiful waterfalls. At the end of this walkway was an equally white city.

The architectural style didn't have any sort of consistency, but each and every building looked like it was carved out of the cleanest limestone.

Unfortunately, most of these buildings were empty. Their owners had passed long ago.

The only signs of their existence remaining were the small mementos they left in their wake.

Currently, this usually unoccupied space was home to a visitor.

Her long blue hair swayed in the wind, looking like ocean waves crashing against each other as they followed the moon's flow. Her eyes remained closed, but the piercing chill produced by her gaze remained stationary, hovering around her irises until she decided it time to be activated.

This woman was none other than Elena.

Compared to Rose and Ruyue, her strength was already higher. After all, she'd stepped into 4th class already!

While Elena's achievements couldn't be discounted, even she knew that most of her recent improvements were the fault of this realm alone.

It had already been many years since Elena separated from Damien. And for her, it had been even more than the original time flow could register. The strange Mystic Realm she remained in seemed to twist time, making it impossible to see or grasp.

In this time, she'd done nothing but practice. At the same time, Elena had learned far more about herself than she ever knew before.

Truthfully, Elena never knew her parents. She'd moved from foster home to foster home from the earliest years of her life. This only changed when she began earning money from her hunter career.

Like Damien, though, Elena always felt an attraction to mana. She was sensitive to life, to people, to all things. Perhaps her sensing of Damien's spatial element was what created the bond they'd later come to share.

This ability wasn't something a human who'd never been in contact should produce. Adapting to mana before even sensing its existence was unheard of.

In that case, there was only one answer. Just like Damien, she must've had family from outside earth

Damien's father was a being of origins too big for even the current Damien to understand. In Elena's &case, however, both parents were missing.

It was likely that Elena's parents were deeply connected to this mysterious Mystic Realm. And judging by the source of her power...

Her mother was likely a Valkyrie or something similar. As for her father...

It was better not to mention him. Elena didn't know anything about the man, but she got the sinking feeling that he was incredibly dangerous whenever she thought about him.

Nevertheless, her origins didn't matter much to her. What Elena wanted was strength, and no matter where that strength came from, she'd accept it.

Her eyes shot open. Those ocean-blue irises shone like beautiful sapphires in the light sky. Her mouth parted as she let out a sigh.

'Another day with no progress...' Elena muttered inwardly.

Ever since entering this land of Valhalla, Elena had been working towards a strict set of goals. She set time limits for herself and forced herself to properly train to achieve them.

Sadly, no matter how much work she did, she couldn't make progress. The Life Laws that she was trying to master and apply in more conceptual ways...were simply too convoluted. No matter how she studied, she couldn't comprehend them at all.

But that was normal. Elena's situation was the exact opposite of Rose and Ruyue's. While the two of them merely needed to heighten their comprehension until their Baptisms arrived, Elena was long past the Baptism and only needed to continue tempering herself and moving forward.

Essentially, what Elena needed was no longer the same type of dreary practice at all times.

What Elena needed was true combat experience.

Her eyes turned to the Mystic Realm's entrance. Despite all the mysteries surrounding this territory, it was still true that she somehow attained ownership of it.

Her smile spread into a savage grin. As she wondered if that specific trait was something everyone who spent too much time with Damien one greeted, Elena exited the realm entirely.

'I heard the Nox have been up to some tricks recently. I guess killing them will be a lot of fun.'

With that thought, Elena's body turned into a flash of light.

Her body was headed straight in the direction of Eden.