

VOID EVOLUTION SYSTEM

Chapter 3

When Damien turned around, he saw a relatively handsome man in his late 20s with blonde hair and green eyes standing there haughtily.

“No, I’m good— find someone else to do it for you.” Though he responded casually, he inwardly prayed that he wasn’t dealing with an arrogant young master of some corporation. Sadly his prayers weren’t unanswered.

“Hmph! Who do you think you are, talking to me like that! I am Jin Horten, heir to the Horten conglomerate! If I say you do something, you do it!” The arrogant man said.

Damien sighed. The Horten conglomerate was one of the worlds leading tech companies even after the influx of mana. They had more than enough power to ruin his life and the lives of those around him without any repercussions.

As he sighed again, Damien followed the man. “I wonder what other fun my dogshit luck will bring me today.”

When Damien arrived at the area where the front liners were gathered with Jin, he received looks of disdain from almost everyone, which he promptly ignored. Turning to look at Elena, who was barely hiding her surprise, he could only flash a helpless smile.

“Listen up, people!” Jin yelled. “I’m Jin Horten, and I’ll be leading the expedition today.” He paused, seemingly enjoying the shock on everyone’s faces when they realized his background.

“This gate was officially listed as a B rank gate, but the boss will likely be a 1st class beast. We need to proceed with utmost caution so we can close the gate successfully.”

As he spoke, Jin snuck several glances at Elena, trying to impress her; however, she remained as stoic as usual.

While Jin continued to give an overview of the raid plan, Damien looked at the gate in wonder. It was like a swirling vortex of deep blue attribute-less mana that maintained its shape by assimilating the mana in its immediate surroundings.

Gates usually sustain themselves like this, however after all the mana in a radius of 50 meters from the gate is absorbed, it can no longer sustain itself and collapses.

This collapse is usually just an implosion of mana that decimates the area around it, but in some cases, it can lead to a dungeon break, where beasts use the moment the gate destabilizes to breach the barrier and arrive on Earth.

These incidents, although rare, have led to many cities being decimated in the past. Therefore, the Guild Association made a rule where no gate is allowed to remain untouched for longer than 1 week.

When Damien looked at this gate, he felt an undeniable attraction to its function. Slowly but surely, he got stuck in a trance staring at it.

‘Although it’s never expressly mentioned, these gates also make use of the spatial attribute to function. The suction force of the gate resembles my Void Body in some ways, by absorbing everything that’s usually meant for different situations and repurposing it all to sustain itself.’ Damien realized.

‘If my Void Body works on the same principle, what would happen if I consumed more energy than the limit? Is that the way for me to strengthen myself? If so, how-‘

He was abruptly woken up when he felt a powerful force kick him to the ground.

“Hey! Worthless little shit, if you aren’t going to listen to me, then what’s the point of even having you here?”

Damien looked at Jin with hateful eyes but said nothing, swearing that one day he’ll get strong enough to repay his grievances. As it turns out, Jin wasn’t even saying anything meaningful.

The only reason he even bothered to hit Damien was to maintain his superiority complex. Damien looked at the gate one more time before acting like he was paying attention to Jin’s speech.

However, he was still stuck thinking about his Void Body. ‘A method to strengthen myself. Even if it’s only in theory, it’s still the first step forward I’ve taken in years. The question is, where am I going to find an energy source large enough to test my theory?’

He continued to ponder on this concept while letting Jin's words go in one ear and out the other until he finally finished his speech. Once everyone separated to prepare, Elena walked up to him.

"Hey, are you okay? That asshole is only leading this raid because of his background. If it wasn't for that, I swear I would've-" Since it seemed like Elena would go on a rampage soon, Damien smiled lightly and patted her head.

"I'm okay, don't worry. If it wasn't for his family background, he wouldn't be shit, so why should I worry about him instead of thinking about how I can improve myself?"

Elena blushed but didn't stop him. "W-well whatever! If that's what you think, then I'm fine too." Even as she tried to play it off, she put her hand on Damien's chest and began to heal him.

Seeing this, Damien chuckled. "Well, if you're done worrying about me, how about you go get yourself prepared for the raid? It would look bad if our friendly neighborhood War Priestess was fumbling around, right?"

Elena's blush deepened at his tease, but since his words were partially correct, she scurried away to get ready.

Damien watched her for a while before turning back to the gate, his expression becoming serious. 'That ominous feeling only got stronger once I got closer to the gate. Well, no matter. If it comes to the point where I need to flee, I'm confident I can get out, only...'

Damien looked towards Elena again, 'Even if I need to sustain some internal bleeding, I have to make sure she makes it out too.'

He'd mentioned before that she was his best friend, but it was more accurate to say she was his "only" friend. After that fateful day of awakening, when everybody got their powers, even social hierarchy went through a change.

While those with useless powers were shunned to one group, those with stronger abilities gathered together; however, Damien could be said to be somewhere in the middle.

He was ostracized by both sides, and the only one who had stuck with him was Elena. Thinking back, he couldn't help but feel grateful to her once again.

Gathering his thoughts, he stood up and joined the attack squad. Deep within his eyes, an intense determination began burning. To keep himself safe, and to keep Elena safe. No matter the situation and no matter the consequences.

As his resolve grew firm, the space around his body started to distort. Whatever happened in this dungeon would be a new beginning for him; whether it was a good or bad one, only time would tell.