

BloodLine 1081

Chapter 1081: Subduing the Bandit!

Many warriors from various backgrounds had left their homes.

They were secretly looking for Zack Lockwood.

Many of them had formed parties of their own.

While other warriors were searching alone, none of them had spoken openly about their mission.

If they revealed they were looking for Zack Lockwood, they would soon be hunted by the Star University Warriors.

The Star University had clearly issued a statement: they did not want any Black Mark Warriors or above to interfere in this matter.

If they did, not only would they be affected, but the forces behind them would also suffer.

Thus, the warriors who were pursuing Zack Lockwood were under the Black Mark rank.

As time passed, the surrounding cities of Star City received visitors from many places.

Clearly, everyone understood that a new wave of people had entered the city.

They were there for one reason: to find Zack Lockwood.

But unfortunately for them, Zack Lockwood was not in this place.

He was staying in the most unpredictable location.

Unless Zack Lockwood revealed himself, it would be impossible for these people to find him.

Meanwhile,

It was the same case for those warriors whose family background was connected to Star University.

Most of the Warrior Families had warned their descendants.

But some unruly individuals decided to take this chance.

They were looking for traces of Zack Lockwood all alone.

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From MC's Perspective:

Time passed,

When it was late at night, I left the inn and started moving towards the City Administration Building.

I had no clue from the hand-drawn map, so I decided to investigate the place first.

There was no one walking in the middle of the night except me.

Since my face was covered with a mask, I had no worries.

Just in case, I activated my perception ability.

I could perceive the surroundings clearly.

With confidence, I continued walking toward the new building.

When I got there, I saw guards standing in front of the gate.

I could use my flight ability to enter the building.

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The storage ring in my hand could block the senses of other people.

As long as I didn't use my strength, it would be difficult for people to find me.

After gaining some clarity in my thoughts, I started looking for a way to enter.

Time passed,

When the two warriors were not paying attention, I immediately flew over the wall and landed on the ground inside.

This all happened within seconds.

Then I raised my head and looked at the massive structure in front of me.

To think there was such a towering building used as the City Administration Building!

This building could easily be rated as the tallest tower in Star City as well.

I couldn't help but recall the last words of the bandit before his death.

I collected my thoughts before finding an entrance to the building.

It was late at night; hardly anyone was on the first floor.

I noticed that an identification system was installed on the door.

It was impossible for unknown individuals to get inside.

I furrowed my brows.

"Hey, quickly store the plunder items and return!"

Just as I was looking for a way to enter, I heard a voice coming from behind.

Their words caught my attention.

If they mentioned the plunder, they were certainly not the City Guards.

Swoosh!

I immediately left the place and hid behind a tree.

A burly warrior appeared.

His head was covered with cloth.

He walked up to the door and used the stolen ID to enter.

Seeing that, my eyes flashed with determination.

I waited for the door to open.

Creak!

The door opened, and the warrior stepped inside without looking back.

Before the door closed again, I used the lightning phantom technique to reach there.

Swoosh!

In a flash, I appeared and stepped inside the building.

The next second, the door closed behind me.

“Who are you?” The burly warrior turned around and asked.

He didn’t expect someone to sneak up on him.

Swoosh!

Instead of answering his question, I appeared before him.

The burly warrior was startled.

Before he could say anything, I circulated purple lightning around my fist and punched him in the stomach.

Boom!

As my punch landed, the burly warrior flew backward and hit the wall.

Pfff!

The burly warrior coughed up blood as his eyes flashed with fear.

He almost thought he was attacked by a Black Mark Warrior.

Since he was still alive, he thought the enemy must be a General Rank Warrior.

Swoosh!

I appeared before him and casually smashed his face.

But my body strength was the same as my essence strength.

So, the casual strike caused a few of his teeth to break.

The burly warrior's head was covered in blood.

He wanted to say something.

"You dare!"

“Catch him!”

“Don’t let him escape!”

I heard shouting behind me.

When I turned around, I saw two City Guards along with the burly warrior’s friend arriving before me.

“Lightning Drop!”

In the blink of an eye, a thick purple lightning ball appeared in my palm.

I simply shot the lightning ball at their feet.

In an instant, the lightning ball landed at their feet.

Boom!

The purple lightning ball exploded, causing several purple lightning bolts to strike here and there.

Argh!

Simultaneously, three heart-wrenching screams were heard.

The purple lightning bolts sent their bodies flying backward before they crashed into walls and floors.

The scene didn’t go unnoticed by the burly warrior.

He had witnessed the duel.

His body began to tremble.

After dealing with them, I turned towards the burly warrior.

“You can speak?” I asked.

The burly warrior nodded his head.

Seeing that, my eyes lit up.

I picked him up and started to leave.

The fighting had just alarmed people nearby.

I didn’t think it was safe for me to stay here.

I used the burly man’s ID to exit.

Shortly afterward,

I took him to the old inn.

There was no one awake at this late hour except the old staff, who was roused upon hearing the noise.

But I immediately told him to be quiet and mind his own business.

The old staff got scared, nodded his head, and went back to his room.

The burly warrior witnessed the whole thing; he was petrified.

He didn't know what the person was going to do next.

I looked at the burly warrior and took him to the inn.

To be honest, I was worried about my life, but I was not hopeless.

I knew that the ring in my hand could block attacks from Red Mark Warriors.

So even if any Black Mark Warrior showed up, I still had a chance to escape.

I led him back to my room.

After closing the door, I told the burly warrior to sit.

Gulp!

The burly warrior swallowed his saliva in fear.

He did as instructed and sat in the chair.

"You must be wondering who I am.

Let me tell you, I can kill these people and no one will ask me anything," I said.

Hearing that, the burly warrior was stunned.

He realized that the identity of the person in front of him was not simple.

“Lord, what do you want?” The burly warrior asked.

He was still bleeding, but his condition was nothing serious compared to those warriors.

“I need some answers.

I hope you will answer me without hiding anything.

Otherwise, I will roast you alive,” I threatened him.

Hearing that, the burly warrior became truly scared.

No one had ever attacked inside the City Administration Building before.

This person not only attacked him but also brought him to the inn.

“I will tell you everything.

Just let me go,” the burly warrior pleaded.

“Where is your hideout?”

“Who is your bandit leader?”

“What’s his strength?” I asked back-to-back questions.

The burly warrior didn’t know whether he would survive this or not.

But he knew that if he didn't answer, he would surely die.

"Our hideout is located in the basement of the City Administration Building.

Our leader and the City Lord are friends."

"Our leader's strength is Commander Rank.

He is retreating to attempt a breakthrough.

The City Lord's strength is General Rank.

I don't know where he is right now."

The burly warrior said with great difficulty.

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Meanwhile,

Inside the City Administration Building, the other City Guards had arrived at the scene.

Some nearby bandits had also come to the place.

Upon seeing three badly scorched bodies on the ground, everyone was frozen in shock.

Who could kill these people so viciously?

The City Guards looked at each other.

They realized it was not the work of an ordinary warrior.

They feared it could be the work of a Black Mark Warrior or above.

“We should inform the higher-ups!”

“Among the dead, one of them was a bandit.”

The City Guards suspected it might be related to the Bandit Team.

One of them quietly left the scene to make a call.

The same thing happened with the bandits; they left the place to inform their Bandit Leader.

Chapter 1082: Killing the bandit leader!

From MC's Perspective:

The Burly Warrior confessed everything.

After getting a statement from him, I let him go.

The Burly Warrior was shocked.

He couldn't believe that this man was letting him go.

But he didn't want to waste any time on it.

Before the enemy could change his mind, the Burly Warrior left the place with injuries all over his body.

Not long after he left the inn, I silently followed him.

There is a way to confirm whether his words are true or not.

If my guess is right, he would definitely go back to the hideout to inform others.

Just as I thought, he would go to the Administration Building.

The Burly Warrior is fleeing towards the gate.

My eyes flashed with doubt, so I decided to follow him.

The City Guards are startled upon seeing his injuries.

Obviously, they know each other.

They immediately let him leave.

When I saw this scene play out in front of my eyes, I was pissed off.

Earlier, I didn't attack the City Guards.

But right now, I have decided to teach them a lesson.

When I got there, the two guards tried to stop me.

Smack!

I struck at the back of one of them, one by one.

Both the City Guards fainted on the spot.

Before anyone could come here, I decided to leave the place.

After leaving Central Fort City, I found the trail of the Burly Warrior.

Instead of using any vehicle to leave the place, he is running towards the nearby forest.

The forest was the same place where I killed the bandit team not long ago.

My eyes flash with curiosity.

“Don’t tell me the bandit team chose this spot for some reason,” I said in my heart.

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Swoosh!

I followed him into the forest.

Not long after, I crossed the ambush point where the small bandit team had tried to kill me.

Now they are all gone.

The Burly Warrior is going deeper and deeper into the forest, so much so that I felt it was in another different territory.

I'm no longer close to Central Fort City.

"Where is this place?" I asked myself in my heart.

I'm sure that the Burly Warrior was not trying to escape; rather, he is indeed going to the bandit hideout.

Not long after, I saw the building structure from a distance.

A proper building structure in the middle of the forest was not a luxury resort; rather, it's a bandit hideout.

My eyes flash with excitement.

To think that the Burly Warrior told me a bold lie.

I don't know how he would react if he sees me.

Before he could alert anyone, I decided to kill him.

"Lightning Phantom Technique."

A purple lightning arc covered my legs.

The next second, I burst forth at tremendous speed.

I crossed a few hundred meters within seconds.

The Burly Warrior, who is running with injuries all over his body, felt a sense of crisis all of a sudden.

When he turned around, he saw a purple shadow leap towards him.

Boom!

Before he could shout, a massive fist covered with purple lightning struck his face.

Argh!

He let out a heart-wrenching scream before his breathing came to an end.

The purple lightning has burnt his brain.

Tud!

His body fell to the ground, with smoke coming out of his eyes, nose, and ears.

While feeling the pain from the purple lightning, the Burly Warrior thought the person who attacked him was none other than the masked man.

But he was a bit late to find out.

After killing him, I continued moving towards the building structure.

The building is a two-story building.

There are warriors going around to monitor the place.

I stopped before observing the warriors.

I thought it would be best to check if there are Black Mark Warriors and above.

According to the mission contents, there are no warriors above the General Rank.

The Burly Warrior's statement has confirmed that as well.

As time passed, I was able to confirm that there were four warriors guarding the building.

The warriors are Commander Rank.

I calmed my heart before deciding to take them down.

Swoosh!

I started to approach the building structure one by one.

When I got closer, I activated my perceptual ability.

The next second, I could perceive the area around me.

There are two Commander Rank Warriors next to me.

I sprinted towards one of them.

The black-clothed warrior was taken aback by seeing someone.

"Blood Fist."

I used the blood fist technique to attack.

I covered my fist with red blood energy in a flash.

The black-clothed warrior tried to fight back, but my fist landed on his chest.

Pfff!

The black-clothed warrior's chest caved in.

His heart was crushed on the spot.

After confirming his death, I immediately sprinted towards the next warrior.

The next warrior was equally startled.

Before he could make any sound, I silenced him.

There are two more warriors to go.

"Lightning Phantom Technique."

I used the purple lightning movement technique to get inside.

I spotted the remaining warriors.

I rushed towards them to attack.

Boom!

My fist once again struck the chest of the warrior.

After dealing with him, I attacked the last warrior with purple lightning.

In the blink of an eye, the two Commander Rank Warriors were down.

If it were before, I wouldn't have achieved this.

But everything has changed after my breakthrough.

Both my body and essence are at General Rank strength.

Then I shifted my attention to the room.

I entered the room and came across neatly arranged wooden boxes.

There are more than a hundred in number.

I had no doubt that these are looted items.

I don't know whether the leader of the bandit group is hiding.

I should kill him before others arrive.

It's really surprising that only four warriors are guarding this place.

If my guess is right, other bandits are outside right now.

After pushing down these thoughts, I started searching the place.

Especially, I was looking for a hidden door.

Not long after, I spotted a suspicious metal door hidden behind the large wooden boxes.

These wooden boxes had covered the door.

As if someone didn't want to find this door.

My eyes gleamed with a twinkle.

"Blood Fist."

I used the blood fist technique again.

A strong blood energy came out from my bones and covered my right fist in the blink of an eye.

I could feel overwhelming power.

Without further thought, I struck the metal door.

Boom!

A deafening noise occurred as the metal door caved in.

Inside the room, an old man with a wrinkled face was sitting cross-legged.

He was attempting to break through.

But the sudden noise disturbed him.

He received the backlash the next moment.

Pfff!

He hurt his meridians, and as a result, he coughed up blood.

“Who dares to attack me?” The old man’s eyes reddened in anger.

Boom!

The metallic door broke completely.

I stepped inside and saw the weak old man, who was showing the strength of the Peak Commander Rank.

“Are you the leader of the bandits?” I asked.

The old man saw someone wearing a mask barging into his training room.

“Who are you?”

“The City Lord is my friend.

It’s best for you to leave this place immediately.

Otherwise, you will be arrested and tortured for attacking me,” the old man threatened.

"I'm just eliminating the bandits.

I don't care about your friend," I replied with a smile.

The old man's pupils shrank.

He knew that the strength of the masked man was not ordinary.

He broke the metallic door just like that; he couldn't do it.

He was totally enraged.

His plan, heritage, and wealth-everything was going to be ruined because of this masked man.

Swoosh!

The old man burst forth at great speed in this close matter.

Anyone would be caught off guard in this situation.

The old man thought he succeeded.

At the same time, I calmly executed the lightning technique.

"Lightning Wheel."

A purple lightning wheel appeared around me.

The wheel was beaming with destructive power.

The old man's eyes were in disbelief.

"No!"

Before he could stop himself from the clash, his body collided with the purple lightning wheel.

Boom!

The purple lightning bombarded the old man's body.

In the blink of an eye, the old man's body was being ravaged by purple lightning bolts.

Before the old man could scream from the heart-wrenching pain, his heart burst into pieces.

His eyes lost color, and he died on the spot.

The old man wouldn't have imagined in his wildest dreams that someone would barge into his training room to kill him.

This building structure was a simple hideout located far away from Central Fort City.

Apart from the bandits and the City Lord, no one knew about this matter.

It's unfortunate for the old man that he died without any real fight.

I'm looking at the totally scorched corpse.

I don't know whether anyone could identify it, but I need his corpse as evidence, so I stored his corpse in one of the storage rings I got from the bandits earlier.

After doing that, my attention shifted to the wooden boxes.

I don't know whether anything valuable is stored in these wooden boxes.

From MC's Perspective:

Boom!

I started to break the wooden boxes one by one.

As I had expected, there are Artifacts and rare herbs collected here.

But they are useless for me.

They can be used by warriors below the General Rank, so I stopped paying attention to them and decided to leave.

Swoosh!

Just as I left the building, I came across another warrior.

At first, I thought he was a bandit.

But his next words shocked me.

"How dare you attack the people of this City Lord?" an old man shouted at me.

He was covered with flames, but his strength was only at the General Rank.

Which gave me confirmation that he was the City Lord.

“Are you the City Lord of Central Fort City?” I asked.

“Yes, it’s me.

Who are you?” the old man replied.

His face was obscured by the raging flames.

He had decided to kill the person here so that his secret could be kept.

At the same time, my mouth curved into an arc.

Swoosh!

“You helped me by saving a lot of time,” I said before rushing towards him to attack.

The old man was taken aback.

The next second, he became furious.

He unleashed his “flame fists” to attack.

“Blood Fists!”

In the blink of an eye, I mobilized the blood energy from my bones.

A powerful blood energy coursed through my body before reaching my right fist.

Instantly, I felt overwhelming power.

When I appeared in front of the old man, I threw a punch at him.

Boom!

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The old man raised his flame fists to counterattack, but when both of our fists collided, his bones cracked, and his right arm became useless.

Puchk!

The Blood Fists attack completely caught him off guard.

The next second, I slammed my fist heavily into the old man's chest.

The remaining blood fist energy shattered his chest bones, rampaging through his internal organs.

Pfff!

Blood splattered on the ground.

The old man's face filled with horror.

He thought he was facing a Black Mark Warrior, not a General Rank Warrior.

The old man realized that he couldn't escape this predicament.

"Wait!"

"I want to live..." Before he could finish his words, his chest was pierced by another fist attack.

The old man's eyes lost color.

He died with unwillingness.

Tud!

The old man's body dropped dead on the ground.

"It's over," I muttered to myself.

Then I removed the old man's storage ring.

Since he was a General Rank Warrior, I suspected his belongings would be useful to me.

When my consciousness entered the ring, I saw tons of Fire Essence stones.

Seeing that, my eyes flickered.

Unfortunately, these essence stones were not useful to me.

If they were lightning stones, I would be happy.

Then I shifted my attention to other items.

There were Grade-9 herbs, which were slightly useful.

Then I searched for the remaining items.

But they were not useful.

After collecting the head of the old man, I left the place.

There was no need for me to enter Central Fort City.

Since I had completed the mission, I would report it as soon as possible.

Then the Star University would recommend someone.

Shortly afterward,

I came out of the magical forest.

Then I looked around before leaving in the opposite direction.

After a few minutes of travel, I came to a barren spot.

Then I called Pilot James and told him my location.

About 20 minutes later,

A black aircraft arrived at the place.

Upon seeing the aircraft, my mouth curved into an arc.

Earlier, I thought that the mission would take a few more days.

But the mission ended sooner than I had expected.

The aircraft landed on the ground.

James opened the cockpit to land on the ground.

“Lord, we can leave,” he said.

Hearing that, I noticed his expression.

James seemed to be tense.

“James, what happened?” I asked.

“Lord, the news about you has spread across the territories.

People are monitoring the Star University aircraft.

Not long ago, our aircraft was spotted by a few people.”

“Their identities are not ordinary,” James said, fear evident on his face.

Seeing that, I realized the gravity of the situation.

Clearly, James was shaken by the news.

“Okay, let’s leave,” I said to him.

Then we entered the aircraft.

Swoosh!

James started operating the aircraft.

It slowly rose from the ground.

After it was halfway above the clouds, it started flying towards Star University.

I sat in the window seat, watching the outside passing scenes.

James’s words had alerted me, but I doubted anyone would dare to attack the Star University aircraft.

As time passed, the aircraft had left the region of Central Fort City.

Just as I thought everything would go smoothly, James alerted me.

Swoosh!

“Lord, there are aircraft tailing us!”

“We have a tail,” I uttered in a solemn tone.

I didn’t know who was causing this problem.

If it was a Black Mark Warrior, then it would be troublesome.

“Lord, what should we do?” James asked.

“Don’t worry about it; you should focus on piloting,” I assured him.

At the same time, I went to the back of the aircraft to check.

I saw three modern aircraft chasing us from behind.

Swoosh!

All three of them had distinct emblems.

Clearly, they were from certain organizations or families.

I memorized their emblems before making a call to Master Austin.

In a few seconds, the call was connected.

“Zack, what happened?”

“Is there any problem?”

Master Austin’s concerned voice reached my ears.

Hearing that, I understood that he was aware of the rumors.

“Master, I have encountered a situation.” After saying that, I told him about the emblems.

Hearing that, Austin was silent.

Then he asked for the details again to confirm.

“These emblems belong to the warrior families connected to Star University.

Don’t worry; Dean Jerome has given the order.

No Black Mark Warrior or above will target you,” Austin said.

Hearing that, I felt relieved, which meant these people had similar strength to me.

After speaking to Master Austin, I ended the call.

Then I turned towards James and told him to land on the nearest empty plot.

James was relieved.

He had been observing Zack Lockwood as well.

Seeing that, he made a call to someone.

He felt relieved.

About 20 minutes later,

James landed the aircraft on a big vacant plot.

When the aircraft touched down, I opened the cabin door to step outside.

I was still wearing the mask to cover my face.

I was looking forward to seeing who was causing the problem.

Shortly afterward,

Three powerful aircraft came one after another and landed in front of me.

Creak!

The doors opened.

From each aircraft, more than three warriors stepped out.

A quick gleam flashed in my eyes.

My gaze fell on the main person in each group.

They were wearing expensive clothes, with a tinge of royal air around them.

Master told me about the Warrior Families.

Their backgrounds were confirmed; I just needed to know their motives.

A golden-haired warrior from the second aircraft walked up to me.

My gaze fell on him before assessing the strength of his guards.

“All of them are General Rank,” I said in my heart.

I didn’t know why, but I felt that things were not that simple.

The golden-haired warrior said, “You must be the owner of the aircraft.

Remove your mask; I would like to see your face.”

Hearing that, my heart boiled with anger, but I controlled my emotions.

Then I replied, “I’m from Star University.

The aircraft belongs to our Star University.

Look at our University symbol drawn on it.”

“I have already informed the higher-ups about the three aircraft, including those symbols.

It would be a matter of time before help arrives,” I said in a serious tone.

The golden-haired warrior was stunned.

He didn’t expect such an answer.

The faces of the other two descendants changed drastically.

“You dare!”

The golden-haired warrior shouted.

Then he realized it was impossible to hurt this person right now.

“Let’s go,” he said before turning to leave.

The other two descendants heard his words as well.

Since they were exposed, they didn’t want to target Star University people anymore.

The three aircraft left within minutes.

Once they were gone from sight, I turned towards James and said, “Let’s go.”

James sighed inwardly.

The threat disappeared just like that.

He then entered the cockpit.

I entered the cabin and sat in the window seat.

Swoosh!

The aircraft slowly rose from the ground.

Then it started flying towards the destination.

Meanwhile,

The golden-haired warrior was not satisfied.

He felt something was wrong with the identity of the masked man.

More importantly, he couldn't see through his strength.

"Since they have been exposed, it would be a matter of time before they receive a summons from the family," the golden-haired warrior said in his heart.

He felt frustrated.

Suddenly, he thought of a good idea.

Since he couldn't target him, he could use others' help.

Chapter 1084: Black Mark Rank Protectors

From MC's Perspective:

The black aircraft is flying without any disturbance.

After that episode, no other aircraft is hindering us.

But I have this feeling that things aren't that simple.

Pilot James is focusing on operating the aircraft.

I don't plan on discussing such things with him.

Beep!

Just as he is enjoying the passing view, he receives a call from the Master.

“Zack, what happened?” Austin asked.

“Master, I’m fine.

Like you said, they are descendants of the warrior families.

They didn’t know me.

After some verbal talk, they left,” I replied.

“Okay, if you face any trouble, don’t hesitate to use your ring power,” Austin advised.

Hearing that, my eyes flickered.

“Okay, Master.

I will take care of it,” I replied.

Then we spoke about a few other things before I ended the call.

Meanwhile,

The Golden-Haired Warrior played his card.

He had informed his contacts that a mysterious figure was traveling in the Star University aircraft.

He also gave them coordinates.

Not only that, but he told them that the mysterious figure was suspected to be Zack Lockwood, who is carrying sacred fruit with him.

The Golden-Haired Warrior lied to others.

He wanted to kill that person through others.

The best course of action would be to identify as Zack Lockwood.

He knows there are a lot of people looking for Zack Lockwood's whereabouts.

If they figure out the masked person is not the one they are looking for, they would kill the masked man on the spot.

The identity of those people is connected to Star University.

Even if they killed a little warrior of the Star University, the Star University won't be able to punish them.

"Ha...Ha...Ha....," the Golden-Haired Warrior cracked a wide grin thinking about it.

But if he learned the true identity of the masked person, he wouldn't be laughing right now.

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On the other hand, many influential figures received messages from the Golden-Haired Warrior.

The name Zack Lockwood especially attracted their attention.

They don't know whether Zack Lockwood was truly traveling in that aircraft or if someone else was using him as a knife.

Unless they check the Star University aircraft in person, they won't be at peace.

Swoosh!

The next second, many private air cars were moving towards the location.

Not long after, more than five aircraft were flying towards the location from different cities.

In one of the aircraft, a descendant of a famous warrior clan was searching for Zack Lockwood.

After receiving the coordinates, he became happy.

His name is Callum.

Though he is a General Rank Warrior, he is being protected by a Black Mark Warrior named Ed.

"Ed," Callum called out.

A black-clothed man appeared in front of him.

"What do you think of the person named Zack Lockwood?" he asked.

Ed was an old man dressed in black.

After hearing the young master's name, his expression turned serious.

"Young master, the Star University Dean has issued a statement.

No Black Mark Warrior and above can attack him."

"Otherwise, the consequences will be disastrous," Ed said in a solemn tone.

Hearing that, Callum's face turned ugly.

He had been thinking of using coercion.

If Zack Lockwood didn't trade sacred fruit with him, he was thinking of using Ed.

Now, he thinks his plan might backfire.

He then thought of something.

His expression eased a lot.

"I'm not the only one with a Black Mark Rank protector," Callum said in his heart.

There are others with similar status looking for Zack Lockwood.

He is looking forward to seeing what they are going to do.

Time passed.

The aircraft had crossed the big city.

It would be a few hours of traveling before they reached Star City.

Upon seeing the time, my eyebrows relaxed.

I have this feeling that something bad would occur.

Despite having no such evidence, the lingering feeling is still there.

Dean Jerome's statement had a deterrent effect.

But it doesn't mean there are people who don't want to cause harm to me.

Swoosh!

Just as I'm pondering this, I see a few aircraft in my view.

They are approaching us.

"Lord, we have another disturbance," James shouted.

"Alright, don't panic.

Just land the aircraft on the ground; we are just a few hours away from reaching Star City.

I'm going to ask for emergency help." After saying that, I sent a message to Master Austin.

Though Master Austin didn't say it, he was also aware that there were people who were not afraid to cause problems.

James piloted the aircraft to land on the ground.

At the same time, six aircraft with emblems of powerful families and business organizations landed on the ground as well.

Looking at their actions, my eyes narrowed.

Creak!

When the aircraft touched down, I opened the cabin to leave.

I stepped onto the ground.

Then I told James to stay near the aircraft.

After saying that, I walked towards the front.

Similarly, the warriors began to step out after opening their aircraft.

Among them, Callum was there, walking together with Black Mark Warrior Ed.

A red-haired woman wearing expensive clothes stepped forward as well.

Behind her, an old woman in plain black clothes accompanied her.

She is the Black Mark Rank protector of the red-haired woman.

Callum frowned upon seeing the masked person.

According to the information, there are low chances the person in front of them is Zack Lockwood.

They understood that someone wanted to use them as a knife.

Before reaching any final conclusion, he wanted to see the true face of the masked person.

Four more young people wearing luxurious clothing stepped forward as well.

Each was accompanied by a powerful Black Mark Rank Warrior.

The six of them were facing a single masked warrior.

Each of them came from various forces.

All of them wanted the sacred fruit.

“Who are you?”

“Why are you wearing a mask?”

“Take it off!”

The warriors began to ask questions.

Hearing that, I didn’t know what to do.

I could already tell that the strength of the guardians was above the General Rank.

If I attacked any one of them, their Black Mark Warrior would definitely take action against me.

At the same time, the pilot James was trembling in fear.

Even he could tell that the power of the guardian people was extraordinary.

It was not something that Zack Lockwood could handle alone.

“What to do?”

“Escape,” James shook his head.

Abandoning Zack Lockwood in this situation is the same as seeking death.

“Are you deaf?”

“Take your mask off,” Callum asked in a cold tone.

He knew the status of the person as a student of Star University.

But their own status was not any worse.

“I’m a Star University student.

You guys are hindering my way.

I hope you will leave as soon as possible,” I said to them.

Boom!

“What?”

“How dare he?”

The warriors were furious.

They didn’t like the attitude of the masked person.

“Granny, why don’t you take his mask off?” the red-haired woman asked.

Hearing that, the old woman behind her revealed a bitter smile on her face.

“Young lady, we don’t know the identity of the young man.

If he were an ordinary student, then it’s fine.

But if he is Zack Lockwood, then we and our families would face consequences,” the old woman advised her.

Hearing that, the red-haired woman was not convinced.

But she didn’t want to take the risk.

Suddenly, she thought of a good idea.

She turned towards the other four warriors.

All of them were males, of a similar age to her.

“All of you are young and respected warriors.

Why don’t you teach him a lesson?” she said.

Her voice sounded beautiful.

Even Callum was almost convinced to take action.

But he recalled Ed’s words at the last moment.

So he stopped reacting to her.

“Bloodline power,” Callum was horrified in his heart.

If he had acted on her words, he could have offended Zack Lockwood.

“What a cunning lady?” he thought.

“That’s right, beautiful lady.

Your words sound true,” a burly warrior stepped forward.

He is a General Rank Warrior.

The organization behind him is one of the powerful business organizations under the Star University.

The guardian behind him was a burly middle-aged man.

He is a Black Mark Warrior.

Upon seeing the young man act, he felt something was wrong.

“Young master, wait,” the Burly Warrior called out.

The young burly warrior frowned.

“You, wait here.

I’m going to take his mask off,” he said before walking towards the masked person.

The remaining three warriors were alerted by their guardian at the last moment.

If the masked person turned out to be Zack Lockwood, then the burly warrior would face consequences.

Callum, who was observing the scene, couldn’t help but feel bad.

He had a feeling that the Burly Warrior was going to kick an iron plate.

The red-haired woman let out a chuckle.

The old woman behind her felt bad.

That burly young man was from a famous business organization.

She didn’t want anything bad to happen to him.

Chapter 1085: Art of convincing?

From MC's Perspective:

Seeing the young, burly warrior come toward me, I felt an urge to kick him, but I controlled my emotions.

I said, "I have contacted my elders.

Help is coming from Star City.

There is still time left for you to leave."

Hearing that, the burly man's face changed.

He showed hesitation and didn't know how to take back his spoken words.

His expression turned ugly.

At this time, the middle-aged burly man stepped forward.

He was the guardian.

"Young master, if the elders know, then you will be punished," he reminded him.

Hearing that, the young man's eyes flashed with fear.

"Let's go." Without turning back, he started walking toward his aircraft to leave.

Seeing that, the middle-aged man sighed in relief.

He then followed him to leave.

“He was saved,” Callum said in surprise.

He thought that the burly man would remove the mask of that person.

“What an idiot,” the red-haired woman commented.

She was disappointed that the burly man left without doing anything.

“Young lady, we should leave as well.

Even if he is Zack Lockwood, he has already called for help.

Considering his identity, the Silver Mark Warriors might be coming to rescue him,” the old woman behind her reminded.

Gasp!

Hearing that, not only did the red-haired woman get scared, but the other warriors were scared as well.

Callum’s expression turned worse.

He was not stupid; he could guess that as well.

Behind him, the old man Ed said, “Young Master, I agree with her statement as well.

We should avoid unnecessary conflict with Star University.”

“If a Silver Mark Warrior wants to capture you, then I won’t be able to save you,” he added.

“This?” Callum was frightened.

He was not a kid; he knew this could possibly happen.

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The red-haired woman overheard it as well.

She said, “Granny, I’m leaving.”

After saying that, she addressed the masked man.

“Don’t think you have escaped right now.

If we come across each other in the future, I won’t let you go.” After saying that, she turned around to leave.

Her departure startled the others.

Compared to the rest, her background was stronger.

Even though she had left without causing any problems.

The three warriors looked at each other before leaving, but before they departed, they did not forget to cast a deep glance at the masked man.

They didn't know the masked man's identity.

If the masked man was not Zack Lockwood, they wouldn't mind teaching him a lesson.

Since they couldn't verify the identity, they didn't want to take the risk.

Especially considering the conversation just now had scared them as well.

They didn't want to get captured by a Silver Mark Warrior.

Then the families behind them might have to pay a huge amount to save them.

The three warriors left with their guardian decisively.

Right now, only Callum remained.

The allure of the sacred fruit was great, and he was not thinking about the risk.

"Who are you really?"

"If you are Zack Lockwood, then I want to exchange something equally valuable for the sacred fruit in your hand," Callum asked openly.

He really didn't want to leave empty-handed.

"Young master," Old man Ed called out.

He was nervous.

He knew how much the sacred fruit meant for the young master.

But it's a fact that he was asking for someone else's fruits.

And that someone else had an extraordinary background.

On the other hand, I was glad that the other idiots had left.

But the last one was bothering me.

He seemed to be a decisive person.

"Listen, if I'm Zack Lockwood, do you think I would leave Star University without giving it to my master?"

"Why would I carry such a thing outside?" I replied to him.

Hearing that, Callum was stunned.

Old man Ed was surprised as well because the answer was logical.

"Yeah, why would anyone take such a risk?" Callum thought to himself.

Then he thought of something.

Earlier, someone had used Zack Lockwood's information to target the masked man.

Clearly, the other party wanted him dead.

Similarly, there must be someone in Star University who might have spread the false news as well.

Thinking about it, his back went cold.

Finally, he came to understand he was so close to committing a mistake.

“You are right.

Thanks for reminding me.

If you are Zack Lockwood, then we will meet next time,” Callum said.

“Next time?” I blurted out in surprise.

“Yes, you might not know yet.

A powerful secret land will appear soon.

All the warriors below the Black Mark Rank will enter to try their luck.”

“I’m hoping you will come as well.” After saying that, Callum left with his guardian.

“Secret land, huh,” I said to myself.

It’s not something I’m hearing about for the first time.

I had been to a secret land before where I got the condensed blood and black liquids in two secret lands.

Because of those two treasures, I was able to improve my physique.

But this secret land seems to be powerful.

I don't know what kind of treasures are hidden there.

"I should ask the Master later," I thought.

Then I pushed down these thoughts before walking back to the aircraft.

When I saw Pilot James, my mouth curved into an arc.

This guy must have been petrified.

"Lord, you are back.

Glad that you are safe.

I thought they were going to attack you," James said in a trembling tone.

Hearing that, I sighed inwardly.

Just as I decided to reply, I felt gazes on my back, as if someone was spying on me.

My heart turned cold.

I thought they had left, but these people were still watching me.

I calmed my nerves and thought of a good idea.

I replied, "Just calm down.

I told you before that I have called for help.

The Elders are on their way.

If you want, you can leave now.

I'll come with the elders."

"My lord, I don't want to," James replied.

I shook my head and said, "Your condition is bad.

You should leave right away."

Hearing that, James didn't know what to say.

But he felt the Lord's gaze was ordering him to leave.

He gulped his saliva the next moment before nodding his head.

He then entered the cockpit and prepared to leave.

In the void, the old granny looked at the scene with a dreadful expression.

She felt glad that she had made the right decision.

She had covered the young lady with her energy so that she could stand and see from the void.

“Tsk, I didn’t expect this to be true.

If his elders are coming, then we should leave as soon as possible,” the red-haired woman said.

The next second, they left the place without disturbing anyone.

Because not only was she here, but Callum and a few others were watching from the shadows as well.

“So he is Zack Lockwood,” Callum muttered to himself.

He noticed how the pilot addressed the masked man.

Only main disciples of the Purple Mark Warriors received such respect.

Earlier, when he left, they discovered that others were watching from the shadows.

So he had decided to try it out as well.

In the end, they learned the truth.

“Let’s go,” he said before being taken away by old man Ed.

Similarly, the others in the void were taken back by their respective guardians.

At the same time, James left with the aircraft.

On the other hand, I felt the gazes on my back disappear.

Though it was not actual prying, I had this feeling that someone was watching me secretly.

Now that feeling was gone, and I was feeling relaxed.

Then I immediately called Master Austin.

The connection was established, and Austin was on the call.

“Zack, are you fine?” Austin asked with concern.

He really didn’t want to take any chances with his last disciple.

Even if there was a small problem, he wanted to help.

Hearing that, I started to tell him what had happened just now.

About a few minutes later,

“Hmmm, this time you have encountered a bunch of brats from powerful families.

Their identities are stronger than anyone you encountered earlier.”

“Their organizations’ leaders and families’ heads are Purple Mark Warriors,” Austin said in a grim tone.

Hearing that, my heart set off storms.

Then a look of realization dawned on me.

Back in the inner post region, those organizations and families' top powerhouses were Gold Mark Warriors.

In this Tier-4 region, it was normal to have Purple Mark Warriors as leaders.

"But don't worry.

Your identity is still strong.

The whole Thunderflame Faction supports you," Austin reminded.

Hearing that, I recovered my thoughts and thanked him.

Austin said, "Right now, your Senior Sister Leah is coming to get you, so stay wherever you are."

"Okay, master," I replied, and then I ended the call.

"Phew!"

"Senior Sister Leah is coming.

Then the rest of the journey will be smooth," I thought.

I just hope there won't be any problems ahead.

Chapter 1086: Senior Sister Leah came to the rescue

Dark Variant Faction:

The Faction Leader, Vince, was in his office.

He was constantly reading reports from various cities.

But there was no news about Zack Lockwood.

“What’s going on?”

“Where is that kid?” Vince asked himself inwardly.

He had leaked the news about him carrying the sacred fruit.

He had heard that many warriors were looking for his whereabouts.

But still, there was no sign of Zack Lockwood.

He knew that the kid had picked an outside mission.

The mission must be within their territory.

“That kid is still inside our territory.

As long as a small clue can be found, we can track his whereabouts,” Vince said to himself.

He was personally aware of many criminals as well.

They were not showing their faces in broad daylight.

They were hiding from Star University.

He could use them to kill that kid.

Beep!

Just as he was contemplating, he received an update.

He raised his eyebrows in surprise and then clicked to read it.

A hint of surprise flashed in his eyes.

“Someone from the warrior family spotted the kid.

He seems to be coming back from the mission,” Vince’s eyes flickered.

Then he thought of a good idea.

He decided to dispatch some criminals outside Star City.

If they found Zack Lockwood, they could kill him right there.

His eyes flashed with a cold glint.

Old man Vince then contacted the criminals, especially those he knew were exceptionally strong.

They were all strong Black Mark Warriors.

He could dispatch the Silver Mark Warriors, but he thought the Black Mark Warriors would suffice.

He believed they were a bit overkill for targeting Zack.

However, if any Silver Mark Warriors appeared in the sky, it would attract a lot of attention.

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Silver Mark Warriors and above were considered top powerhouses.

Wherever they went, they attracted a lot of eyeballs.

After telling them what to do, he leaned back in his seat with a smile.

He couldn't wait to watch the sorrow of the Thunderflame Faction.

Everyone was seeing hope in that kid.

If that kid died, it would be a heavy blow for the Thunderflame Faction.

More importantly, he thought that kid had yet to consume the Purple Lightning Sacred Fruit.

That's why he had spread the rumor.

If that kid had consumed the fruit, he would have died already.

That's why he still thought that kid was carrying the sacred fruit with him.

When it came to the loss of such a sacred fruit, he was not worried at all.

Whoever consumed the sacred fruit would die for sure.

....

Meanwhile,

Many criminals received a mission from an anonymous source.

But the anonymous source was famous because he had previously issued many missions and rewards to them.

With their criminal identities, it was hard to get any job in the big cities.

But people like the anonymous source were giving them jobs.

Now seeing another job, they were thrilled.

This time there was no limit on the number of applicants.

As long as one finished the job, they could receive rewards.

So these criminals accepted the task.

After reading the content of the mission, they were shocked.

But they were used to doing killing missions.

Swoosh!

Immediately, one after another, they left the hideout.

These criminals were in different attire, varying from old, young, and middle-aged individuals.

Some wore shabby clothes, while others were dressed in fine clothes.

They all made their way toward Star University, knowing that the target would get close to Star City first.

They had to kill him before he entered the city.

The only clue they had was that the target was traveling inside the Star University Aircraft.

So they decided to check every Star University Aircraft that came in.

...

From MC's Perspective:

I'm waiting in this barren land.

I don't know when Senior Sister Leah Downing will arrive.

Even though I'm resting, my perceptual ability is still active.

The surrounding details are clear in my mind.

My only problem is if someone hides in the sky.

It's impossible to see them unless they set their gazes on me.

Shortly afterward,

A huge white aircraft arrives in the barren land and slowly lands.

Seeing that, I stood up and went to the aircraft.

Creak!

The cabin door opened.

A tall, beautiful woman walked out.

“Senior Sister,” I called out before removing my mask.

The woman is undoubtedly Leah Downing.

She smiled upon seeing Zack Lockwood.

“I heard from the Master that you have encountered trouble,” she said.

Hearing that, I nodded and began to explain the recent events.

Leah Downing frowned.

In fact, she had heard the vicious rumors as well.

She knew someone had spread false rumors.

She knew that Zack Lockwood had already consumed the Purple Lightning Sacred Fruit.

He was now at the General Rank Warrior.

But she was shocked that he had faced such trouble.

If the Black Mark Warriors had attacked Zack Lockwood, then he would have died for sure.

Thinking about it, her eyes turned cold.

She decided to investigate the identity of these people later.

“Let’s go; no one will target you from here on,” Leah Downing said confidently.

Hearing that, I thanked her before entering the cabin.

When I saw the pilots, I was surprised.

There were actually two pilots.

The aircraft seemed to have more advanced technology.

Then I sat near the window.

Leah Downing took her seat and instructed her pilots to depart.

Swoosh!

The modern aircraft swiftly ascended into the mid-air.

Then it started flying back toward Star University.

Leah Downing was confident that there would be no trouble from now on.

People might have targeted Zack Lockwood earlier, but they were now getting close to Star University.

Time passed,

The criminals found their spot outside Star University.

There were more than ten in number, all Black Mark Warriors.

They started inspecting every Star University Aircraft.

They knew it was risky, but they had no other choice.

They didn't know which Aircraft Zack Lockwood was traveling in.

Shortly afterward,

A brand new modern aircraft appeared in the sky.

It was Leah Downing's Aircraft.

The criminals who spotted it were shocked to see such an advanced aircraft.

Such aircraft were expensive to buy; not everyone could afford them.

The criminals hesitated before letting the aircraft go.

They feared the owner of the aircraft was a Black Mark Warrior or above.

When the aircraft flew over them, they sighed in relief.

But they didn't know they had missed their target.

About ten minutes later,

The aircraft reached Star City but didn't stop there before reaching the Star University Campus in a few minutes.

Inside the aircraft, I felt amazing.

I wanted to buy a similar kind of aircraft in the future.

There was no noise at all.

It flew past in the blink of an eye to reach Star University.

Swoosh!

The aircraft landed slowly inside the transportation area.

"I have somewhere else to go.

You can go back to the faction," Leah Downing said.

Creak!

The next second, the cabin door opened.

I thanked her once again before stepping outside.

When I landed on the ground, I heaved a sigh of relief.

I was back at the University.

No one would target me anymore.

Especially the Black Mark Warriors; they wouldn't be a problem.

Then I saw Senior Sister Leah Downing leaving.

Her aircraft ascended into the sky before disappearing from sight.

Seeing that, I felt amazed.

I had never seen this type of aircraft in transportation before.

It seemed that Senior Leah's identity was not ordinary either.

Then I pushed down these thoughts before leaving the place.

I wore the mask again to avoid attracting attention.

Soon, I reached the Outer Hall Area and started going back to the Thunderflame Faction Territory.

On the way, I came across other warriors.

They glanced at my mask before minding their own business.

Shortly thereafter,

I reached the Thunderflame Faction.

After entering the Faction, I went to the mission hall to submit the report.

Soon, I arrived at that place.

I approached the counter and told the staff about the mission.

The female staff widened her eyes in disbelief.

She knew who took the mission.

It was none other than Zack Lockwood.

She wanted to speak, but I stopped her.

“Here is the evidence.

Evaluate it,” I said before handing her the decapitated head of the Bandit Leader.

The smell of blood shocked her, but she remained professional.

She handled it carefully and verified that the decapitated head indeed belonged to the Bandit Leader.

After the verification was complete, she said, "You will receive your rewards later."

I thanked her before leaving the place.

The staff sighed inwardly.

She knew that everyone was searching for Zack Lockwood, but he had returned silently after completing the mission.

She wanted to yell right now, but she stopped at the last moment.

She didn't want to cause any problems.

On the other hand, I left the place quickly.

I could see people's gazes on me.

It would be a matter of time before others found out about my return.

Chapter 1087: Old man Vince's cunning plan

From MC's Perspective:

Soon, I returned to my residence.

The first thing I did was take a bath.

Then I changed into comfortable clothes before going to bed.

Meanwhile,

Austin was waiting for Zack's return.

He didn't know Zack had returned and already gone to sleep.

Shortly afterward,

He got confirmation from his disciple Leah.

Then he understood that Zack had returned.

He left the residence and went to Zack Lockwood's place to check in secret.

He appeared above his residence.

He then found someone sleeping inside.

After confirming that it was Zack, he eased his eyebrows.

"Looks like he was exhausted," Austin said to himself.

He was on the call with Zack earlier, so he knew Zack had faced Black Mark Warriors and convinced them verbally in the end.

If they had attacked, then Zack would have died on the spot.

His eyes turned cold.

He was not only angry with the rich families' kids, but he was also angry with the person behind the rumors.

If not for the malicious rumors, Zack wouldn't have had to face these situations.

He already had doubts about a few people in his mind.

But he didn't know for sure.

After glancing at Zack Lockwood's residence, he disappeared from the spot.

...

Dark Variant Faction:

The Faction Leader Vince was waiting for the update.

But he had yet to receive any news so far.

Because of that kid, he had been getting sleepless nights.

If not for Dean Jerome, he would have taken direct action long ago.

It was an easy task to kill a Warrior below Black Mark Rank.

He didn't know why it was getting harder for them.

Time passed,

Those who came to request a meeting with him were dismissed.

He was not in the mood to talk to anyone.

The Main Elders realized that he was upset about something.

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It didn't take long for the reports to arrive.

He then asked those criminals anonymously what had happened.

Their answer was simple.

They hadn't found Zack Lockwood.

They had risked their lives to inspect the Star University Aircraft.

But Zack Lockwood was not traveling in any of them.

Vince's expression darkened.

He had made the decision based on some brat's information.

Now he thought, what if the information was wrong to begin with?

If it was false news, then their entire effort was a waste.

His eyes reddened in anger.

The veins popped up on his forehead.

He ended the call abruptly.

If the criminals were here, then he would have vented his anger on them.

“Waste!”

“Everyone’s a waste,” Vince said in a cold tone.

“If the kid comes back alive, then I’ll have to ask the inner hall and core hall students to kill him,” Vince’s eyes turned cold.

So far, he didn’t want to involve the Dark Variant Faction.

But the faction rivalry has been going on for decades.

Dean Jerome was not doing anything to stop them.

His stance was clear.

He wanted competition between the factions.

If that kid died in faction rivalry, even the Dean couldn’t question them.

A cunning glint flashed in his eyes.

...

The following day,

I woke up late.

But I felt refreshed and bright.

After getting out of bed, I started doing my morning routine.

About 30 minutes later,

I walked out of the bath and started to wear my uniform.

Then I left the residence a few minutes later.

On the way, I came across the members who were going about their business.

Upon seeing me, everyone was genuinely startled.

“He is back!”

“When did he come back?”

“Must be last night.”

The Warriors started taking pictures while discussing.

After nodding at them, I continued walking towards the Golden Lightning Palace.

Soon, I appeared at the gate.

The huge gate opened up automatically.

Creak!

Seeing that, I walked inside.

I was immediately greeted by the members inside.

I smiled at them before striding toward Master Austin's residence.

When I got there.

Creak!

The door opened before I could touch the knob.

Austin was the one who opened the door.

"Master," I greeted him.

"You have come," Austin said with a smile.

Then he welcomed me inside.

I nodded to him before going in.

Master Austin sat in his seat.

I sat opposite him.

“Looks like you have recovered from the fatigue,” Austin said.

Hearing that, I smiled and started recounting the things that happened to me during the mission.

About 20 minutes later,

Austin sighed.

He didn’t expect a Central Fort City Lord to be a corrupt official.

He had stopped paying attention to the cities not long ago.

For warriors above the Black Mark Rank, they had more serious work to do.

Then he looked at his disciple and asked, “What’s your plan next?”

Hearing that, I replied, “Master, I have decided to reach the Peak Stage of General Rank first before going out for the next mission.”

I had found that someone was targeting me.

Otherwise, the rumors wouldn’t have spread this fast.

Someone was deliberately doing it from behind.

I strongly felt my strength was not enough to uncover the truth.

Austin fell into deep thought.

Zack Lockwood's experience had given him a rude awakening as well.

He thought that if Zack Lockwood went on the mission next time, the people would target him for sure.

Who knew?

If a Silver Mark Warrior targeted him next, then who would save Zack Lockwood then?

Austin felt a headache.

It hadn't happened with his other disciples.

They were able to reach the Black Mark Rank without any troubles.

But Zack was facing these problems so soon.

More importantly, the outside world didn't know about Zack's three elements.

If it was known, then other forces would send their assassins to eliminate Zack Lockwood.

After some pondering, he said, "Zack, until you become a Black Mark Warrior, don't accept any missions.

I'll talk to the Faction Leader."

Hearing that, I nodded at him.

Then we talked about a few other topics before I left my Master's residence.

Then I started walking toward the essence chamber to cultivate.

During the mission, I hadn't had time to practice.

The warriors training in the courtyard were shocked to see me.

After nodding to them, I quickly arrived at the essence chamber to cultivate.

I found the available essence chamber room and entered inside.

Creak!

The door behind me closed automatically.

Then I went to the console and activated it.

Buzz!

The next second, pure world energy started pouring from the inlet.

In the blink of an eye, it began to cover the whole chamber.

Seeing that, I stepped inside the platform and sat cross-legged on the ground.

Then I closed my eyes and started to run the lightning method.

The next second, the Star rune in my mind started to flicker.

Slowly, I began to absorb the purple energy from the surroundings.

When the purple energy entered my body,

I started to guide the energy according to the lightning method.

The purple energy coursed through my body in the specified pathways.

After circulation, the refined essence entered the dantian.

The refined purple essence mixed with the liquefied purple essence.

Seeing that, I continued to repeat the process.

Meanwhile,

The news of Zack Lockwood's return started to spread like wildfire.

Those who had spotted him shared his picture in the media.

It didn't take long for the whole Thunderflame Faction to know it.

Even the other Main Elders learned about the news from their disciples.

The other Main Elders were genuinely surprised.

They were aware that many warriors believed the false rumors and started looking for Zack Lockwood everywhere.

Now that he has returned safely, the person who was behind the rumors must be pissed off.

The Main Elders suspected the Dark Variant Faction, including Austin, but they didn't have evidence for it.

Zack Lockwood had returned safely.

They didn't have any reason to target the Dark Variant Faction.

...

Meanwhile,

Inside the Dark Variant Faction, the Faction Leader Vince lost his cool.

He had guessed it from the criminals' failure yesterday.

But to actually hear the news, he was pissed off.

He was starting to suspect whether that kid had given the Purple Lightning Sacred Fruit to someone else.

If he had consumed it, he would be dead for sure.

Suddenly, he thought of a good idea.

There were a lot more capable warriors like Ronnie Seth in their faction who were at the verge of breaking through.

But they were delaying it for a reason.

They were waiting for a suitable Inheritance to get.

Old man Vince thought about using them.

Once they fought against Zack Lockwood, then he could confirm whether that kid had consumed the Purple Lightning Sacred Fruit or not.

If he had consumed it, then someone must have helped him in neutralizing the poison.

He knew for sure that there was no cure.

But there was only one person at Star University who could help that kid.

The person was none other than their Dean, Jerome.

If he was involved, then he should think carefully about his actions in the future.

Chapter 1088: Hidden Ace Stephen

From MC's Perspective:

Time passed.

After reaching the limit, I switched methods.

Then I started running the blood element method.

I was so immersed in the practice that I forgot about the outside noise.

When I reached the limit by practicing the blood element method, I switched the practice again.

This time it's the ancient healing method.

The ancient healing method would give powers once I completely mastered it.

I doubted how long it would take me to do that.

I was totally immersed in the practice.

After a long time, I focused on the three methods again.

I should make it a daily habit to practice all three methods compulsorily.

Only then can I reach the Peak Stage of the General Rank.

When it was evening, I reached the limit by practicing the ancient healing method as well.

My veins and meridians were under stress.

I needed to take proper rest before continuing the practice.

I stood up and walked up to the console to turn it off.

Buzz!

The world energy inside the chamber started to recede in the blink of an eye.

When it was completely gone, I stepped out of the room.

The warrior responsible for recording the details started upon seeing me.

I nodded to him before leaving.

It didn't take long for me to reach my residence.

After entering the residence...

About 30 minutes later,

I lay in my bed wearing comfortable clothes.

Today's practice went well, but I couldn't help but think about the secret land.

That person told me that all the warriors below the Black Mark Warriors would enter to try their luck.

I got benefits from the Secret Lands under the control of Star University.

I'm sure other Secret Lands will have something valuable as well.

While pondering, I slowly fell asleep.

...

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The following day,

In the Outer Hall,

A slender-looking middle-aged man was training inside one of the facilities.

His name is Stephen.

He is one of the low-key people in the Outer Hall.

But that doesn't mean he is innocent or good.

He is just minding his own business.

Suddenly, he received a call from the Main Elder.

"Master, why is he calling me?" he muttered.

His master is one of the main elders in the Dark Variant Faction.

Stephen stopped training before attending the call.

The Main Elder gave him instructions before ending the call.

The call was short and simple.

"Zack Lockwood?" Stephen's eyes flickered.

The instructions were clear.

His master wanted him to fight against the new kid who is famous right now.

His master wanted to know that kid's real strength.

"That kid may have entered Commander Rank.

It's simply overkill for him to target that kid," Stephen said to himself.

He didn't want to be involved in any kind of mess.

He simply wanted to mind his own business.

He had been laying low for many years.

According to his age, Zack Lockwood could be considered a teenager.

He had no feud with that kid.

But the master was clear in his words.

He felt troubled.

He had been suppressing his strength for the past two years.

He was doing this for one simple reason.

"Inheritance," Stephen's eyes flickered.

It's because he couldn't get any suitable Inheritance for breaking into the Black Mark Rank.

That's why he has stayed at the Peak Stage of General Rank for 2 years.

He knows that a powerful Secret Land is going to open soon.

He may get a chance to find a suitable Inheritance in that Secret Land.

That's why he doesn't want any conflict at this moment.

He spent at least an hour pondering.

"Since he wants to know that kid's strength, he can have a friendly spar with Zack Lockwood," Stephen convinced himself.

Then he walked out of the training room and asked one of his friends to spread the message.

Shortly afterward,

A new piece of news started spreading like wildfire across the Outer Hall.

The news is about Stephen, one of the powerful seniors in their Outer Hall, issuing a challenge against Zack Lockwood, the rising star of their Outer Hall.

The news shocked many people.

The older students knew about Stephen.

Stephen is one of the oldest warriors in the Outer Hall.

Normally, he should have been expelled for his age.

But he is still training inside the Outer Hall.

The Outer Hall Elders and the older students knew the truth.

It's not that Stephen was not talented; he didn't get any suitable Inheritance.

If he had gotten a suitable Inheritance, he would have become one of the Inner Hall seniors two years ago.

Now this rumor has caused mixed emotions.

Stephen had not offended anyone, nor did anyone dare to offend him.

Because Stephen was from the Dark Variant Faction.

This time the Outer Hall Elders couldn't help but wonder whether it was the work of the Leader of the Dark Variant Faction.

They couldn't help but smell the hidden burning smoke.

There was faction rivalry between the Thunderflame Faction and the Dark Variant Faction.

This time Zack Lockwood had been involved in continuous fights against the Dark Variant Faction's members.

Everyone could tell that Zack Lockwood was being dragged into the faction rivalry as well.

The Outer Hall Elders had mixed emotions when it came to the faction rivalry.

Many geniuses had died in the faction fights.

Their Dean never stopped such fights from happening.

He wanted competition.

Only strong competition could develop a fierce warrior.

Only a few veteran elders were probably aware of why the Dean was doing this.

If they didn't develop fierce warriors, they would die on another battlefield.

...

Dark Variant Faction:

It didn't take long for the news to reach Ronnie Seth as well.

He was shocked by the news.

Right now, he was preparing himself to enter the training facility.

But this news came out of nowhere.

"Stephen," Ronnie Seth uttered in a solemn tone.

He had joined Star University long before Zack Lockwood, so he wasn't too familiar with the name.

Senior Stephen is one of their hidden places in the Dark Variant Faction.

Like Stephen, there are a few warriors in the university who are waiting to get powerful, suitable Inheritance.

Even he wouldn't dare to fight against such people.

Because their ranks might be the same, but their mastery of skills was different.

They had long perfected their own skills.

So if he went all out using the Black Lightning, the chances of defeat were there.

At this moment, he couldn't help but think about Zack Lockwood.

He had considered Zack Lockwood his rival.

After winning the sacred fruit, he thought Zack Lockwood's strength had increased further.

But he never expected a senior from his own faction to challenge Zack Lockwood.

At this time, he even began suspecting that this was about faction rivalry.

Zack Lockwood had become a target of the main elders and the faction leader.

He then immediately thought of the Virtual Training Lab.

The Virtual Training Lab was the only place where he could get duel information.

He immediately left the place and started going towards the Virtual Training Lab.

...

Virtual Training Lab:

Old man Daniel was getting bored.

Only one or two random warriors came to their place to train.

When Zack Lockwood was here,

The whole Star University talked about their Virtual Training Lab.

"Only that kid can save the Virtual Training Lab.

If he becomes a Black Mark Warrior and above, then the Virtual Training Lab would become more famous," Old man Daniel said to himself.

Suddenly, one of the staff checking the social media posts saw the challenge post.

"Elder," he abruptly stood up from his seat.

"Why are you yelling?" The old man was disturbed by his thoughts.

"Elder, there is breaking news!"

"It's about Zack Lockwood."

“He received a challenge letter again.”

One by one, other staff stood up from their seats as well.

“What?” Old man Daniel blurted out of curiosity.

He collected his thoughts before asking, “Tell me what happened?”

A female staff member stepped forward and said, “Elder, one of the hidden aces in the Dark Variant Faction, Stephen, has issued a challenge against Zack Lockwood.”

“What?” Old man Daniel was dumbfounded.

He was just thinking about that kid.

The development and rise of the Virtual Training Lab depended on that kid.

Now his name has come into the spotlight again.

“Stephen,” Old man Daniel muttered.

His eyes turned solemn.

Because he knew there were people who were purposely not becoming Black Mark Warriors.

They were waiting for suitable Inheritance.

There are many inheritances, but a powerful suitable Inheritance can help warriors become Gold Mark Warriors.

“This Stephen must have mastered his skills.

It’s difficult to defeat him,” he said to the staff.

“Elder, Zack Lockwood consumed the sacred fruit.

His strength must be different than before,” a male staff member said.

Old man Daniel shook his head and said, “You are underestimating the skills.

He can fight for a longer time with mastered skills.

The output damage will be high.”

Chapter 1089: Zack Lockwood’s future challenges

From MC’s Perspective:

As usual, I’m immersing myself in practicing the lightning method.

It’s been more than one hour.

After feeling the veins under stress, I decided to take a rest before switching to the ancient healing method.

In this way, the healing energy will heal the injuries.

After making the decision, I stopped practicing the lightning method and started taking a rest.

...

Thunderflame Faction:

The Thunderflame Faction was in commotion.

Once again, Zack Lockwood's name came to the spotlight.

They learned that someone had issued a challenge against Zack Lockwood.

The warriors were shocked, but they quickly became interested.

They wanted to know which faction had issued a challenge this time.

Not long ago, Ronnie Seth from the Dark Variant Faction fought Zack Lockwood and lost to him.

So they were keen to know which faction was challenging them.

But upon learning that it was one of the hidden aces from the Dark Variant Faction called Stephen, the warriors' expressions changed drastically.

Especially the senior students in the General Rank became serious.

Not many had heard of Stephen, but they knew of him.

Seeing that Stephen had challenged Zack Lockwood, who was a newcomer, the faces of the Senior Students turned ugly.

They sensed a conspiracy from the Dark Variant Faction.

They quickly began to spread the information.

Golden Lightning Palace:

The members of the Golden Lightning Palace were in shock as well.

They knew that Zack Lockwood had been practicing inside the essence chamber since morning, so he didn't know the news.

But they couldn't stop discussing it.

"I'm sure Senior Brother Zack has become a target because of faction rivalry.

This is the second time the Dark Variant Faction is going after him," one of the members said.

He is a warrior in the Early Stage of General Rank, but he is a few years older than Zack Lockwood.

He is a talented warrior as well.

But upon hearing the name Stephen, he became nervous.

Not only him, but everyone who had heard the name Stephen before wore solemn expressions on their faces.

They knew it's not about General Rank strength, but the battle between skill levels.

The Senior Students thought that Zack Lockwood had zero chances of winning against the hidden ace Stephen.

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They didn't think Zack Lockwood's mastery of skills was up to the level of Stephen.

The other warriors didn't know anything about it.

They thought that the Dark Variant Faction wanted to redeem their lost face by challenging Zack Lockwood.

Only the Senior Students believed it was a conspiracy.

Meanwhile,

Main Elder Austin was in his residence.

Except for Zack Lockwood, none of his disciples were there.

Leah and Lola had gone on their mission as well.

He didn't know about the other disciples' activities.

Beep!

Suddenly, he received a call from the Faction Leader, Clifford.

Seeing that, he answered the call.

"Austin, where are you right now?" Old Man Clifford asked.

"I'm at my residence," Austin replied.

"Where is Zack Lockwood?" Clifford asked again.

Austin felt something was amiss.

But he answered, "He is practicing inside the essence chamber."

"Good, don't let him out of your sight," Clifford said in a serious tone.

"Leader, what happened?" Austin asked.

"You?"

"Don't know?" Old Man Clifford was taken aback.

He thought Austin would have heard the news.

"Leader, what's going on?" Austin asked with confusion.

Clearly, he was missing something.

He wanted to know badly right now.

Clifford sighed.

He didn't want to discuss it over the phone, so he asked Austin to visit the meeting hall.

After saying that, Old Man Clifford ended the call.

At this moment, Austin realized something was up.

He immediately left his residence.

Soon, he arrived at the meeting hall.

When he walked into the building, he saw the other main elders were already there.

Upon seeing him, Main Elder Leola chuckled.

She said, "Main Elder Austin, it looks like no one wants to let your disciple live in peace."

Hearing that, Austin was stunned.

With a look of confusion, he went to his seat.

Main Elder Cathy revealed a smile as well.

She now understood the pain of having an outstanding disciple.

She couldn't imagine the pressure of being the Master of Zack Lockwood.

She thought that Main Elder Ann was experiencing the same stress as well.

The Thunderflame Faction Leader Clifford had yet to arrive.

Austin ignored the smiles of Main Elders Leola and Cathy.

He turned towards Main Elder Ann.

“Main Elder Ann, do you know what happened?” he asked.

Main Elder Ann sighed.

Even she was not aware of the news until her disciples informed her.

Swoosh!

Just as she wanted to reply, Faction Leader Clifford arrived at the meeting hall.

He sat in the main seat before looking at the others.

“The Dark Variant Faction won’t let us live in peace,” he said with frustration.

He then turned towards Austin, noticing that Austin was still confused.

He said, “Someone challenged your disciple again.”

“This time, the challenger is not from another faction, the Dark Variant Faction has asked one of their hidden aces to face Zack Lockwood.”

“The opponent’s name is Stephen.

He is one of their geniuses.

For two years, he has been staying at the Peak of the General Rank.”

“He has rejected many inheritances because he couldn’t find suitable ones.

He has been suppressing his strength so far.”

“His mastery over skills must be great.

There is a very slim chance for your disciple to defeat him.

So don’t let him participate,” Clifford explained everything.

Hearing that, Austin was pissed off.

His heart was boiling with anger.

Not long ago, his disciple had escaped the pursuit of Black Mark Warriors.

He thought there would be peace for some time, but he never expected the Dark Variant Faction to cause problems again.

“Looks like they are targeting my disciple Zack.

This time, they didn’t hide their intentions,” Austin said in a cold tone.

“If they wanted to drag Zack Lockwood into the faction fight, that can’t be helped.

I don’t think the Dean would favor him,” Clifford said.

Austin’s expression turned solemn.

The faction rivalry is something that cannot be avoided.

Many geniuses have died before they could grow up.

They knew why the Dean was encouraging this type of fight between factions.

They could only sigh about this matter.

“Leader, I think Zack Lockwood is different from other geniuses.

The Dean won’t sit and watch if other factions are trying to kill that kid,” Leola said.

“I know.

But other factions would rebel if the Dean tried to protect that kid.

He has no choice but to win the series of challenges thrown at him,” Old Man Clifford said.

“It’s now more important to think about his future plans.

We can’t let Zack Lockwood wait two years before accepting a suitable inheritance.”

“Not only the Dark Variant Faction, the other rival factions won’t be patient for long,” Main Elder Ann said.

Hearing about the inheritance, everyone’s expressions turned solemn.

“I guess we can let that kid try his luck in the No.

52 Secret Land opening,” Main Elder Cathy said.

“No.

52,” Old Man Clifford muttered.

He then said, “It appears that No.

52 Secret Land will be opened in a few months.

That massive secret land is filled with dangers.”

“There are places waiting to be explored.

If that kid can reach General Rank Peak Stage before that, then we can let him enter the secret land,” he added.

“He has three elements, so he can try to get more than one type of elemental inheritance,” Leola said.

Austin remained silent.

He wanted Zack Lockwood to use purple lightning in the future as well.

But his disciple’s other two elements were not weak.

His disciple was already practicing the ancient healing method.

His blood method was not weak as well.

“Austin, what do you think?” Clifford asked.

“All that matters is getting suitable inheritance.

If Zack can get suitable inheritance in No.

52 Secret Land, then I don’t have any problem,” Austin replied.

“Hmmm, there is still some time left for that.

Right now, let him continue his training.

I doubt the warriors from other factions want to challenge your disciple as well,” Clifford said.

“Okay,” Austin replied.

Then they talked about a few other things before returning to their palaces.

...

Meanwhile,

The other factions in the Top 10 ranking came to know about the challenge as well.

Especially some warriors were shocked by Zack Lockwood’s return.

They had wanted to challenge Zack Lockwood, especially after seeing his duel with Ronnie Seth.

The bloodline factions’ warriors were eager to fight against Zack Lockwood.

But to their surprise, the Dark Variant Faction issued a challenge again.

Now they had to wait for their turn.

At the same time, they were also learning about the hidden ace.

The other factions already sensed the ill intentions of the Dark Variant Faction in this challenge.

But they were not worried since Zack Lockwood was not their faction member.

If Zack Lockwood accepted the challenge, they were ready to watch the duel in the arena again.

Chapter 1090: Malicious rumors tactics

From MC's Perspective:

When it was evening time, I left the essence chamber and started walking through the courtyard where other members were training.

Upon seeing me, they showed mixed reactions.

I raised my eyebrows in surprise.

In the morning, their gazes had been respectful, but now they were expressing concern.

But I didn't have time to inquire.

I was feeling extremely tired, so I walked away from the place.

“Hey, Senior Brother Zack is going to face the toughest challenge.”

“The Hidden Ace Stephen is not an ordinary warrior!”

“I wonder what Brother Zack’s reply will be.”

“I don’t think Brother Zack should accept the challenge.”

“They are harboring ill intentions.”

The warriors began discussing among themselves.

They didn’t dare to speak in front of Zack Lockwood.

On the other hand, I returned to the residence a few minutes later.

As usual, I went to take a shower.

The bath lasted for 20 minutes, and then I walked out and changed into comfortable clothes.

Then I immediately went to sleep.

...

The following day,

Stephen was in his residence at the Dark Variant Faction.

It had been a day since he issued a challenge, but he had yet to receive any response from Zack Lockwood.

Not that he cared that much, but the main elder was interested in this.

After seeing the response to his challenge, he could tell that higher management didn't want Zack to live.

Now they were using him to probe his strength.

He wouldn't be defeated, but if the kid showed enough strength, he thought that the main elders would do something to kill Zack Lockwood.

Sigh!

A sigh escaped his mouth.

He didn't want to get too involved in this matter.

After defeating that kid, he would return to his own life.

Meeting Hall:

The Faction Leader, Vince, was looking at the other main elders.

The meeting was about their hidden ace Stephen's challenge.

"Why isn't there any news from the Thunderflame Faction?" Old Man Vince asked.

He had been getting angrier a lot lately, all because of one brat: Zack Lockwood.

“Leader, according to intel, that kid has locked himself inside the essence chamber.

He is only going to his residence to sleep,” one of the main elders replied.

“Oh,” Vince uttered.

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He could tell that the Thunderflame Faction had figured out their intentions.

That was why they had not informed that kid.

Vince smiled.

At this point, the top 10 factions and other factions must have figured out his intentions as well.

But nothing was going to stop him right now.

Even the Dean couldn’t forcibly protect that kid.

Because of the faction rivalry, many geniuses had died.

That kid was like any other talented kid.

Until he completely grew up, he would have to face a series of challenges.

“Do one more thing.

Spread rumors that the kid is a coward.

He is not ready to face any challenges.

He is unworthy to be a disciple of the Purple Mark Elder.”

“Let’s see how long that kid can hold back under the criticism,” Old Man Vince said in a cold tone.

Hearing that, the main elders shuddered.

Their faction leader was becoming more sinister.

He was treating their Star University Warrior with this hatred.

Then what would he do to his enemies?

The main elders didn’t want to oppose him, so they agreed.

...

Human Bloodline Faction:

An hour later,

Faction Leader Francesca Ball was in her office.

She was going through online news.

One of the best ways to know what was going on at their university was to search social media.

Her gaze immediately fell on the trending section.

She clicked it.

The next second, many news articles appeared one by one on the news feed.

But her gaze was attracted to one particular article that was currently trending in the number one spot.

When she read the article title fully, surprise flashed in her eyes.

It was an article about Zack Lockwood.

How could she forget that kid?

Ever since she saw him at the duel arena.

She felt a strange connection.

She didn't know how to explain it.

Apart from the bloodline connection, she hadn't felt other connections before.

With Zack Lockwood, she felt another connection for the first time.

After that incident, she had tried to come up with answers.

She had even looked into ancestral records, but she hadn't found any information on this different connection.

After that search, she let go of it.

But she hadn't expected to see the name again.

Out of curiosity, she clicked the article and began to read it.

A few minutes later,

A look of understanding dawned on her.

She realized that the Dark Variant Faction was targeting that kid.

It was part of the faction war.

"It's a pity that the kid is yet to become the Black Mark Warrior.

The chances of him dying are higher," she said to herself.

...

Monster Bloodline Faction:

The Faction Leader, Bethany Sutton, had the same reaction.

She found Zack Lockwood to be an interesting junior.

But she thought the same as Francesca Ball.

The fate of warriors who were dragged into the faction struggle wasn't that good.

Not many people would be able to walk out of the faction struggle.

Bethany thought that Zack Lockwood had low chances of survival.

Unless that kid became a Black Mark Warrior somehow, he could extend his lifespan.

Otherwise, the Dark Variant Faction would continue to target him.

Normally, other factions could be involved in the faction rivalry.

They had feuds with a few elemental factions among the top 10 factions.

So she was not interested in targeting Zack Lockwood.

The Thunderflame and Dark Variant Factions had been rivals from the beginning.

She didn't want to offend another faction unnecessarily.

....

The rumors about Zack Lockwood began to spread across Star University, especially in the Outer Hall Area.

All the warriors were taken aback by the news.

But they were not stupid.

They could see that someone was maliciously spreading the rumors.

Many knew that the challenge had been unfair to begin with.

How could a hidden ace issue a challenge against a newcomer?

It was like hitting an egg with a stone.

There was no comparison at all.

Most of the Outer Hall warriors thought that Zack Lockwood wouldn't be able to win against Stephen.

Even those who identified as supporters of Zack Lockwood had the same reaction.

They didn't know about Zack Lockwood's current strength, but they too knew it was too difficult to win in this duel.

So they were not going to judge if Zack Lockwood didn't accept the challenge, whereas the warriors from other top 10 factions were making fun of Zack Lockwood.

This matter had nothing to do with them.

Yet they were slandering Zack Lockwood.

They wanted to know Zack Lockwood's strength and wanted to fight against him next.

But if Zack Lockwood didn't want to, then they could only wait.

...

Thunderflame Faction:

“Damn, this is too much!”

“Someone is intentionally doing this.”

“They are going to force Senior Brother Zack to accept the duel.”

“Not only are they making fun of him, but they are also making fun of the Thunderflame Faction.”

The warriors were discussing it seriously.

Everyone could see the hateful articles online.

They could tell that someone was fueling it from behind.

The disciples of the main elders had seen it as well.

They thought that the Dark Variant Faction wouldn't give up like this.

Golden Lightning Palace:

The members were already showing concern.

Now this online slandering has pissed them off.

They could see that other factions among the Top 10 rankings had joined in as well.

Most importantly, elemental faction warriors were sharing the articles.

The members had noted down their names.

In the future, if they came across these warriors, they wouldn't hesitate to teach them a lesson.

Inside the residence, Austin's eyes reddened in anger.

He could see that old man Vince had gone senile.

He was completely after his disciple, Zack Lockwood.

If he wanted to protect his disciple, then he had to protect him from all kinds of attacks as well.

So far, he could tell that Zack Lockwood hadn't seen the challenge.

If he had seen that challenge, he would have come to discuss it with him.

But right now, Zack Lockwood was busy training inside the essence chamber.

He hoped that Zack Lockwood wouldn't pay attention to the news at all.

Meanwhile,

Inside the essence chamber, after practicing the lightning method, I decided to switch to the ancient healing method.

But before that, I decided to take a rest.

Out of curiosity, I decided to check the online news.

I accessed the site and saw many articles.

Most importantly, the articles were all about me.

“What’s going on?” I asked myself.

Then I picked a random article and began to read it.

A few minutes later,

My eyes flashed with murderous intention.

I didn’t even know who and when he challenged me.

Now this article was saying that I was a coward for not accepting the challenge.

Clearly, someone was behind it.

Why were they doing this?

I decided to read the remaining articles.