

Abyssal 971

Chapter 971 The real fight starts

The Samsara Thearch took a deep breath. All the energy and power he had suppressed to avoid being detected was unleashed, generating shock waves that spread into the Emptiness with so much power that they pushed away the waves of chaotic energy around them.

"¡BOOM!"

The eyes of the Ice Roc and Fire King widened as they saw how Zatiel was able to push away those waves by only releasing his power. It became clear to the duo that they were facing a monster that stood at a much higher stage than them and whose supernatural abilities would be nearly impossible to predict in a battle.

"Outsider, what do you seek in our world!"

The Fiery King spoke coldly as the flames on his body grew even more potent. He knew the man before he was more powerful, but that did not mean he would yield.

The Ice Roc remained silent, but the cold energy it unleashed was able to freeze the particles around it.

Zatiel stared at the duo, and his Samsara Eye showed him how the Ice-Fire World still sent energy into their bodies despite being outside of it. If he were to push their battle deep into the Emptiness, that connection would break, and the duo would become weaker. Nevertheless, that would also mean he could guide the Samsara Force that was trying to force a rebirth in the runic formation.

Although hiding his goal might sound like the best plan, it was not. The duo was powerful enough to figure out the goal of his Samsara Force if they focused on it, so there was no problem telling them, and it might lead to a more peaceful outcome.

"I will take the runic formation that divides your world. Steep away, and I promise to give it back once I am over with it."

As soon as the Samsara Thearch revealed his intention, the killing intent in the Fire King and Ice Roc exploded. The runic formation was a key piece not only of their world but also their cultivation journey, and they would be lost without it.

Even if they could resist a few thousand years without it, there was no way they would allow someone to take it away. The fact this one promised to give it back meant very little to them since they did not know him and had no reason to trust his word.

The duo immediately unleashed their consciousness and sent it into the runic formation. It did not take them long to detect the Samsara Force, but taking it was much more challenging, as it already intertwined with the runes.

Even if they worked together, the Fire King and Ice Roc would need a lot of time to take it out, so the most straightforward path would be to erase the one that controlled the force.

Zatiel noticed the killing intent in the duo, and his eyes narrowed.

'I underestimated the importance of the runic formation for those two.'

Fourth Realm life forms at the Peak of the Initial Stage could roam the Emptiness and must have reached a point where there was nothing of use in their home universe for their cultivation. Clearly, that was not the case for the Ice Roc and Fire King, and they would do all in their power to stop the Samsara Thearch from taking the runic formation.

Coldness appeared in the eyes of the Samsara Thearch as he felt the killing intent in the duo. He had no desire to kill them, but if that were what needed to happen to take the runic formation, then he would do it and use their corpses as raw materials for the future weapon.

The Samsara Thearch's physical strength exploded, and his body grew larger as his muscles bulged. It did not take long for him to reach ten meters in height, similar to the Fire King. That was far from all since his Thanatos Eye and Eros Eye also burst with power, pushing his soul force to a point it could bend reality.

Unlike the right and left eyes, the Samsara Thearch's third eye did not unleash an overwhelming power.

Unfortunately for Zatiel, he could not rely on the powers of the Samsara Truth since they focused on the runic formation, which diminished his battle power. The pupil with the white sun was also sealed as he did not want to use that power due to the backlash. However, there was still the golden pupil.

The Ice Roc and Fire King already felt apprehension as Zatiel unleashed the power of his body, Thanatos Eye, and Eros Eye. They were unable to hide their dread when they saw the golden flames that burst from the third eye.

If it were just the Concept of Justice, Zatiel would have gained little power from it since his actions embody a tyrannical path. However, the Eternal Flame of Justice acted according to his visions of the world.

Facing the Beyonder was the most righteous path that could exist since that entity was the antithesis of existence itself, and everything he did in pursuit of that goal was correct.

The Eternal Flame of Justice flooded Zatiel's body and Inner Universe, improving his physical strength and soul force, but that was not everything. The golden fire would burn everything that dared to intervene in the path of justice, and right now, that included the Ice Roc and Fire King.

The Fire King and Ice Roc look at each other as they feel the Samsara Thearch's power. If this one had wanted anything except the runic formation, they would have given it to him, but they were not so lucky.

Determination appeared in the eyes of the duo as the power of their Truths exploded, and the energy they took from the Ice-Fire World increased exponentially.

Golden, blue, and red pillars of energy flooded the Emptiness, and the radiation they unleashed was so dense and powerful that anything with a battle power beneath Rank 10 would feel their body melt.

"CRAWWWW!"

The first one to act was the Ice Roc, unleashing a force field extended for millions of light years, covering every corner of the battlefield that formed outside of the Ice-Fire World.

Zatiel felt the cold energy trying to freeze his body, but the Eternal Flame of Justice protected him. However, his eyes narrowed everything inside the force field moved slower.

The power of the Ice Roc was able to form a force field that suspended time, affecting the movements of all those inside.

Before Zatiel could even adapt to the change in the flow of time, the Fire King flashed toward him at a simply incredible speed.

Unlike during their first clash, Zatiel was able to react to the Fire King's speed and responded with his own fist.

"¡BOOOOMMMM!"

Golden and red flames exploded in all directions as the fists of the Samsara Thearch and Fire King collided.

Zatiel needed one clash to determine the key behind the Fire King's speed.

'He can manipulate the vibrational frequency of his atoms, putting his particles in a state of constant excitation, allowing his body to deploy an immense speed and agility.'

Those thoughts crossed Zatiel's mind just as he moved back to avoid the other ten arms in the Fire King's body. Unfortunately, he was not able to avoid all and had to block several punches.

The Samsara Thearch's speed was not any less than the Fire King, but the ice force field diminished his speed significantly, making a melee battle harder.

Zatiel was able to use his two arms to block the eleven of the Fire King, but he could not just concentrate on this one since a sharp ice claw flashed at his back.

Those claws were not only extremely sharp, capable of piercing his skin and severing his muscles, but also were a massive amount of the Ice Roc's energy gathered, and he already saw how they instantly trapped his body in an ice coffin.

Eleven arms bathed in flames in the front and giant claws of ice in the back. Both attacks were dangerous, but the Samsara Thearch was ready to teach the duo the power he used to kill dozens of Rank 10 life forms.

Zatiel flashed forward as a dark force emerged from the Thanatos Eye and clashed with the Fire King.

The dark force acted on the Fire King at an atomic level, inducing a state of stasis into his particles, diminishing his speed immediately for a short period of time.

It was less than a second but more than enough for Zatiel to grab one of the arms and punch the Fire King's chest with all his strength.

And as the Thanatos Eye took care of the Fire King, the Eros Eye also unleashed its power, transforming the eighteen demonic wings on Zatiel's back into powerful serpent dragons.

The Ice Roc was shocked to feel a Rank 10 battle power in each serpent dragon, and even more when it saw they were able to endure the sharpness of its claws.

The true battle between the three Fourth Realm life forms finally started.

Chapter 972 Defeating the Ice Roc and Fire King

The battle between the Fourth Realm life forms flooded the Emptiness with ice, fire, and darkness. The power of end in the Thanatos Eye repeatedly clashed with the heat and cold from the Ice Roc and Fire King.

The powers the trio unleashed were so immense that they overcame the veil that was the massive waves of chaos around them, allowing other powerful life forms in the Emptiness to detect them.

The Ice Roc and Fire Kings were strong but not so much as to deter all the Fourth Realm life forms that felt their might. However, none of those who felt the Samsara Thearch's power dared to get anywhere near that battlefield.

Neither the Samsara Thearch, Ice Roc, or Fire Kings had the time or energy to bother about distant Rank 10 life forms, as their fight had reached its zenith, each unleashing all the power inside their bodies and souls.

The force field created by the Ice Roc expanded across the Emptiness, its reach extending across the vast expanse of the battlefield. Time seemed to warp and distort within its icy grasp, slowing the movements of all those caught within its chilling embrace.

Zatiel's senses had attuned to the altered time flow and anticipated the Fire King's next strike with heightened focus.

With a burst of speed that defied the diminished time, the Fire King materialized before Zatiel once more. His eleven arms, enveloped in scorching flames, moved with absolute precision and overwhelming strength.

The Samsara Thearch's reflexes and instincts had already reached their peak, so he was able to respond to the Fire King's barrage. He deflected and evaded the majority of the Fire King's onslaught, but a few strikes managed to land, leaving scorch marks on his resilient flesh.

Zatiel could not afford to get distracted by the pain as his instincts began screaming, and he felt an imminent danger behind him. He avoided the Ice Roc's ice claws by flashing to the left, narrowly escaping their lethal grip, but not without landing a kick covered in darkness to the Fire King and sending this one flying away.

The Ice Roc persisted in its attack, but its speed was not high enough to reach Zatiel. Understanding that a physical approach would not work, it unleashed wave after wave of icy energy.

The cold force that flooded the entire battlefield began to crystallize around the Samsara Thearch, threatening to cage him into an ice coffin.

Undeterred, the Samsara Thearch drew upon the power of his Eros Eye. The serpentine dragons formed from his transformed wings unleashed a torrent of golden fiery breath, clashing with the Ice Roc's icy onslaught. The clash between the Eternal Flame and the ice energy generated a massive storm that covered the entire battlefield.

The dragons' Eternal Flame breath proved to be a formidable match for the Ice Roc's ice energy, slowing the advance of the encroaching ice.

The Fire King, recovering from the brief stasis induced by the Thanatos Eye, flashed back into the fray. The flames that engulfed his body blazed with renewed intensity as he attacked from all angles with blinding speed.

unmatched agility, deflecting most of the Fire King's blows. He and the Fire King began to exchange blows, throwing punches at Zatiel pushed his speed to the limit and maneuvered with unmatched agility, deflecting most of the Fire King's blows. He and the Fire King began to exchange blows, throwing punches at supernatural speed and generating shock waves that generated cracks in the Emptiness.

"¡BOOM!" "¡BOOM!" "¡BOOM!"

Each time a punch landed in either of them, it was like the sound of a world bursting to pieces.

Although the Samsara Thearch had the upper hand in the melee clash with the Fire King, things grew more fire for him by the second as the Ice Roc's freezing energy slowly pushed back the fire breath of his serpent dragons.

Even now, Zatiel felt the cold affecting his body, slowly diminishing his speed, which helped the Fire King.

Silver flames flooded the eyes of the Samsara Thearch as he used the full might of his willpower. The golden flame in his third eye burst with power, tapping into the essence of the Eternal Flame of Justice.

The golden flame surged through the Samsara Thearch's veins, igniting his body with an aura of pure determination as he sought to prevail over those that defied his sense of justice. With each strike and every movement, his power grew exponentially, matching the escalating ferocity of the battle.

Gritting his teeth, Zatiel unleashed a devastating counterattack. His fists blurred as he unleashed a barrage of punches, each blow carrying the power of his Eternal Flame of Justice.

The Fire King, caught off guard by the sudden surge in Zatiel's power, struggled to defend against the relentless assault. Punch after punch landed with bone-shattering impact, sending shockwaves through the battlefield.

Meanwhile, the Ice Roc sensed the situation's urgency as it witnessed the Samsara Thearch's burst of power and burned its vitality in order to unleash its ultimate technique.

"CRAWWWWW!"

With a deafening cry, the creature summoned an immense wave of freezing energy, covering the entire battlefield. Time itself ground to a halt as the frozen tempest threatened to overwhelm Zatiel.

The Samsara Thearch could feel an ice force invading his body and reaching all the way to his soul, threatening to encase him in eternal stillness.

The silver flames in Zatiel's eyes only grew stronger as his mind refused to succumb to the coldness. He tapped into the full potential of his Thanatos Eye, channeling the power of death and stillness.

"AHHHHHHHH!"

Darkness emanated from the Samsara Thearch's roar, intertwining with the frozen onslaught.

"BOOOOOMMMMMMMMM!"

The clash of opposing forces created an explosion of energy, shattering the ice and dispelling the frozen grip, flooding the battlefield into blinded darkness.

With the Ice Roc momentarily stunned by the backlash of having its ultimate technique shattered, Zatiel seized the opportunity.

The Samsara Thearch drove himself forward, his movements infused with the speed and momentum of a meteor. He closed the distance between himself and the Ice Roc in a heartbeat, enveloping his fists and legs in darkness and golden flames.

Silence reigned across the battlefield when Zatiel positioned his right and left fists on the Ice Roc's chest.

"¡BOOOOOMMMM!"

A cannon of dark golden flames blasted point-blank into the Ice Roc's chest, setting this one ablaze with a flame that would never extinguish and darkness that sought to consume everything.

The impact reverberated throughout the battlefield, making portions of the Emptiness collapse into nothingness.

The Ice Roc's body could not stop trembling, its icy exterior cracking under the force of the blow as it puked a mouthful of blue blood.

Zatiel's breathing was rough since that attack used a significant portion of his energy pool, but the battle was far from over. Just after taking care of the Ice Roc, the Fire King managed to recover from the earlier onslaught and launched a final desperate attack.

Flames roared around the Fire King as he unleashed a vortex of scorching fire, engulfing both Zatiel.

The flames threatened to consume the Samsara Thearch, with the searing heat burning his flesh. The Fire King's relentless assault pushed Zatiel to his limits, and things grew even dire as the Ice Roc managed to return to the fray.

The Ice Roc was severely damaged and could barely fight anymore, but by using its soul force as fuel, it managed to blend its ice energy into the Fire King's flames.

As soon as the ice energy and flames merged, the power of the inferno trapping Zatiel grew exponentially stronger. The Fire King and Ice Roc used the runic formation that created the Ice-Fire World to guide their cultivation, so it made sense that they could unleash a fragment of its essence.

Every fiber of the Samsara Thearch's being screamed with pain as the inferno was burning his body and freezing his soul.

The Samsara Thearch clenched his teeth, and resolution appeared on his face as Eros and Thanatos Eyes began to bleed. He used the first to transform his vital force into energy and the second to infuse a force of absolute end in his next attack.

Zatiel's body began to vibrate as the essence of the Eternal Flame of Justice flooded every atom of his existence. With an explosive surge, he channeled the energy coursing through his veins, using it to withstand the inferno surrounding him.

Using the few seconds he had of freedom, the Samsara Thearch clasped both hands, channeling the energy he had left into them. When he opened them, he revealed a dark sun with a power that could erase everything beneath the Middle Stage.

The Samsara Thearch made the dark sun go supernova, unleashed an explosion that obliterated the ice-fire inferno, and consumed the two Fourth Realm life forms behind it.

There was no sound, but a cataclysmic shockwave erupted from the blast, shaking the very fabric of the realm. Flames and shards of ice scattered through the air as the two adversaries were sent hurtling away, their forms cracking apart under the power of the dark supernova.

Chapter 973 Taking The Runic Formation

The power of the dark supernova spread across the Emptiness, and its range was so large that it even crashed against the force field protecting the Ice-Fire World. Luckily most of its power had faded by then, or else it would have been extremely dangerous for the inhabitants of the world.

Zatiel's breathing was rough, and he was having difficulty regulating the energy inside his body and Inner Universe. The Thanatos Eye closed on its own, and the Eros Eye glowed, using its power to heal the internal damage.

That dark supernova was the culmination of the End Force under the control of the Samsara Thearch, and it required everything he had to unleash it. With the pupils holding the white sun and Samsara Force locked, it was one of Zatiel's strongest weapons.

If the Samsara Thearch ended up wounded by releasing such a powerful technique, then the state of the Ice Roc and Fire King could be expected.

The Ice Roc was forced to remodel its body due to the severe damage it had endured at the last moment of the battle, and it went from a massive figure of thirty meters to one not larger than thirty centimeters.

As for the Fire King. He lacked the power to rearrange his body like his ice counterpart. Eight of his arms were gone, just like everything beneath the waist.

Both monarchs of the Ice-Fire World stood together in the distance, trying to regulate the internal wounds and chaotic soul force as they stared at the Samsara Thearch with an expression of utter defeat on their faces.

The duo unleashed everything they had and even managed to trap the Samara Thearch in an inferno that embodied the core of their cultivation and powers, but they still failed, and there was no more strength left in their bodies.

Zatiel stared at the duo, and there was coldness in his eyes. Even though the dark supernova had weakened him, there was still enough power on him to give the final blow to the duo or at least force them to run away.

Venturing into the deep region of the Emptiness in their condition could be deadly, especially since their battle drew the attention of several Rank 10 life forms.

Although part of the Samsara Thearch wanted that fate for the Ice Roc and Fire King due to all the problems they gave him, he was not merciless and understood the instincts of life forms to fight for their home.

"Surrender now, and I will spare your life and keep my promise of returning the runic formation after I am done with it. I will not ask again."

Zatiel's voice was cold at the end, making it clear that there were only two paths ahead, obedience or death.

The Ice Roc and Fire King looked at each other and sighed before bowing toward the Samsara Thearch. If they keep resisting, the Samsara Thearch would kill them and still take the runic formation. There was no point in choosing death.

Zatiel nodded, and then he and the Ice Roc and Fire King returned to the Ice-Fire World.

The world continued shaking with more and more strength as the runic formation reached closer and closer to its death and rebirth.

The Fire King returned to his castle, and the Ice Roc to his mountain range. The duo used the power of the world to heal from their injuries while at the same time using their Truths to stabilize the world's foundation.

Zatiel reached the middle line and put his hand over it. He closed his eyes and sent the full power of his consciousness into the runic formation.

The process was much faster because he could directly guide the Samsara Force. In just a few hours, the runic formation finally reached its death, cutting the connection with the Ice-Fire World before attaining its rebirth.

Before the runic formation could fuse again into the Ice-Fire World fabric, the Samsara Thearch contained it into a small sphere and sent it into his Inner Universe.

"RUMBLE!"

A cataclysmic event began when the runic formation vanished from the Ice-Fire World's middle line. The nature of the force that covered each half of the world could not tolerate each other, so they took the path of dominion, trying to overcome the other.

Even if one side managed to win, a world with a single elemental force could not create a force field capable of enduring the radiation or chaotic waves from the Emptiness. If nothing reverted that path, the Ice-Fire World would become a barren heavenly body with nothing alive in it other than the two Fourth Realm life forms.

The Samsara Thearch saw the state of the world and immediately acted. His hands moved at supernatural speed as he forged runes with the power of Karma and Causality, using his blood and soul force as raw materials.

Those runes began to fuse into the Ice-Fire World's middle line, and slowly the tremors that covered the entire surface began to calm down.

Zatiel spent nearly a week infusing runes into the middle line until a new runic formation finally took place in the center of the Ice-Fire World.

The Fire King and Ice Roc focused on the new runic formation born out of the powers of Karma and Causality, and while they were happy it managed to stabilize the world, they understood it was only a temporary fix. That formation only kept the forces of ice and fire in the world at bay, stopping them from trying to consume the other, but it would not last for long.

Zatiel was a powerful Runemaster, but the runic formation left behind after that golden giant's death surpassed his abilities. He even deduced that the giant had a strength similar to his own, with a step on the Late Stage.

"The Karma-Causality Dual Seal Formation should be enough to stabilize your world for one hundred thousand years. If everything goes well, I should have already returned by then. In the case that something goes wrong..."

The Samsara Thearch did not finish his sentence but sent a meaningful gaze to the Ice Roc and Fire King. He could not return the runic formation to them if he perished.

Although the Ice Roc and Fire King had every right to hate Zatiel, they found themselves praying for his victory since that was the only way their world could survive.

Zatiel gave one final glance at the duo before leaving the Ice-Fire World and marching across the Emptiness. The idea of asking the Ice Roc and Fire King to join his side during the war against the Beyonder's Knight did cross his mind, but he immediately discarded it.

There was bound to be resentment in the hearts of the Ice Roc and Fire King, making them wild cards, not to mention that the Samsara Thearch was aware of the origin of the Knights, so he would only put people of complete trust in the battlefield.

Zatiel's body began to drive the chaotic energy that flooded the Emptiness into his body. That would normally be poisonous for most life forms, but thanks to his unique constitution, he was able to adapt to it and use it as fuel.

'One treasure down, ten to go.'

As he remembered all the effort it took to obtain the runic formation, Zatiel could not help but sigh as he understood there were still another ten treasures he needed. He hoped the others would be easier but knew there would be no such luck.

Where there was a treasure, there was danger. That was a fundamental truth of life, just like the duality of good and evil.

The next target of the Samsara Thearch was a Fourth Realm Phenomenon. Those were events that occurred after the clash of extremely powerful life forms or forces.

The one Zatiel was after was a massive realm of shadows and darkness he saw in the memories of one of the slayed Rank 10 life forms. It had an incredibly destructive nature, and that Rank 10 did not dare to get near it, so Zatiel had very little information about it besides its power.

After a month of traveling through the Emptiness, Zatiel had managed to recover just in time to witness the phenomenon he was looking for.

The Samsara Thearch's eyes widened as he saw the domain of darkness and shadows in front of him. Seeing it through the memories of a weak Rank 10 life form and staring directly into it were two very different things.

It embodied the convergence of death, destruction, and the erosion of meaning on a cosmic scale. It was an event that transcended the boundaries of life and extended its influence to the realm of the mind.

"Exactly what I was looking for."

Zatiel smiled as he felt the nature of the phenomenon, but his focus soon returned to his face since he had to find a way to encapsulate it, so he could use it to form a weapon.

Chapter 974 Into The Fourth Realm Phenomenon

The Samsara Thearch took a deep breath and unleashed the full might of his consciousness. The Fourth Realm Phenomenon was the size of a small super universe, but that was not a problem for him.

He wanted to encapsulate the entire phenomenon before slowly shrinking it to the size of a sphere he could hold in his hand. After that, there would still be a lot of work to do since the energy and powers on the phenomenon needed to be tamed, but it would be much easier then.

However, his consciousness, which had the power to rearrange Laws and Concepts, could not pierce into the Fourth Realm Phenomenon.

Zatiel frowned as he used his soul force to enhance the power of his consciousness and attempted to force his way in, but that only made things worse.

The Fourth Realm Phenomenon reacted, burning anything that came in contact with it, and due to its nature, it was especially effective against spiritual forces like consciousnesses. It was like trying to use a piece of cloth to grab fire.

A profound light appeared in Zatiel's eyes as he retracted his consciousness. The way in which the phenomenon reacted just now gave him a feeling of rage, something that should not have happened.

Fourth Realm Phenomena, like the domain of darkness in front of him, were multiversal forces. They were capable of unimaginable destruction and chaos, but there should not be emotions or feelings in them.

Zatiel's third eye glowed as he used the power of the Samsara Truth to analyze the Fourth Realm Phenomenon thoroughly. A solemn expression appeared on his face as he felt there was something else inside. He could not tell what, but it was capable of rage and would react badly to his desire to take the phenomenon away.

"Ahhhh."

The Samsara Thearch could not help but sigh as he understood there would be problems. Yet, there was nothing he could do but carry on since this phenomenon was perfect for one of the Sacred Kings, so he had to take it.

'Trying to encapsulate it from the outside will not work, so the only path ahead is to reach its core.'

Now that there was a plan, Zatiel did not hesitate before covering his body in dark purple flames and flashing into the Fourth Realm Phenomenon.

As soon as he put a steep in, he felt a crushing force trying to consume his body and erase his mind, but it could not overcome the defense of the Samsara Force.

Still, the power of the darkness grew stronger as he moved deeper, so the Samsara Force might not be enough once he reached the core.

There was no light inside the domain of darkness, and even the laws of space-time were so twisted that trying to figure out left from right would be nearly impossible. That was not a problem for someone like the Samsara Thearch since the power of his soul was high enough to understand the path forward without the need for a stable space-time.

However, outlandish destructive pressure and twisted space-time were not the only defensive tools of the Fourth Realm Phenomenon.

"Hahahaha."

Zatiel's eyes widened as he heard a baby's laughter and turned to the left only to see Aurora laughing and stretching her arms in his direction.

The Fourth Realm Phenomenon's power did not end there since it unleashed a powerful intent that sought to cloud Zatiel's mind, trying to erode his resistance before doing the same with his memories.

The Samsara Thearch's soul force was powerful enough not to lose himself in the illusion, but it still affected his mind. A part of him wanted to surrender himself to the phenomenon, as it promised a life with no worries and pure peace.

'Hmph, a life without worries and pure peace. It's not the same as a life without meaning!'

Although there was not an insignificant part of Zatiel that wanted to toss away the burden on his shoulders, that did not mean he would be content with a life of apathy, just satisfying his most basic desire without a true goal in life.

Zatiel focused his eyes on the path to the phenomenon's center and continued.

"¡Waah!"

The Samsara Thearch had not advanced very far before Aurora's laughter transformed into a cry. An immense coldness appeared in his eyes since someone dared to use the image of his daughter's crying to influence his mind.

Getting angry with a phenomenon for its behavior was irrational, but Zatiel felt an emotion coming from it once again. This time it was not rage but malice.

Zatiel's grip tightened on his resolve as he pressed forward, undeterred by the malevolence emanating from the phenomenon. The twisted depths of the domain seemed to grow darker, as did the evil intent itself. Every step brought him closer to the source of this darkness, and he knew that the core held the answers he sought.

The further he ventured, the more intense the assault on his mind became. Illusions taunted him, taking on the forms of catastrophic futures where everything was lost, and there was nothing but despair.

'Surrender.'

'Rest.'

'Give up.'

Zatiel's eyes grew sharp since voices began appearing in his mind. They were growing louder by the second, and the intent in them could break the spirit of even Fourth Realm life forms.

Silver flames appeared in Zatiel's eyes as he fought back those voices using his willpower. The voices grew weaker, allowing him to move forward.

Unfortunately for Zatiel, the origin of everything was in the core of the Fourth Realm Phenomenon, so the closer he got, the more powerful became the forces that sought to break his body and mind.

The malicious intent intensified as he neared the core, and suddenly shadows twisted and writhed, reaching out like tendrils to ensnare him.

Zatiel immediately waved his right hand, generating a blast of dark purple flames against the tendrils, but to his surprise, they were able to resist them.

The shadow tendrils were so fast that before Zatiel could send another attack, they had already wrapped around him, trapping him into a dark cocoon.

"Cracks!"

Cracking sounds emerged from the shadow cocoon as it began to tighten, trying to crush the bones of the Samsara Thearch. Once the body was shattered, it would be easier to corrupt the mind.

However, before the shadow cocoon could finish its job, a golden light appeared inside it, only to burst it to pieces the next second, showing the figure of the Samsara Thearch bathed in the power of the Eternal Flame of Justice.

The Eternal Flame of Justice's radiant light pushed back against the encroaching darkness. It served as a beacon, guiding him through the illusion and burning the malicious voices inside his mind.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity of struggle, Zatiel stood before the heart of the Fourth Realm Phenomenon. The core pulsed with a malevolence that seemed to seep into his very being, making him frown.

It made no sense that a Fourth Realm Phenomenon would have such an evil aura in its core.

Zatiel channeled the power of the Samsara Truth and the Eternal Flame of Justice. The first one would protect his body, and the second his mind from any hidden power inside the core. He extended his hand, his palm radiating with dark purple flames, and touched the core.

As his hand made contact, a shockwave of malicious energy rippled through his body. The pain was excruciating, threatening to overwhelm him, but Zatiel gritted his teeth and fought against it.

The core burst with power, its tendrils of malice lashing out, piercing into Zatiel's hand and trying to invade the inside of his body.

Along with the unbearable pain came an image. Zatiel saw in his mind the phenomenon during the early stages of its creation and how near its event horizon was a massive super universe.

Unfortunately for the countless souls inside that universe, they were all consumed by the Fourth Realm Phenomenon, which destroyed their bodies and erased their minds. However, there was one thing that remained, and that was the soul force and feelings of those people.

The malice he sensed was a byproduct of the Fourth Realm Phenomenon's consumption. It had grown twisted and vengeful, driven by hatred that those trillions upon trillions of lives experienced during their last moment as they could not accept that they would only perish due to simple bad luck.

Zatiel's eyes almost lost focus as the power of the intent and rage nearly overwhelmed him, but then the power of his Eternal Flame of Justice burst. He used it to regain focus before sending it straight into the core of the Fourth Realm Phenomenon.

"¡AHHHHHHHHH!"

A cry of pain and a searing sound echoed across the Emptiness as the power of the Eternal Flame of Justice burned all the evil emotions inside the core.

Zatiel made his soul force explode as he sent more and more of the golden fire into the core.

Chapter 975 Facing The Dark Storm

Zatiel sent more and more of the golden flames into the core, burning all the negative soul force and emotions left in it by the inhabitants of the destroyed universe.

However, once he reached the deepest part of the core, he found a malignant force that was impossible to destroy with his Eternal Flame of Justice. It was encoded in the essence of the Fourth Realm Phenomenon, and erasing it would do catastrophic damage to the core.

Zatiel's eyes narrowed as he retracted the golden flame and began to send dark purple fire with the power of the Samsara Force into the core. If he could not destroy it, then the only path forward was to purge it.

Tendrils of foul darkness emerged from the Fourth Realm Phenomenon's core, generating a black cloud above Zatiel that grew in size and power by the second.

"AAhhhhAHHhahhh!"

Howls of pain, agony, and rage emerged from the cloud, transforming into a phenomenon itself and gaining sentience now that it was no longer suppressed in the deepest part of the Fourth Realm Phenomenon's core.

The Samsara Thearch glanced at the dark cloud above him, but he did not stop and kept sending purple flames into the core, using all his power to extract every form of pollution from the Fourth Realm Phenomenon.

If the Fourth Realm Phenomenon was in its purest form, then he could build with it a weapon that could allow a Sacred King to unleash a battle might that neared the peak of the Initial Stage.

After ten hours, Zatiel managed to extract all the pollution that had infected the core, and he felt how the Fourth Realm Phenomenon trembled, changing its nature to what it was supposed to be.

The Fourth Realm Phenomenon was an emotionless cosmic force. There was no rage or hatred in its actions, regardless of the destruction it created. It was a manifestation of powers that erased the mind and drove everything to a state of non-relevance.

Zatiel felt the chaotic state of the Fourth Realm Phenomenon as it healed from the malice and pollution that had invaded it for billions of years and saw his chance. The phenomenon was not able to put resistance, and he used his power to drive the universe-size domain of darkness back into its core.

Despite lacking emotions, the Fourth Realm Phenomenon would have put resistance to that sort of action, but it was in such a chaotic state that it was not able to fight back against the powers of the Samsara Thearch.

It began slow, but it became faster every millisecond, and in less than five minutes, the massive universe-size Fourth Realm Phenomenon was now in the palm of the Samsara Thearch in the form of a dark sphere.

Zatiel smiled as he generated a series of runes over the dark sphere to stabilize the Fourth Realm Phenomenon before sending it into his Inner Universe. Yet, he was not able to be happy for long since there was still something to take care of.

"AhhhhhhaAAAHhahahahHAHAa!"

The dark cloud had transformed into a massive storm-like phenomenon, covering billions of kilometers. Howling faces formed in it, unleashing a malevolent and toxic aura that eroded the chaotic energy around it.

Zatiel's eyes narrowed as he felt that the storm-like phenomenon was unstable, and could collapse on its own in a few hundred years, so there was no need for him to take care of it.

However, there was also a chance that the phenomenon could mutate, adapting to its instability and growing stronger.

The Samsara Thearch could not allow that since the sole intent of the storm-like phenomenon was to erode and destroy, bringing other universes to their doom just like the Fourth Realm Phenomenon did to the people whose rage and hatred created it.

Suddenly, the dark storm trembled, and in the next second, millions of eyes made of putrid flesh formed all over it. They had different colors and forms, and there was nothing but rage and a desire to burn everything in them.

Zatiel could see that each eye unleashed a different soul aura, all connected by a single desire. He did not have much time to analyze the phenomenon since all those millions of eyes focused on him shortly after they appeared.

"AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH."

A horrifying how emerged from the dark storm as the millions of putrid eyes glowed, unleashing a soul attack that made the Emptiness tremble!

Zatiel was not able to dodge the attack, and this one landed point-blank, making blood leak from his eyes and ears. He had consumed a lot of his energy taking care of the Fourth Realm Phenomenon, so his energy defenses were low, something the dark storm took advantage of.

Immediately the Eros Eye began to glow, unleashing a stream of life force that healed all the internal damage. The Thanatos Eye took a moment as it first had to find the foreign soul force that invaded the Samsara Thearch's Inner Universe before using End Force to eradicate it.

Zatiel stabilized his condition, and his eyes grew cold as he focused on the dark storm. He could understand the rage of the people that perished but could not allow an entity born of hatred that only could destroy to exist.

The golden flames of the Eternal Flame of Justice flooded his body and soul, and his eyes glowed with silver flames as he faced the malevolent dark storm. He was exhausted and weakened but could not allow such an entity to wander free around the Emptiness, so he had to end it here and now.

Another soul attack emerged from the dark cloud as all the putrid eyes glowed, but this time Zatiel was prepared. His Samsara Eye burst with power, acting as a beacon for the negative soul force, absorbing it before sending it back to where it came from, enhanced by a golden flame.

Drawing upon the power of his Samsara Force, he channeled his energy into his palms, conjuring swirling spheres of dark purple flames.

"Sasmara Barrage!"

He unleashed a barrage of energy blasts, each one aimed at a different eye within the dark storm.

Explosions erupted within the storm as Zatiel's attacks struck their mark. The putrid flesh and malevolent eyes were obliterated, disintegrating into nothingness. But the storm fought back, its rage intensifying with each eye destroyed.

Undeterred, Zatiel continued his relentless assault, pouring more and more of his Samsara Force into his attacks. The dark storm writhed and convulsed, its toxic aura growing weaker. It fought desperately, unleashing waves of corrosive energy and soul attacks in a desperate attempt to defend itself.

Zatiel showed no mercy, redirected all the soul attacks he could, and enduring the others while continuing attacking with all he had.

The dark storm was no different. It refused to accept death and continued attacking, burning itself in order to obtain more energy and unleash even more powerful attacks.

Minutes turned into hours as the battle raged on, the dark storm gradually losing ground. The storm's once formidable presence dwindled, and Zatiel sensed its weakening soul force. He saw an opportunity to deliver the final blow, to put an end to the dark storm's existence once and for all.

Gathering his remaining strength, Zatiel unleashed a devastating surge of power. The dark storm convulsed, its putrid flesh writhing in agony. The storm's toxic aura dissipated.

With one final burst of energy, Zatiel unleashed an all-encompassing attack, channeling the combined might of his Thanatos Eyes and Eros Eyes. The dark storm shattered into billions of fragments that would soon disintegrate under the weight of the chaotic waves that flooded the Emptiness.

However, the Sasamra Thearch had a better use for them. His Thanatos Eye glowed, drawing every fragment of that broken storm in.

That was incredibly dangerous because if the pieces were put back together, they could remerge into the storm-like phenomenon that he took so long to defeat. Yet, Zatiel did it because he was confident in his ability to keep the phenomenon under control and due to the dangers he would be facing in the next clash.

'I have two treasures ready. The runic formation from the Ice-Fire World can generate synergy between two opposite forces and make them thrive with even more power. The Fourth Realm Phenomenon can erode more than just life and death, extending its reach into the immaterial, affecting the mind, will, and memory of everything it touches.'

The Samsara Thearch was very happy with the treasures he had managed to get so far, and there was another not very far away from here, but the problem was that unlike the other two, this one had a guardian that would rather die than lose it.

"Ahhhh."

Zatiel would have wanted not to face that individual if possible, but that treasure was perfect for his firstborn. With it, Dante's chances of surviving the upcoming war would be much greater, and if he had to kill someone to protect his son, there was no doubt in his heart that he would do it.

Chapter 976 Oblivion Gate

Zatiel continues flying across the Emptiness for weeks. Like the last time, he used the waves of chaotic energy around him to heal his body and soul, restoring himself to peak condition. There was a sharp light in his eyes as he moved closer and closer to his objective.

What the Samsara Thearch was after was something he did not learn from the memories of slaying Rank 10, but a place he found during his initial journey through the Emptiness. He had only seen it from afar the first time and did not dare to get too close since, at that time, he lacked the strength to face the individual guarding the treasure.

That person's aura was one full of commitment that would not bend or yield under any circumstances, and there was little doubt in his mind that he would have to kill that individual to take the treasure.

Even now, Zatiel was not sure of his chances of victory. Of course, things would be different if he was willing to go all out, overexerting himself and using the power of the White Sun Pupil.

Yet, that could not happen. The Samsara Thearch could not afford to use the powers of the Late Stage on his journeys to secure the treasures. Any incapacitating injury at this point would put the entire Daybreak Universe in danger.

After almost a month, Zatiel was even better than his previous peak since the battle with the Fourth Realm Phenomenon taught him how to use his Eternal Flame of Justice at a more granular level.

'If everything were to turn out great, then I would reach the Late Stage by the time I obtain all the treasures.'

Zatiel showed a rueful smile as that thought crossed his mind since reaching the Late Stage required more than just hard work. And even if he were to achieve it, that did not mean everything would turn out well.

The Beyonder had existed as a Late Stage life form for an unquantifiable amount of time, so it was impossible to know just how strong it was or what you would need to defeat it.

Silver flames appeared in the Samsara Thearch's eyes as he pushed those thoughts to the back of his head and focused on the target in front of him.

Zatiel had finally reached his destination, and what he saw was hard to describe.

Right in front of the Samsara Thearch was a massive gate whose height could equal the diameter of a super universe, with a division in the middle. It glowed with a golden light that kept the giant waves of chaotic energy away and generated all sorts of phenomena in the Emptiness.

There were strange pictures engraved in the gate, with the largest of all being two majestic black butterflies, one on each side.

Nine golden steps lead to the gate, each of them having the picture of a strange beast that Zatiel could not recognize from any of his memories.

At the highest point of this majestic gate was a golden core surrounded by red halos that unleashed a power full of life and vitality. It was the energy nucleus of the gate and what Zatiel was looking for.

As for the person that guarded this construct, he was a middle-aged man with short black hair, a large muscular humanoid body, golden armor, and a large sword on his back. The man resembled a typical paladin from the fairy tales and was currently in a meditative position, drinking what seemed to be tea.

The middle-aged man did not raise his eyes even when the Samsara Thearch appeared and just kept drinking his tea as if nothing was happening.

Zatiel's eyes narrowed as he saw the behavior of the man. He had not bothered to hide his presence since that would have been futile, but he did not expect the middle-aged man to act as if he was not even here.

'Arrogance or true composure?'

The Samsara Thearch flew toward the gate, but to his surprise, when he reached the steps, a force began to act on his body. It pushed him down, forcing him to take the steps if he wanted to reach the gate.

Zatiel had the power to resist that strange force, but it would drain a considerable amount of his energy, and there was no gain in it, so he descended to the first step.

As soon as he put his feet on the first step, the engraving on it began to glow, and the phantom of a majestic creature emerged.

'Oh, I see. Each step is a different beast I must face before finally reaching that man. It looks entertaining, but I am not in the mood.'

Golden flames emerged from the Eternal Flame Pupil, flooding the first step and forcing the phantom back.

Zatiel then just began to move from one step to the other, and no matter what emerged, all those creatures simply crumbled under the power of the Eternal Flame of Justice.

Those phantoms were not weak, each being a True Rank 10 life form. Still, while that would be enough to hinder the path of most Fourth Realm life forms, it was not enough to delay the Samsara Thearch at all.

The Samsara Thearch reached the ninth step and overpowered the phantom in it just like he did with all the others before jumping into the platform containing the middle-aged man and the golden gate.

"Please."

The middle-aged man extended his hand, signaling for Zatiel to sit in front of him and share the tea. That was a bizarre proposition, one that Zatiel did not accept right away, but he was intrigued by this character, so he nodded and sat in front of the man.

"Zatiel Daybreak, the Samsara Thearch, Progenitor of Neo-Demons and Depravitas, Doom of Alpha and Eldritch, Slayer of Endless Darkness."

Before Zatiel could even say a word, the middle-aged man began to speak. Although those were just titles, they depicted key moments in his life, something the middle-aged man should know nothing about since they had never met before.

"You seem to know a lot about me."

Zatiel's eyes grew sharp, and his voice was cold as he stared at the middle-aged man.

"Not really, it just told me about you." The middle-aged man pointed at the gate behind him before raising his head and opening his eyes. There was no light in them, making it seem he was blind, but Zatiel could feel that someone was looking at him through them.

'Those are no eyes but portals.'

Zatiel's face grew solemn as he felt the power of the middle-aged man more clearly now that they were right in front of each other, and it seemed that the fight would be even more dangerous than he thought. Nevertheless, he would not leave this place without the energy nucleus.

"You know a lot about me, but I don't know your name."

The middle-aged man stared at Zatiel for a moment and handed a cup of tea.

"I don't have a name. Those are social constructs used by life forms to communicate and spread their circle of influence. I was built with the sole purpose of guarding the Oblivion Gate, so I never needed one. However, for the purpose of this conversation, you can call me Guardian."

Zatiel's eyes narrowed, and he stared at Guardian for a moment before taking the cup and drinking the tea. A flash of surprise appeared as the taste was delicious.

"It had been a long time since I drank something just for its taste. I must say, it is very good."

Guardian nodded to Zatiel's words and served another cup as the two drank the tea together.

"Oblivion Gate. That is a very ominous name. I wonder where it leads to?"

"It is not to get somewhere but for someone to get here."

Zatiel's eyes widened as he heard that. He did not expect Guardian to actually answer his question, but this one gave him even more information.

That massive golden gate was a construct that defied logic and with a power that no one beneath the Late Stage could make, yet its sole purpose was to allow an individual to reach this sector of the Emptiness.

The gate grew from an interesting treasure to a potentially dangerous location. Zatiel had no idea who the person that wanted to use it was or their goals, but he did not feel comfortable with the gate being so near the Daybreak Universe.

The Samsara Thearch then focused on Guardian, trying to understand more, but he was out of luck.

"I know your questions, but I don't have answers. I have no idea who will come through that gate or what they will do after reaching this place. I only know I must guard this place until it happens, and I will do it from anyone."

Guardian's face was resolute, with no hesitation or fear whatsoever.

"Ahhh."

Zatiel sighed as he continued drinking his tea alongside the middle-aged man. None of them hurry up since they knew that after they were over, a battle would start.

Chapter 977 Fourth Realm Omnipotent Spell

Zatiel and the Guardian took the last sip of their tea, and the moment they put their cups back on the table, this one exploded due to the overwhelming soul force both of them unleashed.

Both rose from the ground and attacked the other, depending solely on the strength of their bodies with no energy augmentation whatsoever.

The Guardian sent a punch toward Zatiel's face, and the power in this one was so great that it left cracks in the space.

Zatiel's eyes widened as he felt the power in that punch, but he was able to react, moving his head to the side, before sending a counter straight into the Guardian's temple.

"¡Boom!"

A shock wave spread across the golden platform where they stood due to the immense power behind Zatiel's strike. Although he created the Primordial Body Incarnation with the body of a Primordial, the truth was that this one had evolved to the point that even a purebred Lord of Emptiness could not equal it!

All that made it just more impressive how the Guardian was able to stand straight after that point-blank punch to the temple, not moving a single step, and able to counter immediately.

Zatiel felt like he had just stroked the hardest surface in the multiverse when his fist landed on the Guardian's head, and the shock did not end there. Due to their closeness, he was not able to evade the Guardian's punch as this one landed straight in his chest.

Shock appeared in the Samsara Thearch's eyes as he felt the power in that punch and instantly understood that the key behind its power was weight.

"¡BOOM!"

That punch sent Zatiel flying away, but he regained control of his body in less than a second, just in time to avoid the Guardian's ax kick aimed at his head.

"¡BOOM!"

A new blast spread across the golden platform once the Guardian's kick landed on the floor. That attack had not yet finished, but the Guardian sent another toward Zatiel.

The Samsara Thearch focused on avoiding the Guardian's physical strikes as he focused on the power of the man. He could not help but feel it was familiar to the Absolute Solar Yang True Doomsday Body.

'It is similar in terms of durability and weight. However, that is a constitution that reached the limit of the Middle Stage Fourth Realm!'

Zatiel was truly amazed by the knowledge behind the Fourth Realm's constitution. Luckily, he was still superior in terms of speed, or the melee part of the battle would have been futile.

The Guardian and the Samsara Thearch displayed martial skills that reached the same level, with the first dominating in terms of defensive and offensive power and the second having the advantage in speed.

Zatiel and Guardian never broke eye contact, even as their arms and legs moved at a speed impossible to measure. Of every ten hits in the fight, Zatiel connected nine, but the Guardian could equal the amount of damage received with a single blow.

Precisely ten minutes after the fight started, the Samsara Thearch and the Guardian put distance between them as an immense amount of energy gathered in their right palms.

A beam of golden light emerged from the Guardian's palm while the Samsara Thearch unleashed a torrent of dark purple flames.

"¡BOOM!"

The beam of golden light and the dark purple flames clashed in the middle of the golden platform, generating a blast of fire and light in all directions.

Zatiel channeled all the energy of his Inner Universe into the torrent of dark purple flames, driving them forward as the darkness of the Thanatos Eye increased their destructive power.

The Guardian's adopted a solemn expression as he felt the power of the dark purple flames growing, but he did not fall back. Dots of light began to appear in his blind eyes. The next second, he infused starlight into his attack, making it even more potent.

The clash between the dark purple flames continued the power of Samsara and the destructive might of the Thanatos Eye, and the golden starlight continued for a few seconds before it grew unstable.

"BOOOOMMMMMMMMMMM!"

An explosion of dark purple flames and golden starlight spread across the platform. The waves of destructive energy covered both the Guardian and the Samsara Thearch.

The Guardian's body glowed with golden light as he protected himself from the chaotic waves of energy, but he did not lose focus and immediately searched for Zatiel's presence.

A flash of shock appeared in the Guardian's eyes as he looked up and saw the figure of the Samsara Thearch, ready to unleash an attack containing a simply overwhelming amount of energy.

"Heaven End!"

What Zatiel was unleashing was not a simple manifestation of the powers of his bloodline, Truth, or Eternal Flame, but a true Fourth Realm Spell that harnessed the power of Omnipotence.

The power of a Fourth Real Omnipotent Spell was incredible, mighty enough to erase universes.

Zatiel had not used this power before because it was never his intent to kill the Ice Roc or Fire King, and he could not destroy the Fourth Realm Phenomena, but this battle was different. If he wanted the Oblivion Gate's energy nucleus, the only way to get it was to kill the Guardian!

The Thanatos Eye burst with power as dead stars materialized above Zatiel. These were not simple energy incarnations but true heavenly bodies full of the aura of death and end.

The Samsara Pupil's glowed as it ignited the dead heavenly bodies with dark purple flames, increasing their destructive power.

Zatiel waved his hand down, and the dead flaming stars descended on the Guardian with a power surpassing Epoch Explosions' destructive might.

The Guardian knew just how resilient its body was and that he could endure the clash of those giant dead stars, but the key behind Heaven End was not its physical might. All those flaming heavenly bodies had the power to erase time itself, and they would drain the life out of every cell on his body.

Since he was not fast enough to dodge it, there was only one path ahead, block the attack.

Despite facing dozens of dead stars, the Guardian did not lose calm as he took out the bastard sword on his back before burying it in the ground.

"Celestial Barrier!"

Dozens of giant golden shields with a starlight butterfly engraved in them formed around the Guardian, forming an impenetrable barrier.

Zatiel's eyes narrowed as he saw that barrier since its power could not belong to anything else but a Fourth Realm Omnipotent Spell.

Reaching a Middle Stage battle power was something Initial Stage life forms could do with the assistance of a great enough energy source like the Ice Roc and Fire King did by tapping into the power of the Ice-Fire World. However, your cultivation must have reached the Middle Stage to unleash a Fourth Realm Omnipotent Spell!

The Samsara Thearch's eyes narrowed as he understood just how strong the Guardian was, and his eyes burst with killing intent. It would be the first time he had to face someone in the Middle Stage, and if he were to contain himself, the consequences would be catastrophic.

"¡AHHHHH!"

With a roar, Zatiel sent even more energy into the death stars, making them clash against the golden shield the next second.

"¡BOOOM!" "¡BOOM!" "¡BOOM!" "¡BOOM!"

Every time a dead star clashed against the shield, it unleashed an explosion of darkness that spread beyond the limits of the Oblivion Gate, corroding the chaotic energy in the Emptiness and everything else in its range.

The Guardian channeled more energy into the Celestial Barrier, but after enduring over 90% of the dead stars, a crack appeared in the shields.

"CRACK!"

A simple crack was all the power in those dead stars needed to erode the entire barrier and crash with the Guardian.

"BOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMM!"

An explosion of darkness spread across the golden platform, unleashing a power that devoured life in order to give death. It was a force so strong that nothing beneath the Peak Initial Stage could survive.

Zatiel's breathing was rough as he stared at the sea of darkness his spells generated. He did not believe that attack had ended the Guardian, but he was sure it should incapacitate this one long enough for him to stabilize the powers inside him.

However, Zatiel was wrong, and before he could even regulate his breathing, a figure emerged from the sea of darkness, appearing right behind him.

The Guardian's body was covered in injuries, with his right cheek devoid of flesh, showing the bones on his face. Despite the damage and pain, there was nothing but resoluteness on his face as he raised his bastard sword.

"Stellar Strike!"

The power of hundreds of collapsing stars emerged from the bastard sword as he waved it toward the Samsara Thearch.

Zatiel could feel the power in that attack, and if it were to land point-blank on him, he could only survive by using the White Sun Pupil.

Chapter 978 Surrender Or Death?

Zatiel did not lose focus, and his power exploded as the Eros Eye and Samsara Pupil began to glow. Soul force, life force, and dark purple flames emerged from his body, manifesting a lotus-shaped shield around him.

"Samsara Eternal Lotus."

That was the most potent defensive spell of the Samsara Thearch and one that an Epoch Explosion would not even make a dent. It represented the four significant stages of Zatiel's journey.

The outer layer comprised the Human Petals, symbolizing Zatiel's beginning. It imbued the shield with the mortal's resilience and adaptability. All physical attacks would find their kinetic force and moment nullified by the power of the petals.

Moving in were Demon Petals. It represented his journey as the Incarnation of Death and Destruction, infusing the shield with infernal energy, enhancing its resilience to energy and soul forces. Curses, hexes, and soul-invasion attacks would find it nearly impossible to overcome this barrier.

The next layer of petals was the Neo-Demon Petals, full of ethereal power that surpassed the limitation of energy, soul, and body. Unlike the Demons Petals and Human Petals, this layer was constantly rotating, full of variations and changes that could redirect any physical and energy attack.

The final layer of petals protecting the Samsara Thearch was the Universal Savior Petals. There were eleven of them, with the images of the Revenge Thearch, Emptiness Thearch, and Sacred Kings engraved in them.

Those represented his path as the savior and were born out of the soul force and absolute respect and admiration of the people whose essence was engraved in the petals.

Universal Savior Petals were able to use the strength of others to enhance their power, using the power of karma and causality, granting them a defensive might capable of facing even Omnipotence.

Finally, the Eternal Flame Pupil glowed, setting the lotus ablaze with the power of justice.

The power of Samsara Eternal Lotus was incredible and took a long time to describe, but the lotus only needed a fraction of a nanosecond to materialize, protecting Zatiel from an attack that could easily pulverize a standard super universe.

Shock and awe appeared on the Guardian's face as he felt the power of that defensive spell. It was truly formidable, and the Samsara Thearch's use of Truth and Eternal Flame was superb, flawlessly combining the power of ideas and reality.

Yet, regardless of the admiration the Guardian felt for such an extraordinary spell, the only desire in his soul was to destroy it.

"¡AHHHHH!"

The Guardian roared as the power on his bastard sword increased. Celestial energy radiated from the weapon, and as he waved it down toward the lotus, it ignited with a brilliant divine light.

"BOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMM!"

A shock wave that spread beyond the limits of the Oblivion Gate emerged the instant the Stellar Strike collided with the Samsara Eternal Lotus.

Golden flames and stellar cosmic light spread in every direction as the Guardian pushed the bastard sword down with the power to ignore space-time, breaking a fraction of the Emptiness in his path.

Cracks began to form around them as space collapsed. Normally, if those types of phenomena were to happen inside a universe, it would only lead to a pocket of chaotic energy, but it was different in the Emptiness.

Making space collapse in the Emptiness generated areas where reality ceased to exist, and even Initial Stage Fourth Realm life forms could be trapped for eons.

Despite the danger of those failures, the Guardian and Samsara Thearch did not even bother to look at them and kept their eyes on each other.

"CRACK!"

The first layer of protection, the Human Petals, was shattered under the power of hundreds of collapsing stars inside the Guardian's bastard sword, and he carried on with all he had to the next one.

Zatiel stared at the Guardian calmly and coldly as he intertwined his fingers, increasing the infernal energy in the Demon Petals.

The Guardian's eyes narrowed as he saw how the stellar energy and divine light on his bastard sword burned under the might of the infernal flames. A decisive expression appeared on his face as he unleashed a mouthful of golden blood over the bastard sword.

As soon as the blood touched the weapon, it transformed the divine light into golden flames, shining with stellar light.

"CRACK!"

Zatiel's body trembled, and blood leaked from his eyes as the Demon Petals shattered under the enhanced might of the bastard sword.

If the Stellar Strike were to land on him, the Samsara Thearch knew he would be forced to use the White Sun Pupil to survive, leaving him wounded and seriously jeopardizing the survival of the Daybreak Universe.

Defeat was not an option!

The Samsara Thearch ignited the entirety of the energy held inside his Inner Universe, more energy than what a standard super universe could produce in a lifetime, and channeled all of it into the Neo-Demon Petals.

The Guardian's Bastard Sword had already clashed with the Neo-Demon Petals, and it was making a dent in them, but once the Samsara Thearch poured an entire universe of energy into them, everything changed.

Neo-Demon Petals began to rotate with much more power, generating an ethereal force field that dispersed the forces behind the bastard sword.

Blood emerged from the Guardian's hands since the Neo-Demon Petals' rotation threatened to throw the bastard sword away from his hands, forcing him to tighten his grip to the point of self-injury.

Feeling the skin and muscles on his hands tearing did not affect the focus of the Guardian. The starlight in his eyes grew mightier as a golden glow emerged from inside his heart, covering his body and making his muscles bulge.

Zatiel found it hard to believe, but the physical strength of the Guardian rose to a new level after the enhancement of that golden light.

"CRACK!"

The bastard sword managed to stop the Neo-Demon Petals' rotation before shattering them into billions of pieces.

Everything around the duo had already collapsed into a vacuum of nothingness. The only thing the clash between Stellar Strike and the Enterla Samsara Lotus did not destroy was the Oblivion Gate since it was a construct that could endure the might of Reality Override.

Zatiel could not help but puke blue due to the severe damage he received after the Neo-Demon Petals were shattered, and now he was last to his last defense. If they failed, the fight would end, and he would have lost.

There was no hesitation as he opened his mouth, releasing sky-blue blood and fusing into the Universal Savior Petals. He was using his soul blood to improve the power of the defensive spells.

The Guardian's face was pale since he had already used all the energy he had inside his body and even the inner force he had been storing for billions of years. If he failed to break the Universal Savior Petals, he would be left open for a direct attack from the Samsara Thearch, which he would not be able to survive in his current condition.

Once the bastard sword touched the Universal Savior Petals, the Guardian saw how the figures of the Emptiness Thearch, Revenge Thearch, and Sacred Kings opened their eyes and focused on him.

The Universal Savior Petals consumed the energy behind the bastard sword, channeling it into the figures of the Thearchs and Sacred Kings before the eleven unleashed a combined soul attack.

It nearly broke his soul, and the light in his eyes began to fade since the diminished pushed him into unconsciousness. Yet, even in that state, the Guardian kept pushing the bastard sword forward!

The Samsara Thearch saw how the Universal Savior Petals were about to shatter, but a decisive light appeared in his eyes as he clasped his hands with all his strength.

"BOOOOOOMMMMMMMM!"

Since the petals were about to shatter, Zatiel decided to make them detonate, unleashing an explosion that harmed him but also sent the Guardian flying away with severe wounds, saving him from facing the blunt power of Stellar Strike.

Dark purple flames, golden fire, and stellar light flooded the platform around the Oblivion Gate. They only vanished after nearly ten minutes, showing the figures of the wounded and exhausted Samsara Thearch and Guardian.

Both of them were having a hard time regulating their breathing, but it was the Guardian, the one that could only remain standing by using the bastard sword as support.

Although both seemed to be in no condition to fight, the Samsara Thearch's Eros Eye and bloodline were already healing his wound, and it would not be long before he regained enough strength to take away the energy nucleus.

The Guardian knew that, and he could not help but sigh as he looked back at the Oblivion Gate.

"Oblivion Resurgence."

Those words shook the Oblivion Gate, and the next second, streams of energy emerged from it and began to fuse into the Guardian.

Strength returned to the Guardian's body as he raised his bastard sword and pointed it at the Samsara Thearch.

"Surrender or death?"

Zatiel heard those words and saw how more and more of the gate's power entered the Guardian. Instead of frustration, what appeared on his face was a smile.

Chapter 979 Winged Whale

The Guardian's eyes narrowed as he could not understand the reason behind Zatiel's smile. However, everything became clear the next second when he noticed a strange power had invaded his body.

Before the Guardian could react, runes began to spread from inside his body, covering his energy pool and inner organs and soon emerging through his skin. They were black and had the power to push everything to a state of stillness.

If the Guardian had been at his peak, he could have fought off the power of the runes, but he was far from that state. The battle with the Samsara Thearch left him severely wounded, with no trace of energy left inside his body, making the power of the runes something he could not withstand.

Zatiel's Thanatos Eye glowed with a dark light as he controlled the energy inside the Guardian, ensuring that the black runes paralyzed body, energy, and soul flawlessly.

"How?"

There was no rage or fear in the eyes of the Guardian as he stared at the Samsara Thearch. He only made that question to satiate his curiosity.

Zatiel stared at the Guardian for a moment before speaking.

"All my eyes worked during the clash between your Stellar Strike and my Eternal Samsara Lotus. The Eros Eye, Samsara Pupil, and Eternal Flame Pupil used all their power to generate the defensive spell, but there was still the Thanatos Eye.

The energy left after Heaven End did not vanish. I sent it to the energy nucleus to invade your body if you channeled its power."

A rueful smile appeared on the Guardian's face when he heard that. He did not want to use the gate's energy since that could affect its proper functioning, but he did it in the end, believing it would be his trump card. How could he have known that would have made him fall into his enemy's scheme?

"Are you going to kill me?"

No fear appeared in the Guardian's voice, nor was there the sightless desire in his heart to beg for his life. He only asked that question to know what would happen next.

The Samsara Thearch could not help but stare at the Guardian and felt amazement at the man's resolve. In his position, most of the mighty and prideful Fourth Realm life forms would try to negotiate at any cost for their life, but he remained stoic.

"I fought with killing intent since that was the only way I could approach this battle, but now that my runes had paralyzed your body, energy, and soul, there is no need to do something so definitive."

Zatiel had no intention to kill the Guardian. The man fought with honor, not to mention that killing this one would incite the rage of whoever created the Oblivion Gate.

After the Eros Eye had restored enough of his energy, Zatiel flew to the energy nucleus. Luckily for him, the nucleus and gate were not a single structure, making it easier for him to take it out.

When the energy nucleus was finally in his hand, Zatiel felt the amount of energy in it and was preposterous. It had nearly as much energy as the one held inside his Inner Universe and was self-renewable.

Interestingly, even after taking the energy nucleus, the Oblivion Gate kept releasing a massive amount of energy. Zatiel analyzed it and felt that the gate had been charged for a very long time, and it could work even without the nucleus.

The only way to stop the person on the other inside from using the Oblivion Gate to come here would be destroying it, but that would require the power of a Late Stage life form.

"What is on the other side?"

Zatiel was ready to leave but could not stop himself from asking that question. He was genuinely interested in what lay on the other side of the Oblivion Gate, and if it were not for the threat of the Beyonders and its Knights, he would have attempted to use the gate.

Even if the Oblivion Gate was a portal to this location, with enough time and effort, Zatiel was sure he could have transformed it into a two-way bridge.

Although the Guardian had already stated that he knew nothing about who would come or why they would do it, that did not mean he had no knowledge of the place on the other side.

The Guardian remained silent for a moment before finally opening his mouth.

"I was built in that place, but I don't have memories of it. I can only tell you what I see in my dreams."

Zatiel stared at the Guardian before waving his hand, making the black runes vanish. He had already taken the energy nucleus and recovered a lot of his power, so there was no need to keep the man paralyzed.

"Please, continue."

After the runes were gone, the Guardian relaxed his body and stared at Zatiel before nodding and sharing what he knew.

"I only have seen two things in my dreams. A tower more large and majestic than any universe you could ever imagine, and on top of that, a world with the form of a red sun."

When the Guardian mentioned the last part, the expression on his face was one of pure and absolute awe, as if that sun-shaped world was the most unique and beautiful thing he had seen in his entire life.

Zatiel was surprised to see that the stoic Guardian could make such an expression, and it was clear that the world and the tower were truly wonderful things. A great part of him wanted to visit them, and he would do it if he managed to prevail over the Beyonder.

"I will return the energy nucleus if I manage to survive the clash that comes my way."

"Then I wish you good luck, and might our paths cross again in the future."

After that short exchange, the Guardian sat on the golden platform again, making a table with a set of tea appear before him, calmly drinking it as if nothing had happened.

Zatiel felt a little envy of the peaceful life of the Guardian. However, he did not waste time and carried on, venturing into the chaotic waves of energy that flooded the Emptiness. He stared at the energy nucleus for a moment before sending it into his heart.

Immediately after that, the Samsara Thearch felt a burst of vitality in his body, and his eyes widened as he understood that the nucleus could adapt to whatever it was fused with.

When it was in the Oblivion Gate, it acted as a source of energy, but now that it was inside a living body, it fueled it with near-limitless vitality.

"It is amazing. Not only can I make a treasure that will ensure Dante's survival, but I can use it during this journey to help heal faster from injuries."

Zatiel showed a large smile as he moved faster to his next target. The treasure that he was going after was not an object but a living being.

"ARRRRRRRRROOOOOOOO!"

After nearly two months of travel, Zatiel found what he was looking for. The sound of a cosmic whale told him he had found his target.

There was nothing in front of Zatiel other than waves of chaotic energy, but he understood that was because his target had flawlessly blended with the world around it.

The creature that Zatiel was after could harmonize with its surroundings to such an impressive degree that its atomic structure blended with the world, making it part of it. Life forms beneath the Middle Stage could only feel the entity's presence, but only those who have achieved Omnipotence could see it.

Zatiel closed his eyes for a moment, and when he opened them again, he saw a majestic creature the size of a Daybreak Universe's Sacred Mountain.

It resembled a large whale but with tentacles on the lower part of its body and dozens of white wings spread across its back. The creature had a sense of absolute peace as it moved across the Emptiness, devoid of any rage and ambition, happy only wondering.

Not much effort would take for the Samsara Thearch to obtain the body of the Fourth Realm Winged Whale since it lacked any form of battle skills. The only reason it had survived this long in a place so dangerous like the Emptiness was its ability to hide.

Zatiel saw the Winged Whale moving across the Emptiness, and it felt like watching a beautiful dance. He released a small sigh as he adopted a meditative position.

Killing the Winged Whale would have been faster and provided better materials for the future weapon, but the Samsara Thearch was not so ruthless as to kill such a unique life form if there was another way.

A powerful soul force emerged from Zatiel's Samsara Pupil as he prepared to trap the Winged Whale's consciousness into an illusion. It needed to be perfect to trick the creature, making sure it did not even realize it fell into an illusion.

Chapter 980 Sneak Attack

Zatiel's soul force peaked as a purple force field began to emerge from his mind. His cultivation was high enough to generate an illusion realm into reality, not having to endure the pressure of trapping the enemy's consciousness in a different dimension that could shatter at any second.

The purple force field began to spread across the Emptiness, and its ethereal nature allowed it to fuse into space-time while at the same time ignoring the pressure of the endless waves of chaotic energy around them.

It took an incredible amount of effort and concentration on the Samsara Thearch to unleash his illusion realm in such a peaceful way that the Winged Whale would not notice it.

Although it began slowly, the force field soon expanded at a speed of several million light years per second. It took less than an hour for the Samsara Thearch to generate the illusion realm the size of a standard super universe.

Yet, that was just the first step since now he had to mimic the Emptiness's nature, forces, and energy into the illusion realm to trick the Winged Whale into believing nothing had changed.

That process took much longer and required a lot of effort and soul force from the Samsara Thearch. It would be easy for him to make a perfect replica of a standard super universe's Law Matrix, generating an illusion realm capable of giving birth to actual life. Still, the Emptiness was

much more complex since its nature was chaos itself, with Astral, Nether, and Essence combined into a single energy.

Creating an illusion realm the size of a super universe took less than an hour, but mimicking the Emptiness required several weeks.

The Samsara Thearch looked very tired, with a pale face and exhausted expression. The energy waves and erratic soul force emanating from him would corroborate that state to anyone watching.

Not wasting time or taking a moment to rest, Zatiel's Samsara Pupil and Eros Eye began to glow as he used a Fourth Realm Omnipotent Spell.

"Samsara Dream Realm."

The Emptiness trembled for a second as the power and nature of the illusion realm evolved to something that broke the boundaries between imagination and reality.

"ARRRRRRRRROOOOOOOO!"

The Winged Whale unleashed a low-toned guttural roar again as it noticed the sudden change in the Emptiness. However, after a few hours and noticing nothing bad had happened, it simply continued with its dance across the endless waves of chaotic energy.

This majestic creature did not understand that its consciousness was now in Samsara Dream Realm. Its body stopped moving in the real world, allowing even an Initial Stage life form to see it.

Zatiel moved toward the Winged Whale and put his hand over the creature's head. Now that the consciousness was trapped in the Samsara Dream Realm, he planned to send the whole soul.

If the Samsara Thearch succeeded, he would manage to flawlessly separate the Winged Whale's soul from its body, allowing this one to live in the Samsara Dream Realm. Then, nothing would stop Zatiel from using the creature's body to generate a weapon.

Separating the soul from the body without the target realizing it was an extremely complicated task, which is why Zatiel closed his eyes, forgetting about everything else.

Gradually a sky-blue figure began to emerge from the Winged Whale's body, leaving for the Samsara Dream Realm.

Just as Zatiel was about to finish, a figure appeared behind him, and before he could react, a dagger pierced his back, reaching all the way into his heart.

Total and absolute shock appeared in the Samsara Thearch's eyes when the dagger pierced his heart. He managed to turn his head, looking at the attacker, and what he saw was an obsidian starfish.

No eyes could be seen in the creature at first, but as you looked closer to where its mouth was supposed to be, you could see a black eye with a golden pupil.

There were no emotions whatsoever in that obsidian starfish's eye as it looked back at Zatiel. Clearly, it felt no rage, or guilt, by its actions.

"Do not take it personally, but devouring you will help my evolution. The only one you can blame for all this is yourself, as your actions have drawn too much attention, and it was just a matter of time before someone went after you."

Zatiel heard that message in his mind, but he immediately overcame the shock and focused on the dagger penetrating his heart. He realized that the weapon was actually an appendage of the obsidian starfish.

The creature could morph its body into different weapons capable of piercing the body of Middle Stage Fourth Realm life forms!

Had the Samsara Thearch been at full power, he could have reacted to the enemy's attack, but the generation of the illusion realm and sending the Winged Whale into it drained most of his energy and soul force.

Just as Zatiel was ready to make his bloodline burst, the dagger transformed into billions of tendrils that invaded his bloodstream and began to devour his blood.

The obsidian starfish did not stop there, as the rest of its appendages mutated into whips that rolled around the Samsara Thearch's arms, legs, and neck.

Not only did the mutated appendage of the obsidian starfish have an overwhelming strength, but there was a force inside the creature generating a cycle of endless growth.

Every ounce of blood the obsidian starfish consumed from the Samsara Thearch was transformed into energy, which revolved around its body. The amazing part was that after every successful revolution, that amount of energy would grow higher.

The creature's body was like a reactor that could create more energy using energy.

"Your bloodline is so powerful! It provides me with a perfect catalyst for my growth!"

Pure and absolute thrill appeared in the voice of the obsidian starfish as it consumed more and more of the Samsara Thearch's bloodline.

Zatiel realized the unique power of the obsidian starfish, but he had something else that needed his immediate attention. He had been in the middle of taking the Winged Whale's soul out of its body when the obsidian starfish pierced his heart.

Now that Zatiel was immobilized and could no longer carry on with the spell, the Winged Whale's soul began to react, and its consciousness trapped inside the Samsara Dream Realm noticed something was wrong.

The Winged Whale's consciousness reacted violently as the soul forced its way back into the body, suffering severe damage and being left unconscious.

In his current condition, Zatiel did not have the time to worry about the safety of others, but the reason he wanted to calm the Winged Whale was the backlash he would suffer if the Samsara Dream Realm shattered.

Unfortunately, Zatiel was not able to stop it, and the wild behavior of the Winged Whale shattered the illusion realm, making him bleed from his eyes and ears as he felt his mind would split in two.

All that made the mission of the obsidian starfish much easier, using all its power to devour the Samsara Thearch's bloodline, and once there was nothing left, the creature opened its mouth and consumed the entire body as well.

"¡Hahahaha!"

The obsidian starfish could not help but burst into laughter as it felt its power growing more and more before its eye turned toward the Winged Whale. It showed no mercy as it pierced the cosmic beast's body with its appendages, consuming its blood and soul.

"¡HAHAHAHAHAHAHA!"

Its laughter grew stronger as it could not believe how lucky it was and how much power it had gained.

Unfortunately for the obsidian starfish, all its achievements meant nothing since it was currently in an illusion.

In the real world, the Samsara Thearch had his right hand on the Winged Whale, while the left one held the obsidian starfish.

Everything started long before Zatiel reached the Winged Whale. After leaving the Obsidian Gate, he had already detected a presence but did not react to it. He even went to the extreme of faking a weakened state when in reality, the energy nucleus inside his heart had kept his vitality and soul force at their peak this entire time.

The obsidian starfish had indeed attacked him, but Zatiel was able to react, grabbing the creature before this one could pierce his heart and sending its consciousness into the Samsara Dream Realm.

Despite the obsidian starfish having the power to harm a Middle Stage life form, its cultivation was still at the Initial Stage, so it could not resist the might of a Fourth Realm Omnipotent Spell.

"Regardless of its cultivation, its Truth is indeed remarkable."

Zatiel showed a cold smile as his Samsara Pupil, Eternal Flame Pupil, and Thanatos Eye glowed simultaneously, generating multicolored runes that invaded the obsidian starfish's soul and body.

Unlike his plans for the Winged Whale, the Samsara Thearch would use every piece of the obsidian starfish's existence to create a weapon, but before that, he would read its mind.