

# Void 711

Chapter 711 Overlord [3]

Worldbreaker was by no means a simple attack. It disrupted spacetime and intrinsically broke down the components of a world, forming a positive feedback loop with the World Core and destroying the planet thereafter.

Naturally, on a world as strong as Death Emperor Star, this effect was drastically lessened. Because Damien was also holding back his power so it could be contained within the arena barrier, the destruction caused wasn't nearly enough to shatter the world itself.

However, it wasn't something to be underestimated.

BOOOOOOOOOOM!

The entire arena floor disintegrated into a cloud of dust. Bianca's earthen tsunami and even the crystalline barrier protecting her body were instantly shattered.

"Keuk....!"

She coughed out a mouthful of blood as her mana rebounded, stabilizing herself in the air so she didn't fall into the chasm Damien had created.

The battle that had taken place on the ground thus far was moved to the air. The illustrious battle arena floor that had never faced total destruction before was no longer existent, replaced by an abyssal chasm whose bottom couldn't be seen.

Bianca wiped the blood from her lips and gritted her teeth. While she was fortunate enough to avoid heavy injury due to the countless layers of protection that stood between her and the attack, she was now essentially crippled.

Her most powerful attacks were built on the foundation of the earth. Even if she could still attack and defend without its presence, the amount of mana she had to use to do so would be astronomical.

There was a reason people didn't place too much stock in affinities that relied on external mediums to display their full power.

If an affinity wasn't versatile enough to be wholly usable even in the worst conditions, what was the point of having it?

The important fact was that this wasn't a problem of the earth affinity itself. While the universe's foundational laws had ranks, the actual power they could display wholly depended on the wielder.

That was to say, Bianca's current state was a product of her own malpractice. If she hadn't focused so much on manipulating the earth around her and instead focused on understanding the versatility of her law, she wouldn't have been in such a disadvantageous position.

But...what else was she supposed to do?

Not only was she a woman, she was a woman in the Bloodlock Clan. If she didn't want to be turned into a sex slave or a blood source for the Bloodlock heirs, she needed to prove her worth.

And the only at she knew how was destruction.

Her immense destructive talent was the reason she was allowed to join the enforcer unit instead of suffering the same fate as most other women in the clan. Her ability to completely dominate any earthen battlefield was a necessity in warfare.

After all, while her power had a fatal weakness, the Bloodlock Clan merely had to place her in situations where that weakness would never be exploited.

In this way, they'd gain a powerful subordinate while always having an easy method of bringing her down if she decided to rebel.

The enforcer unit was only worth so much. The Bloodlock Clan's power was centralized within its bloodline, so even if they were a strong fighting force, any outsiders working for the clan were considered cannon fodder.

Ironically, the only ones who escaped this fate were those who suffered the most: the wives and concubines of the Bloodlock men.

Bianca's eyes hardened as she thought of this. A defeat here would likely force her into that position as well.

Even if she was cropped, she couldn't...!

Bang!

A bullet of condensed spatial mana shot past her head. Just as it reached a few inches behind her, it turned into a blur.

'Material Shift'

Damien's figure appeared in the bullet's place. Without giving Bianca a chance, he began a furious offensive.

'Void Sword Art First Form: Bladeless'

'Void Sword Art Third Form: Dance of the Void'

'Void Sword Art Second Form: Horizon Break'

Space was thrown into chaos as Damien chained his sword forms endlessly. Large gashes opened up, opening Death Emperor Star's space into the chaotic void, smaller spatial cracks formed from the speed and precision of Dance of the Void's sword slashes, and Bianca was continuously forced to dodge and block unseen attacks from Horizon Break.

Her gritted teeth began to leak with blood. She fortified her defenses with earth mana, but the level of mastery she could show in her current state was incredibly low.

'I have to get close!' She thought rapidly. There were only two facets of her strength that she trusted in her current situation.

Her control of gravity and her physical strength.

If she could get close to Damien and utilize these powers to weaken him, she might be able to clinch a chance at victory!

Bianca moved immediately on her assumption. She dodged by instinct alone, using her countless years on the battlefield to guide her. Through this, she escaped the encirclement of Horizon Break and charged at Damien.

Still, his speed far outstripped her. And when it came to close combat, since when did he lose out to anyone?

Rather than relying on his newfound advantages to pressure Bianca into a loss, Damien put away his weapons and met her head-on.

Against these Bloodlock dogs, he showed no mercy or respect. His aim was to dominate and humiliate.

BANG!

His fist meet hers as they finally met. The sound caused the ambient air to explode and produced a screech of metal clashing against metal.

The second they made impact, Bianca felt her whole body rattle from head to toe. The force of his punch...wasn't any weaker than hers!

Brownish-yellow mana surfaced on her body and coated her fists. Immediately, she utilized gravity to heighten the power of her attack while simultaneously increasing her speed.

This was by far the most intrinsic utilization of mana she knew. She expertly weaved decreased gravity and increased gravity to best suit her needs.

In this state, her single fist could cause tens of thousands of kilometers of damage.

But against Damien...

"Oh? You can do something like this?" He commented with a smile.

His fist meet hers once more, but the result wasn't any different than the last time.

"You aren't the only one who can play with gravity, you know." He continued.

Vector control was an ability that'd become further forgotten the more powerful Damien got. This wasn't a matter of its power, since true vector control would absolutely dominate the universe, but rather a matter of his own talent.

Damien had never been the smartest. In fact, the him who first obtained vector control could be called an absolute dolt.

The problem lay in this fact. Vector control, despite how simplified it was when Damien used it by utilizing space as a medium, was heavily calculation-forward in its usage.

To accurately pinpoint the vectors of an opponent's attack became increasingly difficult as he grew in power. And when laws and natural forces came into play, something like a vector became less prominent. The mana of a 4th class was able to break the established laws to a certain extent, which negated vector control's usefulness.

In the hands of a genius, vector control could've grown to insurmountable heights. Unfortunately, Damien wasn't a genius.

The only reason he got vector control...was because it was the ability he needed most at the time.

Vector control was a manifestation of his desire for "control" after his first defeat to the 40th Floor Boss Wyvern.

But as he grew, control came to him in a different manner; through absolute power.

And now, this was the first time Damien had used vector control in many, many years.

Chapter 712 Overlord [4]

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Despite being in the midst of a ferocious melee with Bianca, Damien still had the freedom to think idle thoughts about his abilities.

Bianca made a critical mistake after Damien used Worldbreaker to evaporate the ground. Due to her surprise at being put in a completely unfamiliar situation, she wasn't thinking straight at all.

While she was limited in her mana usage, she could still barrage Damien and use her superior mana capacity to pressure him. At the moment, this was her best bet at survival and success.

However, she instead decided to compete with physical strength, Damien's first and continued strong point.



It couldn't be helped. When Bianca was briefed about Damien's abilities, his physical strength was never mentioned. The only time he'd showcased it was when he destroyed those two early 4th class fighters upon entering the King Bracket.

Naturally, that level of physical strength wouldn't be considered a threat to someone in the mid-stage of 4th class like her.

She was mainly told to focus on his spatial abilities and his artifacts, the two powers Damien used most often.

There was a critical difference between Damien and the geniuses of the Bloodlock Clan. He never once chose peaceful growth over deathly struggle.

Every time he found another weakness, he did his absolute best to correct it and find ways to improve.

Perhaps the main geniuses of the Bloodlock Clan were doing the same, but a member of the enforcer unit...?

The Bloodlock Clan's suppression of them wasn't just something that could be exploited by the clan.

Damien was doing exactly that: exploiting the weakness that was intentionally left in Bianca's strength to control her.

BOOM!

A heavy punch flew out. Damien twisted his body and allowed it to impact his chest, using the opening he created to land a ferocious strike on Bianca as well.

But unlike him, she didn't have Transcendent Regeneration.

The two flew back from the force of the collision. Bianca coughed another mouthful of blood and massaged her chest, where a large black mark had formulated.

The punch didn't manage to pierce her skin, but her internals were a mess. She could feel chunks of her organs within the blood she was coughing up.

If they continued like this, she'd meet a rather lackluster end.

This wasn't how it was supposed to go.

She was supposed to win this battle and prove herself, gaining more freedom within the Bloodlock Clan.

Who would've thought she'd run into such a monster?

"Haa...ngaah..." Bianca took a few labored breaths as she tried to stabilize herself.

But it was hard.

Her body felt heavy.

Humans were strange creatures. Motivation, despite being intangible, actually had an incredible effect on their performance.

The loss of hope was extremely detrimental to their ability to move forward.

Even if they had the same level of energy, a human with motivation and hope would move far faster than someone who didn't.

And despite a human completing the exact same task on two different days, they could feel like heaven and hell depending on their emotional state.

Bianca...was feeling hopeless.

She felt the despair of her life's situation every single day, but she used destruction to mitigate her mental burden. Dominating the battlefield was her coping mechanism.

Now that she was placed in a position of weakness, a position where she was being dominated on the battlefield, she couldn't draw out her full strength.

Or any at all for that matter.

Slowly but surely, she began to descend. Holding herself up in the air felt hard.

Looking at the abyss below, she had a thought.

Wouldn't her life be infinitely better if it ended?

Damien left every single Bloodlock Clan servant in a vegetative state. Even if they awoke later, they would be crippled for life.

The difference was that they were all men. At worst, they'd be killed.

As she was a woman, and a rather beautiful one at that, her fate would be much worse.

Just imagining the various marks she'd seen on the Bloodlock concubines and the various rooms she'd accidentally stumbled into during her time in the clan's mansions...

'Maybe I should just die.'

Was there any other respite? As long as she existed in this universe she'd never escape the Bloodlock Clan's grasp.

Her eyes turned dull.

And Damien was only a few hundred kilometers away to witness this change.

He had to stop the smile from forming on his face.

'Is this an opportunity?' He thought to himself.

He knew that look. That was the look of someone who gave up on life.

And people like that...were the easiest to manipulate.

'If I'm going against the Bloodlock Clan, I might as well obtain some proper information about them, right?'

The enforcer unit...Damien didn't know their exact status within the clan, but the fact that Bianca was sent here as the last obstacle standing in his way before he fought the Overlord was proof enough that she was valued at least somewhat.

She was sent to the battle arena as a show of power by the Bloodlock Clan. Just remembering the looks of terror on the crowd's faces when she was introduced gave Damien the confidence he needed to enact his plan.

A bullet flew from Hel's barrel.

Bianca stared at it as it approached her.

But she didn't move.

The bullet entered through her glabella and exploded inside her head.

Her body immediately dematerialized and reappeared outside the arena barrier.

She was still conscious unlike Damien's previous opponents.

But at that moment...

"Hahaha, the Bloodbitch Clan must value you a lot for them to send you here to stop me, right? Then I ought to provide them an even better present than anything before."

Damien's voice resounded through the arena before the announcer could even speak the results of the battle.

His body flashed away. His teleportation became usable again the second Bianca was defeated, as her spatial locking artifact was deactivated and transported out of the arena with her.

He appeared directly behind her collapsed body, a twisted smirk on his face.

"Let this be an example. Whether it's the Bloodbitch Clan or a random genius on the side of the street; nobody who offends me will walk away unscathed."

Mirage appeared in his hand.

It swung down in a crisp arc.

'Void Sword Art Fifth Form: Dimensional Severance'

A thin black line cut the dimension in two.

And when it struck Bianca's body, she was vanquished from existence.

Not even a hint of her corpse remained in the world for others to see.

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After the sequence of events that took place in the battle arena, Damien was naturally summoned back in front of the Board of Directors. Unlike last time, his sin this time was far worse.

He'd killed someone on Hidden Death Valley's grounds.

Of the sins the geniuses could commit, this was by far one of the worst.

The crowd, the announcer, the observing elders, there wasn't a single person who reacted in time to stop him. They were already in a stunned state from the battle itself, how were they supposed to stop an event that had only ever happened a minuscule number of times in Hidden Death Valley's long existence?



Damien didn't even meet the enforcement officers of the sect.

The second Bianca's life signature vanished, his body immediately appeared in the isolated realm...

And a terrifying pressure locked onto him.

Looking at the cold faces of the Demigods around him, Damien smiled wryly.

'Welp...I can't say I didn't expect this...'

Chapter 713 Overlord [5]

"Umm...hi again?" Damien's sheepish words resounded through the large chamber.

"Insolence! Not only did you break the academy's rules and disregard our authority once, but you even took for granted the opportunity you were given! Are you seeking death?!"

Scorpio of the Thirteen Zodiacs, Silcerin, raged immediately. If it wasn't bad enough that Damien committed such an offense a second time within three days, he also returned to the Board of Directors with such a flippant attitude!

If this wasn't disregarding their authority, then what was?!

"Hahaha, relax. You're already sending me off to war anyway. What can a cute and innocent little genius like me do when I'm sent into the real world? I'll die!" Damien replied with a mock-pouty expression.

Silcerin gritted his teeth and flared his aura. Despite his rampant actions, nobody moved to stop him.

Damien's first visit could be called a minor offense. It was also his first time breaking any rules, so the fact that he received harsh punishment was enough.

But clearly, their approach was too light.

A Demigod's pressure immediately blanketed the chamber and slammed down on Damien's body.

"Khhh!"

Damien gritted his teeth and let out a sharp exhale as he revolved his Void Mana and tried to use Dimensional Magic to separate himself from the pressure, but that was much harder than it sounded.

'So this is...a Demigod!' He exclaimed inwardly. The pressure he felt now was nothing like the pressure of even an extreme peak 4th class.

There was something different about a Silcerin's aura. Every single action he took was laced with a portion of the Divinity he carried. Even if Damien formed a new connection with the Void, it wasn't solid enough to protect him from the Divine.

"Alright, that should be enough." The Director's voice cut through the pressure, freeing Damien.

"Haa...haa..."

As Damien let out heavy breaths and recovered himself, the Director continued speaking.

"The sin you have committed today is the heaviest sin one can commit at our academy. We will not be taking any statements from you. You will be lucky if you escape death today."

Along with his external words, the Director sent a sound transmission to Damien's head. "Brat, what the hell were you thinking?!"

The usual world barrier appeared between Damien and the Zodiacs as they began discussing his punishment.

"Hehe," Damien replied in kind, "well, it's not like I actually killed her. Call it a bit of smoke and mirrors."

"She's alive?" The Director exclaimed in surprise.

In fact, he hadn't seen the altercation at all. Hidden Death Valley's protection arrays automatically took care of most of the academy's policing.

However, when someone was killed, the perpetrator would be teleported to the hidden realm along with the Thirteen Zodiacs, who were notified before transportation.

All in all, the Director didn't know any of the event's details, nor did the other Demigods. The punishment for dealing with a genius who killed within the academy's grounds was always death without mercy, so they had no need to.

Except...today they'd run into a rather special situation.

Since the Director already knew about Damien's class, he decided to give a short explanation of what occurred. Without revealing the existence of the Sanctuary, using Dimensional Magic and the Celestial class as a scapegoat, Damien wove a story that fit perfectly into the conversation and explained his actions.

"I roughly get the gist of it..." the Director muttered. "But why go through all the trouble? This situation could've been easily avoided."

"Ah, you mean the current situation," Damien replied. He realized that the Director quite easily understood the reason behind his "killing" Bianca.

"Well, you have a dog of the Bloodbitch Clan with you in the room, don't you? It'd be troublesome if he decided to spill my plans to the main clan."

παῖδα-ῥοῦνê|·cóm The Director sighed. Yes, it was smart to not alert Silcerin at all, but did that make his actions any better? Even if he didn't explain himself, he could've at least foregone offending the man!

"Haa, I'll see what I can do. Regardless, you won't be getting off light this time. I hope you've prepared yourself."

"Relax. Whether or not I'm punished depends on if they have the ability to punish me. If it's escape we're talking about, I'm more than just confident in my abilities." Damien responded smugly. Though, his inner thoughts were quite different.

'Their two options are killing or crippling me. Even if the Director can make sure I don't die, I don't think he can subvert the crippling. And judging by that old dog's attitude, I probably won't be excused from my war punishment due to this fact...'

Truthfully, Damien wasn't afraid of being crippled, he was merely wary of its connotation.

If he showcased that he'd made a full recovery immediately after being crippled, he wouldn't make it out alive. Either he'd be killed, or he'd be captured and used as an experimental subject so others could understand how to duplicate Transcendent Regeneration.

Until this point, nobody questioned the ability. This was because, even though they were rare, healing abilities that could heal limbs still existed.

A completely crippled mana utilization system and body returning to its original state through the use of a single skill, however, was unheard of.

'Haa...how troublesome. Looks like I won't be able to fight the Overlord any time soon.'

It was a shame, but it couldn't be helped. For the sake of his greater plans, this small bit of glory could easily be sacrificed.

At that time, the barrier between Damien and the Board of Directors dispersed. He was put face to face with the Demigods once more.

Without suspense, the words Damien was expecting to hear...

"Damien Void! You will be forced to fight an arena battle with the current King Bracket Overlord in the battle arena! This battle will commence without the usage of the dueling system, so death will be permanent! Due to special circumstances, you've been given this final chance. If you can defeat the Overlord, you'll follow through with our previously agreed punishment and return to the academy for the progress examination in 7 months. If you fail, however...you die!"

...didn't come out of the Director's mouth?

Damien's eyes widened as he stood stunned. Wasn't Hidden Death Valley extremely strict about the No Killing rule?! Wasn't that the reason why Julius and even Reavus Bloodlock didn't push him too much within the academy?!

A rule that could easily frighten those pompously arrogant profligate sons of rich parents into submission...

Was being broken so easily?!

Whether it was his eyes or his ears, he couldn't believe them at all!

It was only Silcerin's especially bitter expression that cued Damien in on the fact that the Director's words weren't false.

Seeing the stunned look on Damien's face, the Director cracked a small grin. "What'd I tell you? This much is easy for me."

Damien shook off his surprise and wryly smiled. "I guess it's wrong of me to underestimate Hidden Death Valley's ruler."

"That's right! But kid, you need to be especially careful during the coming battle. The King Bracket Overlord...is not a simple character at all.

Damien's eyes narrowed as he listened. He glanced around the room, catching various glances of gloating or pity from the surrounding Demigods.

'I see...they agreed to this punishment because they don't think I have even a single percentage of a chance to succeed...well, that's fine...'

'Whether he's an ant or a God, I'll crush him all the same.'

Chapter 714 Overlord [6]

The day passed quickly. That night, Damien had no reason to return to the battle arena. His win streak had already been completed and regardless of the circumstance, he would fight the Overlord tomorrow.

Instead, he spent the day cooped up in the safety of his own home.

There were two things for him to do.

Firstly, he submerged himself in thought and made some preliminary plans for his expedition into the warzone. Even if he couldn't properly plot out scenarios until he was briefed in 2 days, he could at least mentally prepare himself for things to go wrong.

Secondly, he studied his opponent. Having a connection with someone with status like the Director's came with more than just a few benefits. One of these was his ability to gather information that others didn't have access to.



'Sheesh, every time I feel how easy life would be with a backer, it makes me wonder if I should just cave and join one of those major influences. Haha, how nice would that be.' Damien thought to himself.

If it was already this easy with a mere connection, how easy would it be if he had an entire Holy Land's resources and backing? There was no doubt he'd reach the extreme peak of 4th class in just a year with ease.

Nevertheless, gaining this backing came with its own problems. And with Damien's personality, him being thrown into the political game between major clans would be a disaster for whoever was backing him.

The reason he could act so freely and offend people as he pleased was because he was a wanderer. More than that, the reason he could do so without worry was because his family was safe in the Human Domain.

He'd entered the Divine Realm through an Abyssal Corridor, after all. Not only was this method unconventional, it was wholly impossible for anyone else. His tracks started and ended in the Dawn World.

'Aside from that, this guy is really something. Ranked top 50 in Heaven's List, top 100 on the Dimensional Leaderboard, has connections with people from almost all the prominent Holy Lands and Demigod influences...'

'And most of all, he's a wanderer like me.'

Damien smiled in admiration as he read more about his opponent. With the Director's reach, he was able to put together a profile so detailed that it was scary.

'Hm? A spatial affinity? Space and wind, huh, how interesting...'

Damien had met plenty of spatial users in the past, but never one on the same level as him. Whether it was Tian Yang or Kurt Galloway, they were both Demigods, supreme existence with a grasp on space that he couldn't even imagine.

But...

His abilities remained special regardless.

Even after meeting Leona, another Celestial, this fact remained true.

In fact, despite the rarity of the spatial affinity, the common populace didn't put much stock into it. It was widely believed that Space Laws were weak and secondary unless one could reach untold heights with them and flip that standard.

Damien's usage of spatial abilities completely overturned this belief. Ever since he was a young fledgling, he'd been creating ways to make his spatial abilities more destructive.

Bladeless was the first ever example of this.

When it came to spatial abilities, Damien's methods were far more conceptual than the average user. He had an intrinsic connection with space that he could feel even before the existence of mana in his body, a level of elemental affinity that was rare even if the entire universe was taken into account.

Therefore, when it came to spatial practitioners that didn't far outstrip him in power...

Damien didn't worry at all.

'Hahaha, this guy is a level 350, just barely a high-level 4th class being. If he had any other affinity, I would probably suffer by his hands. Even if I won in the end, I would still lose at least two or three limbs in the process.'

His next opponent wouldn't be like Bianca. He was battle-hardened, but he was also unrestrained. He tasted the benefits of being a wanderer and used Hidden Death Valley as a field to gain the resources he couldn't get without backing.

'Except, you're still being suppressed, huh.'

This man, the man named Leon Holfort, was definitely capable of reaching the Emperor Bracket. The only reason he remained as the King Bracket Overlord was hidden suppression.

'Whether it's you deciding not to poke the hornet's nest or them actively suppressing you, it still stands true that you'll never stand equal to them. What a shame...'

If he had the willpower to fight his fate, he would've been a perfect soldier. With his power, he could've earned the academy's backing easily, becoming a genius who could stand on par with those Emperors and Paragons in terms of both status and power.

Damien was the perfect example. He was still relatively weak in the eyes of others, but he still garnered the Director's attention. Not only was this because of his talent, but also because of his defiance and willpower.

If he never stood against the Bloodlock Clan, how would his name have made its way to the Director's ears in the first place?

And if he didn't have the balls to stand against the Bloodlock Clan, would the Director have ever considered him as a candidate to carry out his special mission?

Damien relaxed in bed and closed his eyes, turning off the holographic screen hovering before him.

'You should be sorry, Leon...unfortunately, I won't be able to let you off easy tomorrow.'

The difficult fight that should've taken place, Damien didn't think he could entertain it.

Because he wanted to show Leon something.

To this fellow spatial practitioner, he wanted to show what it meant to be strong.

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The next day, the battle arena crowd was met with a surprise.

All matches were canceled. A major event was taking place.

Someone was challenging the King Bracket Overlord.

In the past 1,000 years, this type of challenge had only taken place four times, and every single one of these four times ended in a brutal loss for the challenger.

Knowing this, the arena crowd was even more flabbergasted by the additional piece of news they heard.

Due to a ruling from the Board of Directors, this fight would take place without the dueling system's protection.

In essence, it would be a true life or death battle.

With this news came word of Damien's feats over the past two weeks. His rapid rise through the ranks, his domineering entry into the battle arena, and even his "killing" of Bianca became common knowledge to all, leading them to wonder why he was even alive to fight this battle.

The fact that he was given a chance at redemption after breaking the academy's most sacred rule was madness to them.

Zara walked among the crowd and listened to these stories. For the past almost two months, she'd been far too enveloped in her training to pay a single lick of attention to the outside world. She'd been rapidly consolidating her strength and improving on her Shadow Laws, learning to separate them into light and darkness to exponentially grow in power.

It wasn't a coincidence that she exited her intense training today. Damien called her out beforehand, telling her that something fun was taking place.

Besides inviting her to watch his battle, he also did so for the purpose of inviting her to the warzone with him. He hadn't had the chance to contact her recently, after all.

As she walked into the arena, Zara felt a wry smile surfacing her face.

Judging by the words of these geniuses, her Damien had been causing trouble again...a great deal of it.

The number of geniuses congregating in the arena was massive. By the time noon arrived, the stands were filled with millions upon millions of them.

And walking into the arena were two.

A purple-eyed man with jade white skin, a lean yet perfectly muscled build, and a domineering aura, and a robust man with glistening green eyes and tanned skin, his aura not losing out to his opponent in the slightest.

Crackle!

As they met in the middle of the arena floor, their aura fought for supremacy, their gazes locked on each other.

Unlike other arena battles, this one was real.

There was a chance that only one of them would exit the arena tonight.

And neither of them planned to be the one who stayed.

Chapter 715 Overlord [7]

"Today's battle is one for the history books! On the right, we have our battle arena's rising star, Damien Void! And on the left, the King Bracket's Overlord, the Battle Arena Champion who hadn't lost a single battle in the past 20 years...Leon Holfort!"

The announcer's words caused a wave of raucous cheers to emanate from the crowd. Even disregarding the connotations of this battle, just the fact that these two powerhouses were going to fight in the ring was enough to put them on the edge of their seats.

The arena looked different today. Overnight, the previously 10,000-kilometer-wide arena stage had been expanded multiple times over, giving the two contestants an insane amount of ground on which they could battle.

This was only possible because the battle arena existed in an area similar to a Dimensional Cage. Due to its relative isolation from the outside world, it could be expanded and retracted as needed for the ongoing battle's convenience.

Usually, the arena stage didn't change at all. Even when the weakest 2nd and 3rd class geniuses fought, they did so with 10,000 kilometers of empty land surrounding them.

Only in a situation like this, when two contestants with Emperor level strength fought, would the expansion function be utilized.

Despite the announcer's hot-blooded words, neither of the men in the arena moved an inch. They stood sizing each other up, competing with their auras and trying to gauge their opponent's strength.

Damien wasn't the only one who was given information. Leon was both given information on Damien and a strict warning never to underestimate his enemy.



Because his current challenger, despite his relatively lower level, would be far more difficult to face than any who came before him.

παῖδα-ῥοῦ | ·κόμ The crowd in the coliseum today was also much different than usual. Aside from the regular geniuses, many esteemed personas had come to witness the showdown.

Whether it was the Paragons present at the academy, other Emperor-level geniuses that hadn't yet reached this level, or even High Elders and Supreme Elders of the influence, none of them wanted to miss out on such a showing.

And in the air above, concealed from the perception of all those present, were thirteen more spectators.

The Director smiled as he gazed down upon the arena. He really had to wonder what this rising star would show him today.

And aside from Silcerin, who was wearing a cold and haughty expression, the rest of the Zodiacs looked indifferent.

It was true that Damien's situation interested them. It wasn't just because of the Director's apparent interest in the young genius, but also due to the feats they discovered when they checked his background.

A man who'd appeared from thin air, a man who the universe had no record of...this man managed to make his way to the peak of the younger generation within a mere year of his first appearance.

This kind of talent was unheard of. It was natural for them to be interested.

But at the same time, even disregarding the Director's influence, they didn't put much stock into him yet.

Geniuses rose and fell like drifting clouds. There was a high likelihood that Damien would die in battle, whether that be today or when he went to war in the coming days.

It was still unknown whether he'd be cannon fodder or if he'd rise from the rubble, but only time would tell.

If he came back from the warfront alive, then...

Many people eagerly waited for the fight to start. Many bets were placed on both contenders, leading the atmosphere to heighten even more.

And when the crowd reached the peak of its excitement...

"Battle: Start!"

The announcer's words rang out like a bolt of lightning. Immediately, Leon teleported tens of kilometers away and waved his hand through the air.

'Spatial Windstorm!'

His mana raged and formed a vortex of chaotic spatial winds. This vortex flashed through space, never moving in a linear path as it somehow reached Damien in an instant.

And in response, Damien...

Grinned.

"Dominion."

Voom!

An invisible wave of power spread from his body and encapsulated the surrounding ten thousand kilometers, space rippled and rocked like peaceful waves crawling up a beach. Immediately, Leon's spatial power was dispersed.

As for the remaining tornado, why did Damien have to be afraid of some heavy winds?

It passed through his body as if it didn't exist at all.

Damien looked up, gazing directly into his opponent's eyes.

"If it were a battle of anything else, perhaps my loss would be set. But if you want to compete in Space Laws..."

"Under Divinity, there is no one capable of stopping me."

Space solidified.

The Space-Time River materialized above Damien's head, glimmering with iridescent blue starlight.

"Warp."

Space twisted. The entire arena turned into a chaotic mess. The skies became the earth, the earth became walls, the walls became interweaving branches that spanned dozens of kilometers, and those branches transformed back into the sky.

Within the Space-Time River Domain, Damien was a God.

Leon gritted his teeth and backed away. Despite the distance he made, he found himself trapped in Damien's terrifying spatial cage.

Leon's spatial mana emanated from his body in waves. He dispelled a portion of the spatial confusion taking place around him and regained his bearings. At the same time, his eyes hardened as he looked at Damien who was now floating in the air.

To compete in Space Laws, this had been his intent since the start.

Space Laws were the core of his being. They were the reason he was able to stand on par with the greatest geniuses of the era. If it was space, he wouldn't lose to anyone!

His body turned into a blur as he flashed across the distorted terrain. Despite his senses being confused, he used instinct alone to traverse the spatial layers and find Damien.

But if he could do it, why couldn't Damien?

Bang!

A fist appeared from nothingness and slammed into Leon's face, pushing him back. Damien appeared from within the spatial layers and grinned.

"You can do more than this, right?"

"Spatial Collapse!" Leon yelled without responding. His hand clenched into a fist and slammed through space, causing it to shatter into countless fragments!

A small hole was created, allowing the chaotic void to consume space itself. In the area around Leon, Damien's spatial confusion lost its effect.

"Damn, I knew that one was too mainstream. I bet every spatial practitioner has their own spatial collapse..." Damien lamented.

"Since you've shown me yours, I'll show you mine as well!"

'Void Sword Art Fourth Form: Spatial Collapse'

Mirage appeared in Damien's hand as he slammed it downwards. Spatial mana raged, clouding the surrounding space.

And when Mirage reached the end of its arc...

Bang!

Space shattered on a massive scale. Thousands of kilometers were enveloped in darkness as the chaotic void took prominence over space. The black hole that formed swirled furiously, emitting a terrifying suction force that could be felt even outside the arena barrier!

'This...!' Leon gasped in shock. The scale and power of Damien's collapse far outstripped his. It was to a level where he couldn't even call himself inferior, as that term wasn't nearly strong enough.

It wasn't just due to Damien's Space Law comprehension. Mirage was a sword of space, a sword that not only had its own spatial abilities, but also the inherited comprehension from its previous master.

When it worked together with Damien to showcase the collapse tied to his sword art, the results were devastating.

Small spatial tears opened up all around the black hole as it furiously sucked anything nearby into its maws. Leon found himself riddled with small cuts in an instant as he moved rapidly to dodge the intrusion of these tears.

But would Damien let him continue?

'Dimension Shift'

The dimension itself split in two. The world turned grey as it split horizontally into two pieces, trapping Leon's upper and lower body in each of them respectively.

'What is this?!' Leon exclaimed in astonishment. This level of spatial control that even split the dimension they existed in far outstripped his understanding of space.

Space...was weak.

At least that's what he told himself.

Other than collapse and a few other minor abilities, Leon couldn't find any offensive merit in his Spatial Law comprehension if he didn't combine it with his Wind Laws.

He took pride in his element because even without offense, the defensive and supportive capabilities in space far outstripped its competitors. It was also an especially rare element, so the element of surprise was always on his side in battle against enemies who didn't know him.

When Damien used space, he threw common sense out the window. He turned this supportive element into an intense offense that couldn't be escaped regardless of how hard one tried!

And if they didn't have a spatial affinity to help them counter his onslaught...

Then any opponent he faced was guaranteed to die!

Chapter 716 Overlord [8]



As the battle commenced, the domineering showing only became more and more intense. Every minute that passed led to another tear in space, another array of shattered spatial fragments fluttering to the ground, and another mind-breaking spatial phenomenon that those in the crowd simply couldn't comprehend.

What...was this?

Even as they tried to watch the battle, it became difficult to concentrate. The eyes of some weaker geniuses began to bleed just by looking at the ongoing events.

Spatial confusion was incredibly powerful. Against someone who couldn't use the spatial layers as a medium for their senses, this kind of pseudo-illusion was deadly.

Their awareness would be twisted and mutilated until their spiritual world shattered, their five senses would be confused to the point of becoming utterly useless, unless one had the power to brute force their way through the confusion or the skill to continue fighting through instinct alone, they would be completely incapacitated by this single move!

"How...how are we supposed to fight against those monsters?" a young genius muttered. His spirit was immediately shattered upon witnessing the battle.

And he wasn't the only one. Many felt the same pressure, the same inferiority as they gazed upon what true strength looked like.

But they were a minority. Those who could join Hidden Death Valley...were never normal characters.

The dark elf Damien met when he first entered the King Bracket, Alec, watched the battle with shining eyes.

He'd learned his lesson previously. Weakness didn't stem from the body, and it didn't stem from talent. Regardless of the circumstances of one's birth, becoming a powerhouse was only a matter of effort.

This was the system set in place by the universe. No matter how unfair life was, as long as one had perseverance and a bit of luck, they'd reach the goals they always dreamed of.

Weakness stemmed from the mind. A cowardly or defeatist mentality such as the one possessed by many King Bracket contenders before Damien's arrival, this was the true difference between a genius and an ant.

This battle was proof. It was proof that even someone with no status or power to his name in the slightest could rise and become a shining star admired by all.

One day...one day he would become like that too.

Alec now had the mentality to do so.

And just like the previous young genius, he wasn't alone. His belief was shared by many, his drive was shared by many. An atmosphere of fiery determination seemed to envelop the stands as the gathered crowd watched the battle.

But this battle...was only just beginning.

Damien wouldn't let it end until he'd engraved it into Leon's mind.

A spatial practitioner was born to dominate. Becoming content in his role as an Overlord was pathetic.

If he was going to share Damien's elemental affinity, then he should have the spirit to match as well.

Damien's arms waved through the air like he was conducting an orchestra. The dimension was torn into pieces and remolded, countless Dimensional Cages stacked on each other like a Russian nesting doll, attacks from the Void Sword Art populated the air like clouds in their number.

Tens of thousands of kilometers of space were shattered and remolded. The arena floor was like a toy that Damien could play with as he pleased, even if the destruction wasn't at the same level as an attack like Worldbreaker, the connotation behind his current showing was far greater.

'He was hiding his power.' Leon surmised. The report he'd read didn't state anything like this. As he found himself trapped and barraged from every side, forced to use his strong physical body and pure level of existence to dodge and block the incoming attacks, he realized how naive he'd been to think Damien was as simple as the report stated.

This man was a monster. There was no other way to describe him.

'But if he's a monster...then that's all the better for me.'

Leon's mindset changed the instant the Space-Time River appeared. That mystical materialization was unlike anything he'd ever seen before, and just a single glance at its form made him feel countless sparks of insight forming in his mind.

Leon was the Overlord. It was his job to stop anyone from reaching the Emperor Bracket. Especially in this battle, he knew that many things were riding on his win.

But before he was an Overlord, he was a wanderer. He was a man who rose to prominence with nothing but his own determination supporting him. He was someone who would use any resource at his disposal to grow stronger,

What he saw in Damien was no longer an opponent he had to defeat, but instead a rival who he could battle and learn from to grow.

The instant his mindset changed, the entire meaning of the duel changed as well. Damien's attacks no longer looked like a rampant and domineering barrage, but instead a lesson.

He was trying to teach Leon.

Space wasn't weak.

Only its users were weak.

If one utilized space to its maximum potential...

'Void Sword Art Sixth Form: Worldbreaker'

It would become a monstrous ability that none could contend with.

The arena exploded once more. With space above and the earth below, Damien's essence pervaded all things and controlled them into destruction.

But at this point, Leon could no longer enjoy the magnificent scene.

'Ah, but I don't want it to end like this...'

Being a wanderer had just as many disadvantages as it did benefits. In Leon's case, this was mainly showcased in his lack of resources and proper training.

Without these two things, he encountered the same problem as Damien. He grew without learning to properly utilize his strength.

His mana capacity was weak. He'd only been able to expand it to 70,000 through the use of many treasures he'd gained through his journeys and through his years working in Death Emperor Star.

Before he entered the academy, he'd been stuck at a mere 40,000 units of mana regardless of how he tried to grow.

Because, unlike Damien, he didn't have the Devour ability to support him.

'...I'm sorry, but I can't let this battle end here.'

His apology wasn't to Damien, nor was it to anyone watching from the crowd.

He was apologizing to his own spirit, because the action he was about to take went against every bit of morality in his bones.

"You must kill him. Even if you don't have the ability to do it yourself, you still have to do it." A voice resounded in his ears.

It was a memory from just minutes before he entered the arena floor.

"If you find yourself in a situation where you're about to lose, take this pill. You will gain power you've never felt before. Use it to destroy him thoroughly!"

Leon knew what they wanted from him. He was being used by the major clans to do their dirty work again.

But he had no plans to use the pill. He at least had some minor protection in Hidden Death Valley, so even if he denied the orders given to him, he wouldn't face many repercussions.

Yet, the situation had changed.

He wasn't using the pill for the sake of others, no, he was using it so he could continue this battle, so he could learn the things he'd sought for years on end.

Leon hardened his gaze and took the dark red pill out of his spatial ring.

And without hesitation, he swallowed it into his body.

Chapter 717 Overlord [9]

Leon's body began changing immediately after he took the pill.

His shoulders broadened, his height grew by almost two feet, and his skin turned a charred black color. His blood vessels crystallized and broke through the frame of his body, manifesting as red magma-like lines on the surface of his skin.

"AHHHHH!" Leon roared. The pain he felt as he transformed was intense. Rampaging mana filled his body and entered the mysterious pocket within, enhancing even his base abilities by a large portion.

This type of pill could only be created by a Demigod. After all, it forcefully raised the level of one's soul as well as their body.

Leon opened his eyes a mere second later. Their previous color was gone, replaced by the bloody color that overtook the rest of his body. Just by looking at his figure, one could easily guess the type of burden he placed on himself.

But even after taking the pill, he didn't immediately move. Leon stayed in place and spread his awareness, feeling the space around him and trying to understand it.

"HERE!"

His fist punched out with immense force. Reddish-silver spatial mana surrounded his fist, impacting a gashed portion of space left by Bladeless and shattering it.

This wasn't a shattering of space, but a shattering of Damien's spatial mana that allowed the gash to continue existing.

The soul was a strange thing that was completely incomprehensible to those without Divinity. It was a container and a basis of life, claiming its place as the most important part of a sentient being.



And when the soul grew in capability, it wasn't just abilities that got strengthened, but comprehension as well.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Leon's fists were like a flurry of light as they punched out thousands of times every second. The reddish-silver spatial mana around his body became more and more pronounced with every second.

As for Damien who Leon was supposed to be fighting, he didn't even consider moving in for a killing blow.

A smile surfaced on his face. 'This crazy fucker. Doesn't he know he's going to cripple himself by doing that? Well, I can't say I don't admire his passion.'

As it turned out, Damien was wrong about Leon. The King Bracket Overlord wasn't some weak-minded fool who caved to the pressure of those major influences.

Instead, he was an insane person, an insane genius who knew how to bide his time and wait.

When he was strong enough, he would show everyone what it meant to be powerful, and he wouldn't need anyone's help to do it.

Leon was exactly the type of genius Damien admired the most. He was willing to sacrifice even himself to grow while also having the mind to not act prematurely.

'Unfortunately, I'm not as patient as you. But if you're going to such lengths for the sake of growth, I can't look down on you, can I?'

Damien suddenly paused his attack. Leon didn't have too much time left in this state, and something as basic as Bladeless wouldn't do anything for his growth.

It was better to show him something more intrinsic.

'Restructure.'

'Conceal.'

'Expand.'

Spacetime Essence swirled around Damien's body and spread through the Space-Time River Domain. Suddenly, the warped domain began to change.

The earth that had been completely destroyed by Worldbreaker repaired itself, the debris in the air moving in reverse as it returned to its rightful place. The skies unbent and returned to normal as well, with Damien's spatial confusion being removed from the atmosphere.

At the same time, countless Dimensional Cages formed on top of each other and created a completely isolated dimension from the Real Plane.

Space seemingly returned to normal. The two fighters suddenly disappeared from the arena, and at the same time, the arena returned to its unblemished state.

It was like the ongoing battle never took place at all.

And this change happened in an instant. please visit

Many couldn't process it.

As the crowd tried to understand what was happening, Damien's mana continued to move and execute his commands.

The Dimensional Cage expanded into a Plane of its own. Here, Damien was free to use his power as he pleased.

'Compress.'

'Burst.'

'Rupture.'

In front of Leon's confused eyes, the space around him compressed to a point, looking like a small sun emitting beams as it tried to stay connected to reality.

The sun exploded. Space and time were thrown into chaos as the Void swallowed all things. Five Dimensional Cages collapsed at once, slightly exposing the Plane to the outside world.

But Damien fixed that issue immediately.

At the same time, the space that was being consumed by the void ruptured and formed a gash thousands of kilometers long. Rending space and time, nearly tearing apart the fabric of reality.

"Without the presence of space, how could life exist? Without the presence of space, where would time flow? Without the presence of space, how can reality manifest?" Damien spoke.

Leon looked at him in wonder. His power...truly couldn't accomplish anything close to this.

"Space is an extremely powerful force. Controlling it means controlling the universe. Look past the conventional boundaries placed upon the element by fools who know no better and allow your mind to truly connect with space. Only through this will you be able to advance past 4th class and step into the realm of Divinity."

Damien spoke with surety. Even if he was further from Divinity than Leon, he'd been in contact with the Divine far more frequently.

In fact, he'd even devoured a Demigod.

The Fifth Primal Sovereign's essence was wasted as it protected Damien on his journey through the Abyssal Corridor, but the Space Beast's memories were still fresh in his head even a year after the battle.

He couldn't comprehend most of the mysteries present in those memories, but he devoured anything he could.

Not only did his intrinsic control of space increase to the point where he was almost like a Space Beast himself in the way space actively moved to aid him, but he also gained a small understanding of what Divinity truly meant.

It wasn't just a rank-up, and it wasn't just a matter of "shedding the mortal coil."

Achieving Divinity was a complete restructuring of one's being, a change that surpassed all others.

Looking at Leon, Damien could feel the talent the genius had. He wasn't at a level where he could interfere with the dimension, but he definitely had more untapped potential that couldn't manifest due to his circumstances.

Now that Damien was here, how could he allow that situation to continue?

He would never forsake a fellow spatial practitioner who was worthy of his respect.

"Come. Ignore everything else and meet my Space Laws with yours. We'll see how much you can gain."

Leon's dazed expression shifted immediately. A fiery light converged in his eyes. Reddish-silver spatial mana flared around his body.

"Yes!"

He burst forth with unholy speed. The mana around his body shifted gradually from what it was at the start of the battle.

He could see Damien's intentions clearly now, and he had no plans to waste this opportunity.

Perhaps he'd be crippled after this battle, perhaps he'd never be able to improve again...

But before he reached that point, he'd reach a level that he could've never imagined before today!

Chapter 718 Overlord [10]

Zap!

Xiu! Xiu! Xiu!

Two figures rapidly vanished and reappeared from existence, melding into the spatial layers and altering their structure as they competed in a battle of Laws.

Space became an abstract concept under their rule. Its base structure was altered and restructured until it became a completely different existence.

In the first half hour, Leon could do nothing but dodge and desperately block Damien's attacks. But as time passed, he became acclimated to the rate of attack and the concepts within, growing in comprehension by the second.

By the time an hour passed, he was fighting equally with Damien. When 90 minutes flew by, he was even suppressing the purple-eyed genius to an extent.

Damien grinned. 'Right, this is how it should be. Let's up the difficulty a bit.'

At first, Damien had only been using basic Space Laws, the same breed of law that Leon could control. But now that Leon had a basic grasp on his level, doing this was pointless.

Dimensional Magic began to show its might. A higher level of Space Laws than Leon could utilize at the moment, and a level he likely wouldn't be able to touch until he changed his class again and ascended.

But even with this, Damien was only fighting equal to Leon. The more the latter's comprehension increased, the better he was able to use his actual strength.

The only thing that weakened Leon was his law comprehension. At the end of the day, he was a Level 350 being. And not just that, he was a Level 350 being who forcefully raised his power through that mysterious pill.

Damien didn't have even a slight chance of winning against Leon in this state.

But Leon also didn't desire victory. The respect he had for Damien in his heart had reached an insurmountable level.

He didn't care that Damien was younger and weaker than him, he didn't care that Damien had offended powers he always paid attention to avoid.

Damien was the closest thing to a teacher he'd ever had.



Leon smiled as he continued to fight. His fists bled every time they made impact with Damien's, his body felt on the verge of breaking.

His mind, however, was free. His comprehension broke through time and time again, putting him in a state of bliss.

The sounds of battle became a heavenly sermon in his ears. Space hugged him and held him tight, embracing him like a mother to her child.

He could feel it. He could feel the concepts of space that Damien showed him, and he could finally understand what Damien meant by his previous words.

The constraints he felt that space had, these constraints were defined by people who couldn't even use the element! How stupid was he to follow their notions?!

If he could continue this battle for just another hour, he knew he would take a qualitative leap in power.

Yet...he didn't have time.

It had now been two hours since he began learning from Damien.

The red pill wore off an hour ago, but Leon forcefully expanded his mana and maintained its effects as long as possible.

Now that another hour had passed, it was impossible for him to maintain that state.

His body wrinkled. The robustness brought by the pill faded away, the crystalline blood vessels on his skin shattered, and he withered into a corpse-like state.

He coughed out a mouthful of blood and crumpled to the floor.

Damien's fist paused abruptly before it made contact with Leon. The forceful stop shattered the bones in Damien's arm, but he didn't care.

He flashed behind Leon and supported his body.

"So? How did it feel?" He asked teasingly.

"Ha...haha...it felt...amazing..." Leon responded through rough and blood-filled breaths.

"Was it worth sacrificing everything for?" Damien asked again.

"..." Leon thought for a moment. The consequences of his actions finally set in. please visit

Tears fell quietly from his eyes.

"No...no it wasn't. I wish...I could've fought for longer..."

Damien was in disbelief, and he ended up involuntarily smiling. "You crazy bastard. You aren't even thinking about your future, huh."

"With the way I was...I didn't have a future to think about...but now..."

Leon's mentality might've been strong, but he still submitted to the major clans. Whether it was a subconscious decision or a submission to strength, it was still true that he did it.

When he looked at Damien, he saw someone who never submitted regardless of circumstance. He fought the Bloodlock Clan and taunted them openly, he spoke brazenly to a Demogod like Silcerin to the point where the Zodiac even gave Leon the red pill to kill him thoroughly.

And even though these actions would be considered stupid or reckless by others, it didn't look that way to Leon.

After all, wasn't Damien standing here completely fine?

Obviously, he'd gained a certain confidence from his actions and strength, and he acted based on that confidence.

Respect was earned, not given.

Leon's mentality went through a sudden change during this battle. Even if he lived on as a cripple, he didn't plan to forsake reality.

Even if he was powerless, he wouldn't bend to anyone.

[Heal]

A greenish-white light suddenly wrapped around his body. It was warm and contained the essence of something he'd never felt before.

Somehow, the injuries on his body began to recede.

"This ability is a gift given to me by a great senior. He was a hero of his generation, and someone that should've gone down in the history books. Unfortunately, his name was forgotten with time, and his sacrifice went unpraised." Damien said with a sigh.

"Even if I can't feel it, I'm sure this ability contains a portion of his will. It's so mystical, how could it not?"

"W-what...?" Leon exclaimed in disbelief.

"Shut up already. Even if I can heal you, you still overexerted yourself like crazy. If you don't rest and properly digest the comprehension you gained from this battle, there would've been no point in having it at all."

Leon's eyes remained wide. He was flabbergasted, discombobulated even. The question remained in his head, and inadvertently left his mouth.

"Why?"

Damien smiled. "Why, huh...is it not enough that I don't want to see the loss of a talented spatial practitioner like you? There aren't many of us in this universe, you know. The small portion of us that do exist should stick together, don't you think?"

Leon shook his head wryly and smiled. Really, he couldn't comprehend this young guy.

His reputation preceded him, labeling him a demon. Just as he was respected, he was immensely feared.

But as it turned out, he wasn't such a bad person. As long as one didn't offend him, that is.

Leon felt his eyelids closing on their own. They were too heavy for him to keep up.

And as he fell into unconsciousness, the final sight that entered his eyes was the beautiful scene of the entire spatial scenery they'd created dissipating into the air.

It was truly art. It was art that only a spatial practitioner could appreciate.

That art faded from existence, and shimmering rays of sunlight replaced it.

But Leon didn't mind.

Just the fact that he'd been able to witness it...

Meant that he was a far greater person than he was before.

Chapter 719 Calypto [1]

Damien and Leon reappeared on the arena floor, one standing tall and the other collapsed unconscious.

And the crowd reaction was...mild.

After all, a majority of the fight had taken place outside of their reach. How was the crowd supposed to react when they didn't even understand what took place?

More than anything else, confusion ran rampant amongst them. Some began angrily shouting demanding their bet money returned due to the nature of the fight.

The magisterial showdown they'd been watching suddenly vanished, and the results came about hours later while they sat in confusion. This was more than just being blue-balled!

Those people who bet on Leon's win were absolutely furious. A majority of them had bet an insane amount of contribution points on the previous Overlord, considering his indelible record.

Losing those points was one thing, but losing them without even knowing how was another!

Their protests were loud and violent. Many began clashing against the arena barrier in protest, causing a scene amongst the crowd.

But the announcer disregarded their voices.

"Winner: Damien Void! The rising star has defeated the Overlord and officially earned his place in the academy! The question is...will he become the new Overlord, or will he instead choose to become an Emperor?!" He yelled with the same vigor as always.

The announcer was just as confused as anyone else, but it wasn't his job to complain. He knew the results of the battle were valid regardless of whether he'd actually seen it or not.

After all, he'd received a mental transmission from an esteemed figure that he never should've had contact with in his lifetime.

In the air, separated from the masses below, thirteen figures stood. The Director smiled as he stood among them.

"Silcerin, did you enjoy the battle?" He asked.

Silcerin glared into the arena with red eyes. He couldn't believe it! Even after Leon took the Blood Bursting Pill, he refused to show his full strength! By the time he started fighting to his full capacity, the pill's duration was already long gone, leading to his easy defeat.

He truly couldn't believe it. To give Leon the Blood Bursting Pill was already an extreme affront to the academy's rules. He'd only done so to curry favor with the Bloodlock Clan.

But now that Damien had come out victorious, everything he did was in vain! The only thing he earned himself was the ire of those around him.

As well as...



"You should already be aware, no? Not only did you attempt to kill a rising genius of the academy, but you also almost crippled another. Aside from that, you did so in an attempt to spread the influence of another clan within the academy's grounds. For your crimes, you will spend the next two years in the Abyssal Prison for disregarding the academy's rules."

The Director's words were like a bolt of lightning. Silcerin had long been expecting punishment. Even if he succeeded in killing Damien, he was still bound to be punished.

However, he didn't expect it to be so harsh! The Abyssal Prison was Hidden Death Valley's most terrifying prison. It was built into the ground thousands of kilometers below the surface, a place where Death Emperor Star's death energy thrived to the point where even Demigods would be harmed.

If Silcerin was sent to the Abyssal Prison, he'd essentially be crippled. Especially with a two-year sentence, the version of him that exited the prison wouldn't be anywhere near his current self!

"Director, you can't do this! I am one of the Thirteen Zodiacs! How could you sacrifice me for a mere brat?! I will—"

"Enough!"

The Director's cold voice forced Silcerin to freeze. He felt an enormous pressure envelop him, limiting his every movement.

The pressure...was predatory. Silcerin felt like he'd been thrown into a freezing pit, the maws of a terrifying beast slowly encapsulating him.

The Zodiac Killer, no, it was more apt to call him the Zodiac Devourer. There was a good reason why the Director was feared by the other Zodiacs.

Silcerin fell silent immediately, but in his mind, he was raging.please visit

'Damien Void! This is all your fault! I swear upon my family name, when I exit my punishment, I will personally seek you out and kill you!'

"Director, reconsider your decision! I am the academy's connection to the Bloodlock Clan. If you imprison me, the clan will definitely—"

In the next instant, Silcerin's body disappeared from the sky.

Without suspense, he'd been transported to and trapped in the Abyssal Prison.

The Director didn't give him a single chance to speak.

Why would he? The Director didn't care at all about what Silcerin had to say. From the way he spoke, he was obviously going to use the Bloodlock Clan's influence to buy his freedom.

But the Bloodlock Clan had no power in the academy.

'Immortal Blood Asura? If that old fart wants to try me, let him come.' The Director scoffed.

He swept his gaze across the other 11 Zodiacs. "Any objections?"

He was immediately met with an array of shaken heads. How could they dare object to his decision?

Besides, they had no reason to. Unlike Silcerin, none of the rest had ties to the Bloodlock Clan. They had no reason to care for a fate he brought upon himself.

Instead, their attention was fully focused on Damien. Even if he hadn't beaten Leon in a true duel of strength, the power he showed in the Dimensional Cage wasn't light. The conceptual level of his Law usage was astounding.

Each and every one of them had already forgotten about Silcerin's matter. In their minds, recruiting Damien into their factions was far more important.

The Director smiled when he saw them like this. 'Recruit him? Ha, I'd like to see you try. That kid won't bend to anyone, even if it's me.'

Damien's stubbornness was one of the first things the Director noticed when he first started investigating the young genius.

If he wanted to, Damien could've become a supreme genius of Fallen Star Holy Land upon meeting Atticus in Dawn World, even replacing the latter as the Holy Land's Holy Son.

But he chose not to.

If even a peak Holy Land influence couldn't move him, how could they?

Nevertheless, he didn't hate this characteristic. An untamed Damien was for the best.

After all...

'If any influence gets their hands on a genius of his caliber, it will break the delicate balance that's been created in recent times.'

The Director shook his head and stopped thinking about it. The Grand Heavens Boundary's matters were too twisted, only somewhat calm due to the Nox invasion.

In any case, Damien's personality made him the perfect mercenary. As long as one offered the right reward, he wouldn't hesitate to take the quest.

And that was exactly what the Director did.

'I look forward to seeing how you progress when you leave this birdcage, boy.'

With that final thought, the Director vanished from the sky. The remaining 11 Zodiacs followed immediately after him.

The only ones left in the area were those on the ground, those who remained none the wiser about the former presence of those Deities who once stood above them.

Chapter 720 Calypto [2]

A day went by after the Overlord battle in the arena.

During this time, Damien had to deal with a great deal of troublesome matters. The fame he acquired from the battle wasn't light, but many believed it was undeserved.

Still, he was able to refuse a majority of the duel requests that came his way. After all, his Heaven's List ranking skyrocketed into the top 20 after he defeated Leon.

Though their battle wasn't ranked, his feat was still recognized by the academy, and his ranking was manually adjusted to match it.

Aside from this, Damien also had to deal with his new standing.

The announcer's question at the end of the battle...

Naturally, he answered by becoming an Emperor. Why would he willingly put himself below those Holy Land geniuses?

If they were truly a bunch of pretentious brats who rigged the King Bracket to preserve the "sanctity" of the Emperor Bracket, he would thoroughly destroy them one by one and humble them.

Though, this was a matter for another time.

After acclimating himself to the various benefits he gained from becoming an Emperor, Damien went straight to his Star City residence and submerged himself in planning.

There were only a few hours left until he left Hidden Death Valley, after all.

'Zara agreed immediately when I mentioned the warfront...the academy must be suffocating for her.'

There were practitioners of all races on Death Emperor Star, including those from the Beast Races, but Zara never fit in with them.

Beasts who reached 4th class tended to embrace civilization, becoming no different from humans when they didn't utilize their beast forms.

But Zara wasn't like that.

Even though she maintained more human mannerisms and a civilized lifestyle, she never shunned her bestial heritage. Zara's nature was carnage, and in an environment like Hidden Death Valley where killing was disallowed, she was forced to suppress this nature.

The battlefield was her home.

'I guess we aren't much different in that aspect.' Damien thought with a wry smile. Though he enjoyed the comforts of Hidden Death Valley far more than Zara, he also clearly felt its restrictions.

With his new status especially, his presence became more defined. It felt like there were eyes on him at all times.

As someone who was used to moving uninhibited, this naturally didn't sit well with Damien.

'I didn't come here for Hidden Death Valley, I came for Death Emperor Star. Unfortunately, time isn't on my side. If I want to explore more of this mysterious and deadly world, I'll first need to amass more power and enhance my comprehension. Going to the battlefield is actually the perfect path for me to take if I want to boost my growth.'

Practical combat was just as important for digesting comprehension as it was for consolidating strength. Using an ability over and over again would ingrain it into one's mind and make using it almost instinctual. In the same way, the more one exercised their comprehension practically, the further it would deepen.

Damien smiled in anticipation. In 4 more hours, he'd finally get to experience the battlefield he'd been hearing about ever since he was a young genius on Apeiron.

He closed his eyes and didn't think further.

For now, he needed to rest his mind and achieve peak condition before his time came.

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4 hours was nothing. As Damien's strength grew, his perception of time changed as well. Days felt incredibly short, and months felt like they'd pass in a flash.

He tended to live on a day-by-day schedule, never giving himself a moment of rest. This was the only way he could stay grounded.



Because before he exited training to visit the duel arena, he didn't even realize a month and some had passed since he began his regimen. please visit

This was dangerous.

He had places to be, things to do, and a plethora of responsibilities on his plate. If he ever got too immersed in a task and faded into his natural perception of time, his perception of those responsibilities would also begin to fade.

He wanted to see Rose and Ruyue, he wanted to see Elena again now that he'd grown and rekindle their love. He didn't want to become a monster who disregarded these emotional matters as he became absorbed in training and time.

Currently, Damien stood in the central area of Hidden Death Valley, directly under the trench from which he first entered the academy. Zara stood next to him with a look of wonder on her face.

"Is it really that cool?" Damien asked with a smile.

Zara looked over at him with a frown. "How could it not be? Just look at it!"

Damien shrugged. He could understand where her marvel came from. After all, they were currently standing underneath a wonder of technology unlike anything they'd seen before.

It was a starship spanning countless tens of kilometers. It was shaped somewhat similarly to an aircraft carrier, but its design was much smoother. As it was built to withstand the chaotic starry sky, most of its facilities were located inside the ship instead of on its surface. Though, there was indeed a deck since 4th class beings could survive in the starry sky by using their mana as protection.

Its hull held a silver sheen from the beautiful metal that created it, and blue lines of mana snaked across its surface as it floated in the air. It was so stupidly futuristic that even Damien was somewhat surprised by its appearance.

Still, he could never be truly excited by starships. As someone who possessed transportation abilities far outstripping these devices, he could never appreciate the convenience that their invention brought to the masses.

But, he could definitely appreciate their weaponry.

Although the starship was floating, its isolation barrier wasn't active, allowing Damien's awareness to penetrate its surface. He could clearly see the various armaments lining the ship's interior.

As the two stood, their surroundings were slowly filled with people. Damien was given a special mission, sure, but this expedition didn't involve him alone.

A force of 5,000 students ranked from the 100s to the 10,000s on Heaven's List was also enlisted in this mission. These students had been through the Hell Hole's brutal training, and expeditions like this one were used by the academy to test their growth.

When all 5,000 finally arrived, the starship descended and gracefully landed on the ground.

A small portion of the ship's side slid apart and revealed its interior. From there, a massive and gruff man exited.

"Soldiers, board the ship!"

His words were succinct and without emotion. He was a commander in front of his troops, and he expected nothing from them other than his orders followed.

And just as he expected, the 5,000 geniuses immediately got into formation and boarded the starship in an orderly fashion.

Damien and Zara stood at the end of their line.

Boarding that starship would signal the start of another monumental chapter of their lives, their first introduction to war.

Damien couldn't tell whether he was excited or nervous, but he truly felt jittery now that the moment was upon him.

But...

He wasn't a coward. He refused to be one.

Even in front of this massive change, he refused to show fear.

He stepped forward.

And along with the rest of those accompanying him to Calypto, he confidently boarded the starship.