

Void 931

Chapter 931 Surface [1]

5 minutes ago, on Beast Emperor Star's surface.

At the same time that the Golden Dragon Emperor realized the extreme time constraint that their world's safety was under, he immediately relayed the news to multiple different areas.

Elena and Hedrick of course received the transmission, as well as the remaining royal children and the head of the Imperial Guard, a separate army that answered directly to the Emperor.

These important figures that could all make a difference in the current situation, for them, rather than false hope, understanding reality was far more beneficial.

Various decisions were made at once.

At the palace, the royal children dropped their wariness of each other in this time of threat and assembled the private forces they'd been raising for the succession war, creating a large army along with the Imperial Guard to face the Black Dragon Clan's main army that was storming the castle.

The clashes began instantly, and as they continued, both sides racked up countless casualties. At this point, the Black Dragon Clan didn't show any consideration for strategy.

Rather, they attacked without a care for life and death, purely using their bodies to create a path for the later forces to pass through.

Their goal was obvious. They were making their way towards the throne room as fast as possible, aiming for the Emperor himself.

After all, even if he couldn't move personally, he was the main supporting pillar of the entire Golden Dragon Clan. As long as they could capture or even kill him, they would have an automatic win.

As the battle continued in the castle, Hedrick took a more direct approach. He moved alone and returned to the Black Dragon Clan's base, where their Supreme and main leaders were situated.

Just as the Black Dragons aimed for the head, he would too.

And finally, Elena traversed the entirety of Beast Emperor Star for one purpose: finding and killing those from other forces who joined hands with the Black Dragon Clan to initiate this world-scale siege.

In the past 10 minutes, Elena had been working with both her Valhalla Army and the Golden Dragon Army that was placed under her command to eliminate the Territory Lords and capture their lesser minions to be used as slaves and cannon fodder as they continued their sieges.

In all honesty, Elena was moving with extreme efficiency and skill at the moment. She'd already led the two armies to eliminate a majority of the Territory Lords, and of the 6 that were left, 4 were still at a level that could be easily taken care of by the armies without her aid.

As for the last two...

"We can leave the 4 Dukes for later. For now, we need to concentrate all of our forces on the final two Lords. These two are from the Tyrant Clan and the Kunpeng Clan, two influences just a step worse than your Golden Dragon Clan," Elena spoke solemnly to her army.

"Diego will take the strongest soldiers from the Golden Dragon Army to defeat the Tyrant Clan troops, while Damon takes the strongest Valhalla Souls to do the same for the Kunpeng Clan. Any common soldiers should be sent around the world to provide relief to any victims that might've been missed. As for the Territory Lords..."

Elena's eyes hardened.

"I'll take them myself."

"Lady Elena, with your strength, it—" the soldier named Diego began.

"Don't question it," Elena interrupted.

"I will prevail. You do not need to worry about anything but your own job."

Diego furrowed his brows disapprovingly, but didn't say anything.

They hadn't known each other long, but Diego understood how competent of a general Elena was after following her during this period. While he was definitely worried about her safety, he couldn't question her decisions.

As the armies moved, they went over the details of the plan and created far more intricate strategies to initiate their assault and win with the least possible casualties.

And eventually, they made it to the far West of Beast Emperor Star. Here, in an area termed Terrorwind by the current Territory Lords, was where both of the enemy clans were located.

These two clans had specifically been saved for last by Elena, as with their combined forces, they far outstripped the rest of the Territory Lords.

The instant the armies entered enemy territory, they were assaulted by waves of nauseating heat.

'That must be from the Tyrant Clan.' Elena thought to herself, picturing the giant magma monsters that were the Tyrant Clan.

'I should be able to take one on by myself, but if they're together...'

Elena made the decision to fight both Territory Lords not out of some sort of chivalry, but due to pure selfishness.

The current circumstance had been incredibly beneficial for her. Equipped with the Genesis Bead, her leveling and comprehension speed far surpassed anything she'd felt before, and she was already approaching level 399.

She had no doubt she could face off against the weakest extreme peak masters with her current strength, however...I think you should take a look at

Her enemies weren't so simple.

Bang!

Bang!

Two clouds of dust rose into the air before Elena. One was dispersed in a massive wave of wind, while the other was directly incinerated into nothingness.

The figures of two men, one massive and the other quite lean, revealed themselves.

"So this is it! The infamous Golden Dragon Army has finally come!" The massive dark-skinned man among them exclaimed, his fists pumping with heat

"Let's get this over with quickly. I do not enjoy the thought of allying with you." The skinnier man responded bluntly.

Elena's eyes narrowed.

"Leave me! Spread out and find the enemy forces!" She ordered the army, her eyes never leaving the two men.

"So, you two are the Territory Lords I've been hearing so much about?" Elena asked.

She displayed confidence, but inwardly, she was wary of their every move.

Her enemies, however, didn't seem to share her seriousness.

"Hey, hey! Isn't this girl quite good?" The Tyrant Lord suddenly said, looking Elena up and down.

"Indeed. She is quite to my taste. After we finish her, we can compete on who gets to taste her first."

"Hey, girl! Are you still pure?"

Elena's face darkened.

"It seems you have no consideration for me at all, eh?" She sneered.

"Consideration? I can offer you some consideration. How about you come back with me tonight and I'll consider letting you stay alive as my slave maid?"

Elena's eyes were icy.

These two were definitely much stronger than she was.

Yet...

"You know, last time a man tried to talk to me like that, I cut his dick off."

...she wasn't someone who bowed to strength. Not back then, and absolutely not now.

She drew her sword, a beautiful thin blade that seemed as frail as a feather.

Flash!

Light blinded the two Territory Lords, and in the next instant...

'Illuminating Strikes.'

Shing! Shing! Shing! Shing!

Thousands of sword slashed stacked atop each other to form two extremely powerful strikes that even trumped the blinding flash in their light values.

And the target of these strikes?

Just slightly below the waists of the two men.

It was definitely a battle of life or death, but if she was going to say something so arrogant to trash-talk them beforehand...

Shouldn't she live up to her words before she killed them?

Chapter 932 Surface [2]

Clang!

Clang!

Two dull sounds rang out as the Tyrant and Kun Lords blocked her under-the-belt attacks.

"Girl, you're quite bold!" The Tyrant Lord exclaimed, his eyes turning red with fury.

"Haha, why shouldn't I be? Mutts should be sterilized."

"Mutts?" The Kun Lord repeated. "You dare call me a mutt?!"

He swept his hand through the air in a slightly feminine motion and summoned a fan, using it to control the winds around him.

At the same time, the Tyrant Lord slammed his fists together, evidently ready for battle.

Elena stared them down, trying to gauge their power.

'One is a speed-focused fighter, and the other has tyrannical strength. It'll be difficult to injure them if I don't go all out from the start.'

Elena immediately formulated a strategy and implemented it.

She targeted the Tyrant Lord first. Her body flashed behind his and her sword swung out fiercely. Fluctuations of eerie Life Laws covered her blade, evidently signs of a strange and deadly concept.

The Tyrant Lord immediately ducked down to avoid the blade, but Elena didn't let up.

'Alteration.'

Crack!

Her arm snapped as she rapidly controlled the momentum of her swing and followed the Tyrant Lord's downward trajectory.

However, even with her arm bent at a strange angle, Elena seemed to be maneuvering it with ease, as if she was born with such a disfigured limb.

Shik!

Her sword stabbed into the unsuspecting Tyrant Lord, letting loose its energy into his body.

At the same time, Elena felt a breeze slightly prick her finest hairs.

Her eyes sharpened.

'Alteration.'

Crack!

Whoosh!

Elena's spine snapped in half as she rapidly bent her body in half to evade the terrifyingly sharp blade of wind that almost severed her head from her body.

'Revitalize.'

A bright white light covered her as she pressed off the ground and flipped into the air, spinning her body with a series of cracks.

Her arm and spine snapped into place like rubber bands snapping back, and using that sudden momentum, Elena sent another strike at the Tyrant Lord who was just before her, preparing to attack first!

BOOM!

SHING!

Two sounds rang out as one. The Tyrant Lord sent a crushing punch into Elena's cut, however, her sword stabbed into his shoulder and transferred even more of those strange Life Laws into his body.

She grinned as she flew backwards, spitting out the blood pooling in her mouth.

"Sneaking up on me with your strength? How petty." Elena suddenly spoke to nobody in particular.

'Yggdrasil.'

The World Tree burst from the ground behind her. The trunk slammed against her back and stopped her momentum, and on the direct opposite side, a massive chunk of the trunk was cut into oblivion, an attack from the Kun Lord.

'I still can't sense him.' She thought to herself as she jumped up and recovered herself, examining the battlefield.

The Kun Lord was simply missing. He was definitely in the area somewhere, but Elena couldn't sense nor see him.

As for the Tyrant Lord, he was currently standing up slowly, his back turned to her.

His aura simmered in the atmosphere, low and furious like a beast on the verge of going berserk.

"What did you...do to me?" He muttered.

Elena grinned. It seemed it was already starting to take action.

It so...

"There's no reason for me to tell you!"

...now was the perfect time to attack!

She rushed forward, sword primed to attack, but before she could even make it halfway, she was stopped by a mysterious force.

Clang!

Her blade went forth and collided with something metal.

"I knew you'd show up!" Elena exclaimed, slamming her sword down again.

'Light of Beginnings.' I think you should take a look at

The Light of Beginnings that revealed all things shine brightly, illuminating the Kun Lord's hidden form for Elena to attack as she pleased.

At the same time, she called out with spirit:

"Yggdrasil!"

Leading to the tree's movement, massive roots tore through the ground, aiming for the Tyrant Lord himself.

The Kun Lord's expression changed. He didn't know what was happening to his partner, but he knew that he had to take the leading role in this fight right now.

"Girl, you've impressed me, but that isn't enough to save your life!"

He brandished his fan fiercely and began moving his body in a strange way that made it impossible to move one's attention away from him.

Elena found her senses muddled by his movements, almost like a snake to his flute.

However, since when was she someone that could be so easily controlled?

She immediately let loose the Light of Beginnings, clearing her muddled spiritual world just in time to see the fan barely a centimeter away from her face.

Shing!

Spurt!

It was too late to stop it. Elena's world first went red and then entirely black. Her eyes had been directly cut open, ridding her of sight.

In the dark world, Elena focused on the sound of her breathing and centered herself.

She couldn't feel the Kun Lord's presence, but she could feel the Tyrant Lord, and she could feel Yggdrasil.

She could feel the earth under her feet, and she could feel the particles of light mana illuminating the world with every passing second.

Eyes...

Eyes were unnecessary for someone like her.

A clear picture of the world was painted in her mind by the light mana, the same process through which light was processed by the brain normally, only much faster and more precise.

For any normal person, the world they viewed was an entire 15 seconds behind the world as it existed. Even with mana's help, one without such a close affinity for light wouldn't be able to overcome this gap completely.

Even the strongest experts under Divinity still took a few microseconds or more to process the images and information they received from their eyes and perception.

Elena didn't do it often due to the strain it put on her mind, but in this situation where she was physically blinded, the process seemed to take place naturally.

Currently, as Elena realized, she was existing just a few microseconds in the future compared to the Kun Lord who had given her such an advantage.

As long as she could find him, those few microseconds could define the outcome of their fight.

'He'll try to take advantage of my weakness, but he's wary.'

The Kun Lord hadn't attacked her yet because he wasn't an impulsive individual who'd get incapacitated at the beginning of the fight like the Tyrant Lord.

He still had to consider the possibility that Elena hadn't been weakened by his strike, that she could still perceive with the same efficiency she could with her sight.

The winds around Elena slightly stirred, and while her body slightly jerked in reaction, she didn't seem to understand what was happening around her.

The wind crept up and took away Elena's smell and hearing, forming a wall that didn't allow her mana to project into the surroundings.

'She's open.' The Kun Lord realized by the time he was finished.

If she could truly sense the outside world, it was absolutely improbable for her to let him put her at such a disadvantage.

This was the perfect opportunity to incapacitate her and steal her before the Tyrant Lord could get to her.

Such a delicious and powerful woman, no man would want to let her go.

With this thought in mind, the Kun Lord flew forward. He gracefully landed before Elena and raised his fan to the side, preparing to slash out.

"It's time to come back with me. A woman like you needs thorough re-education before you can be of any use," he stated, knowing she couldn't hear him.

Without hesitation, he slashed out, cutting her legs and arms so she couldn't move them at all.

Next, he took out a talisman and prepared to seal her mana.

And it was at that moment...

Elena's eyes shot open.

'Alteration.'

'Revitalize.'

Her right arm snapped strangely and shot forward.

In that abrupt moment, the Kun Lord found himself facing exactly what he'd done to Elena moments before.

A sword, just a centimeter away from his eye, completely unavoidable.

Shing!

Blood sprayed onto the ground below.

The only one retaining their vision was the Tyrant Lord, who was still occupied by the strange situation in his body, which was only worsening as he faced off with Yggdrasil.

And in his absence, a battle between the blind, a battle of perception and instinct, was about to begin.

Chapter 933 Surface [3]

Several million kilometers away from where Elena and her armies undertook their operation was the Black Dragon Clan's main base.

This base was originally used as a lure, forcing the Golden Dragon Army out before springing the world calamity on them. However, currently, it was facing another threat.

BOOM!

An explosion of golden light tore through the walls of the base. Bodies flew through the air, technology was shredded to pieces as a man stepped through the newly created rupture in the wall and glanced around.

He was none other than Hedrick, second son of the Golden Dragon Emperor.

Just as he promised to himself, he went directly to the Black Dragon Clan's headquarters to face off against their elites.

And now that he was here, it seemed it would be extremely easy to accomplish his goals.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

"Who goes there?!"

"Draconic War God, even if it's you, you will die here today!"

Exclamations rang out as a guard squad arrived before Hedrick could take a single step into the facility.

"To respond so quickly, it seems you really don't want me to go deeper," he muttered mockingly.

He brandished his weapon, a long earthy black halberd with a blade almost an entire foot long.

"If you believe you can stop me, then fight until your last!"

Hedrick charged without giving them the opportunity to reply. He swung his spear horizontally, making a crescent that slashed through the two men at the front of the guard squad and directly split them into four.

"Come, Black Dragons! Show me why you believe you can usurp our rule!"

The deathly black spear spun through the air, and within a second, the rest of the guard detail was slaughtered. Hedrick finally exited the room he broke into and spread his awareness through the facility.

'My perception is being blocked, but I can still sense aura.'

The structure of the facility itself didn't enter his head at all, but the concentrated aura where the Supreme and his closest confidantes resided was all too clear to his eyes.

'For now, that area must be avoided.'

The goal was to draw them out, rather than going to meet them. Firstly, Hedrick wanted to cause as much damage as possible before facing them, secondly, he didn't want to face them in an environment they were comfortable in, but rather one of his choosing, and thirdly...

Thirdly, his pride didn't allow him to be the one who approached first.

The first minute passed.

Hedrick made his way through the facility like a bulldozer. Every Black Dragon in his path, whether strong or weak, was bisected or crushed by the power of his spear.

In a single minute, the kills he'd racked up were many, numbering at least in the hundreds.

By the second minute, extreme peak experts began to take notice of him.

His battles became longer and required more energy. Even if these 3rd and 4th revolution masters were weaker than him, when taken in large numbers, they still weren't soft persimmons.

Golden mana filled the air, the base itself was torn to shreds by its collisions with the eerie black mana of the Black Dragon Clan.

By the third minute, stronger experts began to populate the area.

5th and 6th revolution masters started appearing amongst the crowd, forcing Hedrick into a tighter and tighter corner.

It was at this moment that he realized, this gradual increase in strength level wasn't a coincidence.

They were purposefully wearing him down with weaker forces, slowly introducing stronger beings that had a chance of landing a fatal blow when the time came.

This was a war of one versus many. If Hedrick lost focus for even a single second, he was done for!

He fought with everything he had. He consumed mana-replenishing pills and elixirs with so much vigor that an outsider might have considered him a drug addict.

And somehow, he managed to stay standing against the harrowing assault.

As a single man, his kill count had now reached a number in the ten thousands, and from the fiery look in his eyes that never seemed to fade...I think you should take a look at

This number wasn't anywhere close to his limit.

Two beings entered the atmosphere, almost wholly devoid of Fate Clouds.

Under them spread a bleak scenery of death and destruction, the calamity of worlds, war.

"Master..." the woman among them muttered.

Her long black hair fluttered in the wind, and her golden eyes shone in worry. She was none other than the little princess of this very world, Astoria Golden.

Standing next to her was the universe's favorite purple-eyed genius, Damien, who gazed down at Beast Emperor Star contemplatively.

"So it was like that, eh," he muttered to himself as his irises slowly settled down.

"You little lass, it turns out you're worth much more than expected," he continued with a smile, pinching Astoria's cheek.

However, she was in no mood to receive his teasing.

"Master, be serious! We need to do something!" She exclaimed, pulling away from his hand.

"Relax, relax," Damien responded, "do you think I, your master, am a heartless person? I just wanted to observe for a second before moving."

"Did you find anything? Astoria asked hopefully.

Damien nodded. "Of course! In fact, the secret to saving the world is..."

Astoria's eyes widened in anticipation.

"Drumroll..."

"Master, please!"

"Fine, fine, the key to saving this world is...you, my dear disciple!"

A light shined down on Astoria and illuminated her like a spotlight as Damien pointed at her dramatically.

"Me?" Astoria questioned, ignoring Damien's antics.

"Yup," Damien said with a sigh. It was clear that his cute disciple wouldn't play along with him until after this whole thing was solved, not that she was being unreasonable.

"In fact, when I just glanced at the world through my skill, I noticed something odd in the World Core. Within the regular core, there is a secondary golden core that seems to be made of the same energy as the Fate Clouds." Damien began.

"There's nothing odd about this, since the Fate Clouds are essentially a limb of the world's body, but what I found strange is that the fluctuation coming from this golden core...is the same as the fluctuation from your combined Golden Dragon Space Power."

It was a realization that couldn't be made until this moment, when Astoria had reached a level where her space abilities and Golden Dragon abilities could mix perfectly.

And as if affirming Damien's conjectures...

"Master, is that what's been calling to me since we came back?" Astoria spoke innocently.

Damien grinned. "You genius disciple, why didn't you tell me before? Indeed, the thing calling to you should be the golden core, and its reason should be so you can help it save this world."

"B-but how can I do that? I'm not even at the extreme peak yet."

Damien furrowed his brows in thought, but before long, his head jerked like it'd been struck by lightning.

"Haha, that's simple enough," he immediately said.

Damien grabbed hold of Astoria and teleported, traversing the planet until he arrived at a certain area, just a few million kilometers away from where Elena and her armies were currently fighting.

"Master, why are we—"

"This area is where four so-called Territory Lords reside. Each and every one of them is a powerhouse, but none of them is at the extreme peak yet. If you want to save the world, your first task is to defeat all four of these Territory Lords and prove your grit."

As Astoria processed his words, Damien looked up in a certain direction with a smile.

'Don't worry, old ghost. Just sit back and watch as your daughter shows you how she's grown.'

Chapter 934 Surface [4]

Damien followed Astoria as she began scouting the area and forming a plan of attack.

It didn't take her long to accept his order and firm her will.

However, while Damien accompanied her, he didn't plan to help unless her life was truly endangered.

After all, she couldn't grow if she was coddled.

As such, Damien used this time to think over the information he'd received from the Golden Dragon Emperor when he first entered the atmosphere.

'According to the old man, there's only five minutes before the world's situation becomes irreversible. But if Astoria can defeat these four Territory Lords before then, she should be acknowledged by the World Core, which is guaranteed to change things.'

Astoria began to descend from the air, taking a more direct approach. She walked through the territory of the first Territory Lord, the Lightning Lord, with the confident intention of facing him head-on.

Damien shrugged and followed her. In the first place, he didn't think these little cosplay lords could touch his disciple, so he wasn't worried.

'At the moment, there are three battlefields. The palace is being handled by the royal children and imperial guard, so I don't have to worry about it. There's apparently a Valkyrie taking care of some of the stronger Territory Lords, but she's accompanied by an entire army so I don't need to go over there to help.'

Damien's brow slightly raised in a curious manner as he thought about it.

'Still, this is the third Valkyrie I've met even though they're supposed to be an extinct clan. I should go meet her and make acquaintance once this ends.'

Shaking off that tangent, his thoughts narrowed in on the final battlefield.

'The Draconic War God will die if he continues alone. With my 1st revolution strength, I'm still not strong enough to fight those High Commanders and Supremes, but there are several thousand extreme peak masters under that level that will also barrage him. I can use them as target practice to acclimate to this new stage and sense the changes in my body.'

Damien nodded to himself as he finalized his thoughts. Once he finished up here with Astoria, he would immediately go aid the Draconic War God.

Nevertheless, at the moment, he was nothing more than a lurking old master. His role was to watch the younger generation show off for a bit before the big guns finally came into play.

And who would ever say no to playing such a role? Not only was it a treat to see one's disciple soar to the heavens, but it was also great to kick back and use one's status as an excuse to do nothi—

'Kuhum, what're these impure thoughts? I would never use my position as an excuse to be lazy. Never. Not at all. Okay maybe if I...'

As Damien fought his internal monologue, Astoria finally approached the enemy she was targeting.

The Lightning Lord was a member of the Lightning Kraken Clan, a mainly aquatic clan that rarely interferes with the affairs of the land.

However, this time, they seemed to change their mind.

"Oho? Who is this? Isn't this the little demon princess who caused my son so many losses back then? How honored I am to receive your visit!"

The sticky words of a fat man with dark blue skin welcomed Astoria. In response...

"Hey, blueberry bitch, are you the one calling himself a Territory Lord on someone else's land?" Astoria coldly uttered.

Damien almost spat out his water, even forgetting for a second that he wasn't drinking any water.

'Who taught her to talk like that?!' He wondered inwardly as he watched the bluebe— Lightning Lord's face turn different shades of purple.

"Hey, blueberry, isn't your face supposed to be turning red right now? Wait, don't tell me...pfft!"

Astoria suddenly laughed out, apparently extremely amused by the blue— Lightning Lord's situation.

"You...! Even in this situation, you dare to be arrogant?! Little Dragon, I will catch you today!"

The Lightning Lord barely paid Astoria any mind. After all, this princess who was nothing more than an early-stage 4th class 2 months ago, what could she achieve against a late-stage like him?

"Haha, my little Li will definitely be happy if I give you to him as a gift. Little girl, why don't yo—"

Bang!

Elena stomped her foot down on the Lightning Lord's and pressed it into the ground.

Boom!

A fist covered in golden aura tore through space and slammed into the side of his face, throwing him into the ground below. I think you should take a look at

Crack! Riiip!

Under Astoria's powerful physical strength, the Lightning Lord's foot was unable to escape. As such, when his body was thrown to the side with such velocity...

His leg was directly torn from his torso.

"Ahhhh!" The Lightning Lord yelled in anguish.

Astoria's cold eyes filled his vision in the next instant.

"You are not worth my time. Just die."

Astoria pulled her fist back and covered it in a copious amount of golden aura, a compact spatial dimension formed an inch in front of her fist, a Dimensional Cage compressed to the extreme.

And in a single second, before the Lightning Lord could even react, she punched out and struck it.

BOOOOOOOM!

A rupture in space spread forward for several hundred kilometers, tearing the Lightning Lord and almost his entire territory and clan to shreds.

"Hoo..." Astoria breathed out, settling her emotions.

She looked up with firm eyes.

"Master, this one wasn't challenging enough. I'm going right to the next one," she said as she began to move.

Damien smiled as he followed behind. "What're you telling me for? This is your stage, use it as you please."

Astoria continued flying forward without acknowledging his words, but on her face, a small smile spread imperceptibly.

This warmth, she was glad she had it at a moment like this.

If it wasn't for the constant understanding that Damien was right behind her supporting her, she didn't think she could keep her calm after seeing the state of the world.

That warmth enveloped her like a comfortable cocoon and gave her the strength to protect what she wanted to protect.

And though she didn't notice, that warmth manifested around her body as a slight golden aura that even Damien could barely see.

His smile was extremely wholesome at the moment, like a father watching his daughter graduate high school.

She was truly growing into her own, and it was clear that the universe was acknowledging her progress.

In this world, perhaps only Damien understood what kind of struggles Astoria faced internally.

She never let these struggles affect her strength like his weak past self did, and she never let these struggles surface and affect her life, something Damien also failed to do.

Astoria wasn't someone who suppressed her troubles, but someone who accepted and internalized them, constantly working towards the day when she could personally make those problems disappear.

This was truly her stage.

The current Beast Emperor Star was quite literally set up so it could help Astoria take that final step and bloom into her full true potential.

When that day came...

Just what heights would she reach?

Damien's blood boiled in anticipation.

He couldn't wait to see it.

And it seemed he needed to start working hard.

After all, he could never let his disciple surpass him, could he?

Chapter 935 Surface [5]

Astoria's next target was the Roc Lord from the Earthly Roc Clan.

The travel speed of rocs was incredibly fast, and though Astoria reached the Roc Lord's territory as rapidly as possible, she was just barely later than the information from the clan's spies.

As such, the Roc Lord was far more prepared for her than the Lightning Lord.

He met Astoria in the sky, his eyes solemn.

"Why must you target my clan?" He asked coldly, taking a fighting stance.

Astoria smirked. She almost laughed out loud at the audacity.

"Why must I target your clan? As someone openly poaching my clan's land, you still have the gall to say something like that?"

Astoria had picked up many things from Damien over the few years they spent together, and of them was his disgust for hypocrites.

If it was up to her, she would have directly killed the Roc Lord in that instant, but unfortunately, she wasn't quite strong enough to end this as quickly as she did the last.

Nevertheless, she wasn't in the mood for conversation anymore.

Whoosh!

Astoria's body turned into a blur as she rushed up to the Roc Lord, sending a heavy punch at his stomach.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

An aerial beast to begin with, the Roc Lord's mobility far outstripped his Kraken companion. He dodged to the left and right, swinging through the air like a chaotic pendulum.

"Girl, don't be rash!" The Roc Lord shouted as he cut his hand through the air, summoning a blade of wind that slashed at Astoria.

"Hmph!"

Astoria snorted and lifted her arms across her chest, taking the attack directly. Her golden aura flared out and swallowed it before expanding and covering her fists as she sent an immediate counter forward.

'Dimensional Cage.'

The Roc Lord easily dodged Astoria's first punch by twisting his body to the side, but he wasn't able to escape the rapid compression of space that trapped him and Astoria in an isolated cage together.

'Try to run now, birdie.' Astoria snorted inwardly as she charged him once more.

She let loose a flurry of punches with no particular technique, using pure physical strength to force the Roc Lord into a corner.

With the Dimensional Cage around him, he could no longer dodge with the same efficiency or freedom, and when it came to attack power, he was the worst of the four lords.

After all, he specialized in speed and trapping.

But in this trapped space, how could he set up a trap?

Astoria didn't leave him any room to act, entirely her purpose when she set up the Dimensional Cage.

Originally, she only wanted to trap the Roc Lord and take advantage of his most glaring weakness from the start, but as it turned out, the reason this weakness was so obvious was because it was the result of many weaknesses combined!

When Astoria cut the Roc Lord off from the world, the "Earthly" trait of his race was directly impeded, and while Astoria didn't intend this, she wasn't going to let it go now that she'd realized it.

'Fate Lines!'

Astoria flicked her hand out into space, letting five golden strings extend from her fingernails and whip around the Dimensional Cage.

'Vector Control.'

Immediately, she locked onto several points of space at once and activated Vector Control.

The wantonly flying golden strings immediately straightened out and changed their flight trajectories, instantly surrounding the unsuspecting Roc Lord!

"Dammit!" He roared in frustration as he spun his body, summoning several thousand feathers that shot into the golden fate lines and attempted to interfere with them, but at that moment, the Roc Lord found out just what made the Golden Dragon Clan so terrifying.

Xiu! Xiu! Xiu!

The Fate Lines pressed forward, moving through the feathers like incorporeal illusions.

When it came to Fate, even if it was just a representation created through mana, it wasn't so easy to simply interfere with it as could be done with other elements.

After all, fate was far more esoteric and far more intrinsically connected to the universe's existence. I think you should take a look at

Unless one had a fate that could match the user's, they would have to be extremely creative to block the impact of an attack like Fate Lines.

As for the Roc Lord, this individual who was already about to be killed by Astoria, how could he have a fate that matched hers?

Shik! Shik! Shik!

The Fate Lines stuck into the Roc Lord's body, causing him to jerk. His head snapped back, his eyes turning fully white.

'Severing Ties.'

Shing!

The sound of a sword rang out, but no sword was pulled.

The sound came from within the Roc Lord's body, where something ethereal had been slashed apart.

The Roc Lord crumpled in the air, still living but unmoving and corpse-like.

"Hm? What did you do?" Damien suddenly appeared next to Astoria and asked.

Astoria quirked her head as she responded, "This is one of the core techniques of our clan. It can sever people's karmic ties to the world, which essentially cuts them off from the path of Law entirely."

Damien's eyes slightly widened in surprise. It was quite the cruel move, essentially crippling the enemy at a level that simply couldn't be reversed by anything other than a miracle.

But, who was Damien to judge?

"Hm, well I was just curious. Carry on with what you were doing," he said, exiting with a smile and returning to his observer's position.

The Roc Lord was basically already dead, so regardless of what Astoria did with him, Damien didn't need to care.

Instead, he directed his gaze to the sky.

'It's about time to start now.'

In fact, while Astoria was the key to saving the world, she couldn't quite do it without a little urging from him.

But, she didn't need to know that, right?

With a small smile illuminating his face, Damien flew up into the atmosphere and closed his eyes, spreading his arms to his sides.

'Gather.'

The Breath of All Things leaked from his body and spread like a net over Beast Emperor Star's atmosphere.

And using this impossible ability of the Void to control all existence, Damien called forth the fate of the world, the fate that was being spurred on by Astoria's existence.

Slowly but surely, wisps of golden smoke gathered around Damien's immediate vicinity.

Eventually, these would form new Fate Clouds to replace the old.

But that wasn't for Damien to control.

He was merely acting as a conduit, allowing the world to channel its force through him and gather these clouds with far more efficiency than it'd ever see naturally.

As long as Astoria kept fighting for the world, the golden core would continue to be stimulated into action, and as long as Elena and Hedrick continued their activities, the citizens would eventually see the light.

In fact, while Hedrick saw himself as a hindrance, he was anything but.

His speech earlier offended many people, but more than that, it forced people to face their shame.

The common people who irrationally looked for someone to blame looked at the world around them. They looked at how their homes burned and how their soldiers desperately worked to stop the spreading destruction.

And then, they looked down at themselves, wondering just what gave them the courage to be so ignorant.

Damien could feel it all around him.

The congregation of fate that was filling the atmosphere and floating up to the skies to join him...

Was only getting larger and larger with every passing second.

Chapter 936 Surface [6]

Astoria didn't kill the Roc Lord. Rather, she tossed him into a spatial dimension for him to rot until she could come back and give him a proper punishment.

Afterwards, she made her way to the abode of the Shadow Lord, head of the Invisible Panther Clan.

Now that she'd taken care of two out of the main four, Astoria had used up both the element of surprise and her free pass.

The Lightning Lord wasn't an easy character, but he died easily since Astoria used such a destructive attack at close range without giving him a single chance to dodge.

As for the Roc Lord, he was just weak. There was a reason he had to follow behind the Black Dragon Clan and accept any scraps they threw at him.

But these last two wouldn't underestimate her as they absolutely received news of her strength, and they were nowhere near as weak as the Roc Lord.

Astoria entered the Shadow Lord's territory with her awareness fully extended and her senses heightened to the max. The Invisible Panther Clan was incredibly skilled in deception and stealth, a skill Astoria had personally tasted multiple times.

Right, unlike the other clans, the Invisible Panther Clan wasn't a weak clan, they were just participating in this war due to the external pressure of the Black Dragon Clan.

When it came to respect, they were similar to giants in their worship of strength.

Xiu!

Crack!

Astoria raised her arm and grabbed the hidden dagger that flew towards her neck, directly shattering it to pieces.

"Alana..." Astoria muttered, feeling the shadowy fluctuations coming from the dagger.

"Astoria, I am surprised you still remember me," a calm and slightly sultry voice came from the void.

"How could I not? With the way you humiliated me last time, did you think I would easily forget you?" Astoria sneered.

The woman named Alana smirked from her hiding place. "Do not fault me for your own weakness. If you had the strength to compete against me, would you have lost in such a way?"

Astoria gritted her teeth in anger.

"You hypocritical bitch! Show yourself and watch how I educate you!" She roared.

Alana's smirk widened. Astoria's greatest fault was never her strength, but her short-sightedness.

The same impulsivity that led to her becoming the little devil emperor was what usually cost her the victory in battle against her peers.

This time, though Alana wasn't particularly hostile to Astoria, she'd received orders.

"Our Patriarch has passed it down. As long as you can defeat me, the Invisible Panther Clan will no longer interfere in Beast Emperor Star's matters," she stated.

Astoria's rage only grew. "Even at this juncture, you want to mock me?!"

"I am not mocking you."

"Then, tell your Patriarch to come personally. Maybe then I'll listen to what he has to say."

"That is impossible."

Before Astoria could quip back, Damien's voice suddenly rang in her ear.

"Take her offer."

Astoria's eyes narrowed, but she didn't talk back.

She was well aware of her master's means at this point. If he said so...

Then she would have to calm her anger and view this situation from a different perspective.

Being blinded by rage wouldn't do her any good.

"Huu..." Astoria let out a deep exhale.

"Fine, let's do it like this then. I want to see how my old nemesis has improved in these past few years," she said calmly, once more spreading her awareness and preparing for battle.

And though she couldn't quite feel it, she was absolutely correct to listen to Damien's suggestion.

After all, the leader of the Invisible Panther Clan, the Shadow Lord...

Was an extreme peak master only slightly weaker than Damien!

It was evident that he was hiding his strength, and it was evident that he had differing thoughts about the current situation than his peers on the same side, therefore, Damien chose not to engage directly.

Just as the Shadow Lord wished, this matter would be solved by juniors.

Nevertheless, Astoria didn't attack rashly in this battle as she did in the previous two.

She knew some of her enemy's quirks, and unlike the previous two who were more arrogant and domineering, Alana was quiet and careful.

She only showed herself when she was assured of victory, and if she wasn't, it was impossible for anyone on the same level to find her.

This battle would by far be the quickest, as it would be ended in one move. I think you should take a look at

However, this was the most difficult battle for Astoria up to this point.

She closed her eyes and focused on the surroundings.

Damien's teachings surfaced in her mind, supporting her decisions.

Enemies who could use stealth would always be the most troublesome, but as a spatial cultivator, it would be embarrassing to lose to a stealth expert at the same level.

After all, what was stealth?

Wasn't it merely concealing oneself in the atmosphere or environment?

Even at the most complex levels, unless a stealth expert could separate themselves from the dimension, it would be impossible for them to hide from a space-practicing peer.

2 years.

For the past 2 years, Astoria had been doing everything in her power to focus on this singular concept of sensing the atmosphere and using it to her advantage.

This was the basis of her spatial element.

And as long as she could just find a trace...

'There it is.'

She didn't find Alana, but she found where the previous "greeting knife" was thrown from.

'Vector Control.'

Astoria locked onto that point in space. From there, she expanded her perception and used Vector Control to "trace" the activity that existed and extended from that point.

And using this roundabout method.

Astoria's eyes narrowed.

She quietly set up a Dimensional Cage in the surrounding area and charged mana into her legs and fists.

In the next instant...

BOOOOOOOOOM!

Space ruptured and burst as Astoria's fist pushed forward.

From the center of that impact, a girl not much older than Astoria flew forward, coughing out blood as she tried to stabilize herself.

Flash!

Astoria appeared right in front of Alana, her face only centimeters away from the other girl.

She grinned.

"I'm not the same person I used to be."

Alana's eyes widened.

A small smile spread on her lips.

And a furious punch slammed into her gut, crushing her into the ground below.

Astoria landed silently, her expression unmoving.

Something was happening within her.

It wasn't some sort of ethereal phenomenon, but rather a small shift in Astoria's perception.

The validation she wished for was a type of validation that only she could provide herself.

And now, though the battle was short, just the fact that she was able to defeat Alana in a single move was telling of her strength and effort.

The time she spent working, the time she spent shedding her identity as a devil emperor and growing into herself as a practitioner...

She finally felt like she could feel just how significant that time was for her.

And with that confidence, she made her way to her fourth and final battle.

A battle that even Damien, who was watching from above, wasn't sure if she could win.

This time, her target was the Dark Phoenix Clan.

The clan itself was relatively new and had a short history, however, there was one thing that allowed them to sit on the same pedestal as the top forces in the Beast Domain.

That is, they were descendants of the Godbeast, Death Phoenix.

Chapter 937 Surface [7]

The Death Phoenix was a Godbeast not much weaker than the Golden Dragon, however, it took several generations before its descendants could finally emerge in the universe.

The possible reasons for this phenomenon were many, but the reasoning didn't matter anymore.

The Dark Phoenix Clan was able to rise to prominence through the power of their racial traits and gain the backing of the Black Dragon Clan. While the other clans participating in the Golden Dragon Clan's downfall were merely in business relationships with the clan, the Dark Phoenixes were true subordinates.

As Astoria approached their base, a prickling sensation overtook her, alerting her of danger lurking all around.

In the sky above, Damien's eyes narrowed as well. He looked deep into the main residence of the clan where the Death Lord resided.

"4th revolution master." He muttered to himself.

It should've been expected from Godbeast descendants, but the rate of growth of these phoenixes was truly terrifying.

To produce a 4th revolution master in less than 100 years was something not many could do.

Nevertheless, it was clear that this master also hid his strength for unknown reasons. If Astoria tried to charge him, she would be instantly killed.

'Is it time to get my hands dirty?' Damien wondered with a smile.

The rest of the clan didn't even have a single extreme peak master, making it obvious that some extraneous means were used to raise the Death Lord to his strength so rapidly.

With these conditions, if Astoria were to challenge the entire clan instead of just the Lord, she would find an even greater challenge than any of her three others.

And while she did so, Damien could also test his new power.

"Astoria, stand back and face off against the experts who try to chase me. I'll be taking the Territory Lord this time," he said through mental transmission.

Astoria pouted for a second before realizing the implications of his words.

"How strong is the Territory Lord?" She asked curiously.

"4th revolution," Damien answered nonchalantly.

"Ehh?!"

Astoria immediately jumped in surprise.

"Master, isn't that a bit too much?!" She asked in a slight panic.

Damien shrugged, grinning to himself. "Don't talk nonsense. This is the perfect challenge."

"Hmm..." Astoria frowned in worry, but she wasn't given even an instant to let that worry fester.

"I'm going in. Follow me if you don't want to miss the fun!"

"Eh? Master, you—"

BOOOOOOOM!

Only when she heard the distant explosion did Astoria realize that Damien was already gone.

She jumped up and ran towards it with an exasperated expression.

"Dammit, Master! Wait for me!"

'Starfall.'

It was an entrance gift, a grand ceremony of flames that announced Damien's presence to the world.

The meteorite that sped through Damien's connected portal crashed into the main abode of the Death Phoenix Clan, directly blowing it to shreds and killing several tens of people who were within.

Damien descended into the flames excitedly.

It had been a long time since he met an opponent who could match him.

In recent days, he'd only been meeting those significantly weaker or significantly stronger than him, and it almost felt like he lost track of his strength in this time he spent peerless.

Atop that, he'd been winning too often.

The impossible situations he was able to overcome in the past, he was only able to do so because of the long list of past experiences that supported him.

If he was to become content, if he was to forget his true place in the universe, he was sure to taste karma eventually.

In the end, Sir Theon was killed by the Heavenly Vine, and the Heavenly Vine was killed by Galantis. Arthur was also only killed due to Galantis' interference, and Immortal Blood Asura was driven back by Tiamat.

Damien himself had only contributed to these victories. He never actually had the power to execute them himself.

As the Death Lord, this large and domineering character rose from the flames to face him, Damien felt his blood pumping. I think you should take a look at

He knew his own limits better than anyone. Now that he'd finally entered the extreme peak, he didn't doubt that he was any weaker than this Death Lord.

But the only way to test that was...!

Bang!

Damien pushed off the air and flew forward, swinging his fist with extreme velocity.

The Death Lord's eyes slightly moved. With a look of superiority clouding his face, he extended his arm, manifesting a black feathered wing that clashed against Damien's fist,

Clang!

Sparks flew from the point of impact. Damien looked into his opponent's eyes as he vanished and appeared on the complete opposite side of where he was, summoning Hel and shooting a terrifying black bullet into the Death Lord's temple!

Bang!

The shot flew true and entered the enemy's head, but unlike what Damien expected, he saw no reaction.

Bzzt...!

Suddenly, Damien felt his connection with the mana disappear.

His eyes narrowed.

"I should've expected it from someone called the Death Lord. It seems this particular law is useless against you," Damien said with a smile.

The Death Lord glanced up at him as he teleported a few meters away and responded, "After attacking me so fiercely, you finally decide to speak?"

"Hey, hey, you can't blame me. It's been so long since I met someone who could match me, I couldn't hold back."

"Hmm, it is true that characters of your strength are rare in this part of the universe. Very well, I have also been itching for a fight recently. Entertain me well."

"Your whole clan might get exterminated while we're fighting, you know?"

"If so, that is their fate."

"Sheesh, the Death Phoenix sure is unforgiving."

"It is but our nature."

"Hmph!"

Damien abruptly teleported, summoning Mirage and slashing out.

'Void Sword Art First Form: Bladeless'

Space tore apart into a proverbial mush of flesh and bones, cutting into the Death Lord's body.

The Death Lord didn't panic, instead summoning his own mana and slashing his arm, shattering the spatial mana into pieces.

"Nice one!" Damien exclaimed as he circled back. Freya appeared in his left while Mirage stayed in his right.

In the next instant, he began a furious assault.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Countless bullets of pure white mana clouded the air. Space was gashed into pieces, and as Damien activated Dance of the Void, a collection of minuscule yet deadly spatial cracks formed in the atmosphere, laying in wait for the enemy to collide with them.

With this opportunity to go all out without worry right in front of him, how could Damien act lightly?

He felt like he was back in his younger days, using every possible means without care and endlessly barraging the opponent until they gave in.

Whether it was Spacetime or Samsara, Damien had spent the last 2 years developing them seriously while training Astoria.

The number of theoretical attacks he was waiting for the opportunity to bring into reality was many.

And the Death Lord was just unfortunate enough to appear at this timing, when Damien was desperate for a fight.

With this kind of barrage assaulting him, would he even have a chance to show off his skills as a 4th revolution master?!

Well, the Death Lord certainly wasn't resigned to such a fate.

He wasn't going to let Damien beat him one-sidedly.

After all, even if he was relegated to a lower position in this siege...

He was still a true 4th revolution master, after all.

Chapter 938 Surface [8]

The Death Lord's eyes narrowed in the face of this assault.

He suddenly poured mana into his body and abandoned his human form, becoming a Dark Phoenix in all its glory.

Skreeee!

He let out a powerful war cry as he furiously flapped his wings. A tornado of purple-black mana formed around him, blocking the rain of bullets as they fell.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

As the bullets made contact with the swirling barrier, they exploded into showers of light. At the point of contact, a clear negative reaction was taking place, making the mana bullets volatile and dispersing them.

Damien observed it carefully, realizing the reason for this phenomenon.

'Should it be called Law Discordance?'

The Death Lord's barrier was made of a very specific Death Law concept that Damien wasn't familiar with, and it was repelling his own Life Law like a magnet with the same polarity.

It was the complete opposite of a Law Resonance like Samsara Intent, and if it was something the Death Lord could wield consciously...

'It's too early to make assumptions.'

Damien brought Freya and Hel out together and aimed them at the barrier, combining his Life and Death mana to shoot bullets of True Samsara into the barrier.

Xiu! Xiu! Xiu!

The bullets flew unhindered and sunk into the Death Law Barrier.

'Hm?'

Damien's brow immediately raised in curiosity.

'It's still...clashing?'

It seemed in that instant, Damien's Samsara Intent clashed against something else, another combination of Life and Death Laws, but not quite the same as Samsara.

'That's dangerous. I shouldn't let him utilize that.'

If he continued using Samsara, it was inevitable for their collision to take a long time, and what Beast Emperor Star lacked most was time.

As such, Damien was limited to only Spacetime in this battle.

But...was that ever really a limitation?

'Let's try this out.'

'Transmission.'

Damien vanished.

Skreeee!

The Death Lord let out a powerful war cry as he furiously flapped his wings. A tornado of purple-black mana formed around him, blocking the rain of bullets as they fell.

A sword slashed out.

'Void Sword Art Sixth Form: Worldbreaker'

BOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Mirage sliced into the forming tornado and dispersed it to nothingness. Its path continued until it slammed into the Death Lord's back, releasing all of its pent-up mana and crushing him into the earth below.

Damien stood in the air above, panting heavily.

"Haa...haa...haa..."

'So...it's possible.'

Damien's eyes shone with excitement.

In that moment, he hadn't just teleported.

No, in that moment, he truly traveled through space and time and arrived less than a second in the past to cut down the Death Lord before he formed his strange tornado.

It was an extremely complicated maneuver, and while its nuances needed further definition, the Death Lord's rising figure didn't allot any time to do so.

Huu...I think you should take a look at

Damien took a deep breath and opened a black hole behind him, swallowing the ambient mana to replenish himself before he returned to battle.

'It's too early to be excited.'

Transmission, a useful killing move that was completely ineffective in the middle of a battle.

Damien hadn't used it properly because he didn't quite understand how to use it properly yet, but now that he'd experienced it, he could improve in the future.

'The first test run is done. Let's continue.'

Damien rushed into the air, away from his enemy, as he spread his arms into the air.

'Void Breathing: Domain of Reminiscence.'

Damien's eyes were dyed black, becoming portals of blackness in his face. His mana spread for several kilometers into the surroundings, shifting Spacetime in a strange and imperceptible manner.

A string of pitch-black mana pierced the Death Lord's spiritual world and spread its webs, connecting to his deepest memories and drawing them into reality.

The space changed.

A dark world manifested itself, ridden with chaos and destruction.

The Death Lord's eyes turned hazy as he fell into the illusion.

This apocalyptic worldscape wasn't a random image. No, it was a setting drawn from the core of the Death Lord's being.

This was a scene that tormented him ever since childhood.

This was the memory of his original world, a long-destroyed vestige of the past.

While Damien experimented with new attacks and fought the Death Lord, the situation on the rest of the planet continued to proceed.

Elena's armies conquered the Kunpeng Clan and attacked the Tyrant Clan, while Elena herself slowly wore the two Territory Lords down in combat.

Hedrick got closer and closer to the Black Dragon Clan's ruling powers, who, despite his siege on their base, didn't deign to move and deal with him personally. With the current progression of events, his mana would run out within the next few minutes.

The battle at the palace only became fiercer with time. Now that 3 minutes had passed since Damien and Astoria arrived in the world, the clash was taking place in full force, with the most powerful combatants facing off to determine the final outcome.

And separated from all three battlefields, Astoria had her own struggle. She fought with all her strength, expertly utilizing Vector Control and Dimensional Magic to support her Golden Dragon Techniques, conserving her mana as much as possible as she battled her way through the Dark Phoenix Clan's forces.

It was difficult. The Dark Phoenix Clan was skilled in both Death and Fire Laws, and when these two laws were combined, they became a true force to be reckoned with.

Even with her newly acquired abilities, Astoria couldn't avoid injury.

"Keuk...!"

Astoria coughed out a mouthful of blood as she took the attack of a late-stage 4th class powerhouse, avoiding a fatal blow from another in the process.

Her hands moved restlessly, creating seal after seal to form Dimensional Cages that separated the thousands of enemies into smaller portions for her to devour one after another, however, the number of late-stage powerhouses made it difficult for her to maneuver freely.

'Dammit!' She exclaimed inwardly as her eyes darted around the surroundings.

Since Damien trusted her to win this battle, it meant there was absolutely a method for her to do so.

However, to this point, she had still yet to figure out what it was!

'My spatial skills are supportive, they were never meant to be my main form of attack.' She thought to herself as she analyzed the things Damien prioritized during their lessons.

'I am the descendant of a Godbeast, and my body is that of a future Godbeast. If I want to exert my full power, I need to learn how to harness it!'

Astoria racked her brain as she dodged and blocked as many attacks as possible, wearing her opponents down slowly.

Fate, just how was she supposed to harness it?

She could use Fate Lines to sever people's worldly ties, and she could cover her body in golden aura to enhance herself, but even as a Golden Dragon, Astoria was never able to fully understand the concept of Fate.

Astoria suddenly understood what Damien wanted from her.

Through this battle, she needed to have a breakthrough and learn to harness fate.

That wasn't only the key to winning this battle, but also...

It was the key to saving the world!

Chapter 939 Fate [1]

Once, on a distant planet far in the past, two experts existed.

These two experts were both old monsters who'd exhausted the majority of their lifespans, and in their final moments, these two clashed constantly.

On one side was a man who craved life. He worshipped immortality and did everything he could to stave off death, even using heinous methods to steal the vitality of others to sustain himself.

On the other side was a man who accepted mortality. He understood that death would eventually come for anyone who had yet to step onto the path of Godhood, and he didn't reject it. Rather, he welcomed the end of his life cycle, as it would only signify greater things for the future.

These two experts stood on opposite sides, and their clashes weren't merely using words. They constantly battled until their final moments, when they stood together to finally determine which of them was correct in their thinking.

In that moment, both sides stared death in her eyes...

And the planet went up in flames.

A third party descended into the world and spread destruction across it, enveloping it in darkness.

Within the chaos, a man threw down a lamp. As its glass shattered, the flame within was spread to pollute the world,

Purple-black tongues of flame enveloped existence itself, burning all things to dust.

Except for a single man and the clan that served him.

The flames of death merged with his perception, harmonized with his soul. Rather than being killed by the flames, he and his people received a baptism.

This was the birth of the very first traces of Dark Phoenix Godbeast Bloodline in the universe.

And the mysterious invading race who originally introduced the purple-black flame to the world, this was also when the Dark Phoenix Clan met the Black Dragon Clan and formed its connection.

A boy burned in flames of death.

His eyes were shut tightly, his teeth gritted in pain. He clutched his heart as his body was forcefully transmuted into that of a Dark Phoenix.

That pain remained clear in his head for countless years.

Even when he and his people were forced to flee the universe and hide in a hidden realm for countless years, even when they returned to reality only to realize tens of thousands of years had passed around them, even when he was crowned the Lord of his sacred clan and granted the responsibility of protecting it, that original feeling of pain and purification was forever etched in his memory.

Today, watching it manifested into reality, his emotions were tumultuous.

It was terrifying that such a strange phenomenon could even exist, far sturdier and more tangible than any illusion.

It was almost as if he'd been sent back in time to that very moment.

He looked down at his hands, too small to hold any tool yet long coarse from tireless work.

From here on out, he had to choose between two things.

As a 4th revolution master, his perception allowed him to stay grounded even within this atmosphere and maintain his understanding of reality. If he desires it, he could break out of this illusion and continue fighting for the Black Dragon Clan's cause.

However, if he wanted to, he could seal his senses and submerge himself into this illusion, obtaining the ability to change his bleak past, even if it was only for his own personal satisfaction.

The Death Lord followed the Black Dragons, but more than anything, he followed the will of the Dark Phoenix.

Even after receiving the Dark Phoenix's blessing, the old clan head didn't try to experience nirvana or any sort of material rebirth.

He accepted his death and died contentedly a mere few years after his clan stabilized themselves after the original disaster, not even taking the opportunity to test his new power.

The Death Lord was the 3rd Lord after the old clan head, but the scene he witnessed all those years ago was just as fresh in his mind as the memory it was attached to.

Even when he was a child, he could intuitively understand that the old clan head was wiser than anyone could comprehend. Compared to anyone who succeeded him, perhaps the old clan head was still the man with the greatest affinity for the Dark Phoenix bloodline to ever exist. I think you should take a look at

As the man titled 2nd to such a being, the Death Lord wanted to understand how his old influence became so detached from the world, and he wanted to understand how the old man viewed it.

If he could understand this truth by experiencing this reconstructed past...

The Death Lord's eyes went to the sky.

It wasn't rare to find opportunities to grow while in battle, but it was almost impossible to find an opponent who'd allow one to properly digest these gains.

From his place above the illusion, Damien quirked his brow.

'That doesn't mean what I think it means, does it?' He wondered.

As a training maniac himself, Damien could very clearly understand the look in the Death Lord's eyes.

However...seriously?!

'It's a little hilarious that he's making a request like that. If I wasn't the same breed, would I have even understood it?'

For a man risking his life to obtain a chance to grow stronger, Damien could only show respect.

And aside from that, they'd yet to properly fight. The Death Lord was strong, but he simply wasn't fast enough to keep up with Damien's pace. As long as he stayed the way he was, he'd be able to keep his life, but fighting back was another story.

'Have I developed a habit of raising my own enemies?' Damien thought to himself, shaking his head wryly.

Damien had always been a man who would never respect strength if it wasn't backed by character and will.

However, the Death Lord had currently shown both strength and will. In terms of character, it was best to say he was lacking any at all.

So, Damien was curious.

'If I leave him be, what kind of use will he have?'

And that's when it struck him.

'That guy...has the Breath of Nothingness polluting his spiritual world. As long as he's submerged his consciousness in the false reality, I can enslave him unimpeded.'

It was an absolute advantage.

And Damien himself had more important things to do if he wanted to end the ongoing conflict as soon as possible.

'Haa...seriously, it's hard to find people as kind as me in this universe.' Damien sighed.

He tapped his finger through the air, creating a layer of dimensional protection around the hidden reality before using a few wisps of the Breath of All Things to make the false reality more stable.

"I hope you can properly utilize this and give me a surprise when I'm back."

Leaving these words to ring in the Death Lord's ears, Damien vanished.

The hidden reality that only a single person would ever experience commenced on its own trajectory.

Not too far away, Astoria's battle continued, but her mind was elsewhere.

She pondered it endlessly, trying to reach for any possible answer she could think of.

Fate...just what in the world was it?

Chapter 940 Fate [2]

Fate.

By definition, fate was the development of events beyond an individual's control, development determined by a supernatural or higher power.

However, in a world of mana and universal law, the definition of fate couldn't be so simple.

If Karma was the web that connected all things, then Fate was a representation of the possible futures that could sprout from those connections.

The "fate" that one usually thought of when the term was mentioned, one's ultimate fate that determined the course of their life, was a representation of the karma between oneself and the universe itself.

Yet, even this definition was only on the surface level. Anyone who had some sort of comprehensive ability could draw these connections, but that didn't mean they could suddenly wield fate.

No, for someone blessed with such a power, the understanding required was far more intrinsic.

But the problem also stemmed from this fact.

Despite the heaven-defying comprehensive ability a genius like Astoria had, she also had a heaven-defying level of talent.

When she'd been using and understanding Fate instinctively for the past 20 years, suddenly attempting to truly comprehend its inner workings was an extremely complicated task to do in a closed environment, let alone during battle.

'I have to do this. I have to understand it.'

Whoosh!

Astoria dodged to the side and punched out, exploding with golden aura and pushing back her opponents.

'If I can't do it on my own...'

As she fought, Astoria slowly gained the ability to perceive her surroundings and calmly analyze every factor she possibly could.

With this new outlook, she was finally able to notice the golden blobs in the sky that had almost taken shape.

'...then I just need to borrow some help!'

Bang!

The ground burst into a cloud of debris as Astoria launched herself into the air, using Vector Control to exponentially boost her acceleration and reach the partial Fate Clouds in an instant.

She closed her eyes and set up a Dimensional Cage. Lightly moving her hand through the air in a strange pattern, Astoria summoned both her Golden Dragon and spatial mana together as she said:

"Sentries..."

Her mana coalesced into four miniature dragons that exited the Dimensional Cage and flew around it.

These dragons weren't just manifestations of her will and mana, but also targets loaded with charged Vector Points that would be able to repurpose enemy attacks and defend her position.

With them protecting her, she at least didn't need to worry for a brief 30 seconds.

Astoria didn't plan to waste this time at all.

Her body became a vortex, absorbing the energy of the Fate Cloud around her without any mind for the ancient tradition that all Golden Dragons respected, to never desecrate these clouds.

Strange golden mana entered her body in waves. It was corporeal and present, yet ethereal and seemingly existing on a higher plane. It was mana, but not necessarily mana. It was like Damien's Void Mana, better called its own energy than a form of mana at all.

Thump!

Her heart beat powerfully.

Within the core of the world, a golden heart thumped with the same rhythm.

The energy of Fate filled Astoria's body, causing her to glow in a golden sheen.

A mark appeared between her eyebrows.

Gradually, like a nearly stilled river blocked by a dam, a "golden star" formed itself between Astoria's brows.

And judging by the energy fluctuations in the surroundings...

The dam would be flooded soon enough.

'God Spear.'

The soul weapon of the Valkyries was summoned.

Elena wrapped her hands around its pole and forcefully pulled it into existence, revealing its beautiful platinum and white glow to all beings present.

'God Spear Inquisition Technique: Downward Momentum.'

Without waiting for a response from her enemies, Elena slammed the spear into the ground, running her mana through a specific bodily pathway before charging it into the swinging spear.

BOOOOM!

The ground immediately burst. From below, rays of white light pierced the earth and polluted the area, becoming more and more numerous until...!

BOOOOOOOOM!

"Dammit!"

"Kagh...!"

A massive explosion of light enveloped an area several tens of kilometers wide. The Kun Lord immediately dashed into the air and escaped the blast radius, however, the Tyrant Lord wasn't so lucky. I think you should take a look at

"Haa...haa...haa..."

He took short and heavy breaths as he tried to stabilize his weary body.

It was odd.

At the beginning of the battle, Elena slashed him twice. Ever since that moment, he'd been weakened over time until he couldn't even fight Yggdrasil anymore.

In simple terms, there was a circuit connecting Elena, Yggdrasil, and the Valhalla Army. The Tyrant Lord had been marked, and his energy was currently feeding that system.

Whenever Elena needed lifeforce, Yggdrasil could immediately transfer it to her. When she didn't need it, Yggdrasil could use its authority to relegate the life force to the Valhalla Army, increasing the strength of the soldiers.

With its administrative power within Elena's established abilities, Yggdrasil naturally wasn't weak itself. Every hit that the Tyrant Lord took from the tree would sap a portion of his life force, draining him even faster than before.

However, there was simply no way for the Tyrant Lord to know this fact.

He was too far removed from Life Laws to know that they were ruining his body at the moment.

He stood up shakily and hardened his body, coping with the injuries he received from the explosion as he glanced into the sky at the ongoing battle.

Elena used the God Spear with ultimate proficiency, launching several sweeping attacks and thrusts that fully made use of her distance advantage to suppress the Kun Lord's speed.

She stepped back several kilometers and held the spear in one hand, pitching it forward like a javelin.

WHOOSH!

The spear tore through the atmosphere, ripping apart space and time as it arrived before the Kun Lord.

The Tyrant Lord's eyes widened.

'I have to get up there!' He thought to himself in frustration.

He took a step and took another. He pushed his mana to support his weak body into the air.

And as he began to rise into the skies...

Shik!

A sword pierced him from behind, driving itself through his heart.

"...!"

He looked down with widened eyes.

"You..."

He wasn't allowed to speak before he suddenly jerked forward like he was possessed.

"Since it's been long enough, I think it's time to reap this reward."

Elena's words entered his ears like the whispers of a devil.

She was going to reap...what?

"Keuk...!"

The Tyrant Lord coughed out a mouthful of blood as his body jerked again.

Elena touched his torso before suddenly yanking her arm back, tearing a large ball of mana out of the Tyrant Lord's chest.

"I'll be taking this for myself. As for you...well, just slowly enjoy your last few moments."

Without another word, Elena shoved the ball of mana into her own body and shot back into the air to face off with the Kun Lord.

It was only then that the Tyrant Lord realized it.

From start to finish, he'd been her target.

While she pretended to put her full focus on the Kun Lord, she used covert methods to slowly wear him down until he was nothing more than a pig on the chopping block.

With the Kun Lord preoccupied, he wouldn't have been able to sense the strangeness, and when it came to the Tyrant Lord...

If his previous actions were taken into account, it was clear that perception wasn't his forte.

Flash!

Suddenly, Elena appeared before him again, causing his slowly closing eyes to rapidly reopen.

Elena looked up at him with a smile. "My bad, I forgot something."

Shing!

A sword slashed through the air.

The Tyrant Lord suddenly felt a breeze from below, and in the same instant, he felt a terrifying pain envelop him, far worse than the pain of death that he was already undergoing.

As Elena once again returned to the Kun Lord to continue their battle, "something" fell to the ground below and sank into the sea of blood that was present there.

To define that "something's" identity...

Well, was it enough to say that the Tyrant Lord could no longer be considered a man?