

Death 701

Death... and me

Chapter 701: Transformation

After that, Rean and Roan's vision went dark once again. When they finally returned to themselves, they were lying on the ground near the Soul Gem Orb. Kentucky, Celis, Liza, Luna, and quite a few of the kids were looking at them. None of them seemed worried, though. That's because Sister Orb explained to them that they were fine.

[Oh! It seems like you're back. That's great. So, how was it? Did it clear up some of your questions?]
Sister Orb asked, who seemed excited.

Kentucky sighed in relief after seeing that they were awake. "I have to say, although I wasn't worried about you, I was still worried about the time."

"Time?" Rean and Roan were slightly surprised to hear that.

"That's correct." Celis agreed with Kentucky, saying, "You two have been in a sleeping state for four weeks straight. We only have two more days before one month mark where the kids will be thrown out will come."

"What?!" Rean and Roan were taken aback to hear that. That's next to no time at all!

Kentucky then said, "Alright. As long as you are back, that's enough for us. Besides, it might not be too bad since it confirmed that the Soul Rulers can't find the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm's location even after all this time stationed in their territory." Kentucky seemed very pleased with that already.

Celis then asked Rean and Roan, "So, what did you see?"

The twins looked at each other before saying, "Sorry, but we can only discuss it with Kentucky at the moment. I hope you don't mind." Rean tried to be polite as he said that. As much as Celis was connected to Kentucky and themselves, they had just met each other."

Celis didn't seem to be too surprised to hear that, responding, "That's fine. I'll leave you guys alone for now." With that said, Celis moved his roots, bringing his enormous body away as if it wasn't anything difficult.

After that, Kentucky looked at them and asked the same question, "So, have you gotten more answers?"

Rean nodded, saying, "Yes. A lot of things were revealed this time."

Kentucky, who also knew about everything, couldn't help but ask them to tell him. The twins then used Spiritual Sense messages to show Kentucky what happened in the past between Soul Gem and his organization. Only then did he get a general picture. "To think such a thing happened. Too bad that the recordings stopped right at the moment he embraced the Soul Gem Orb. I wanted to see what happened after that."

Roan nodded, saying, "Indeed. Nevertheless, it isn't hard to guess that whatever had happened separated the Universe into two right after. As for whether the Soul Gem Orb is Soul Gem himself or not, we can't be sure about that."

Rean also added, "We now know that the ones who attacked us were probably the Wafrol Forces' members. I can't imagine why anyone else would want to destroy the Soul Gem System."

[That's not entirely correct,] Sister Orb responded. [You have to understand that a lot of time has passed already. There's a very good chance that the Wafrol Forces doesn't even exist anymore. Perhaps the ones who attacked you had other agendas when they tried to destroy us. Of course, the Wafrol Forces are still the main suspects.]

"That makes sense." Roan agreed with Sister Orb. "Now then, let's check the system again and see if there's anything else we have access to."

The twins then sent their Spiritual Sense and Energy into the Soul Gem Orb and accessed the authority options. Unfortunately, the only thing available was the same Unification Plan option. Not only that, but it had a large line over it as if it had been crossed out. Even after trying to select it, nothing happened.

Surprisingly, it didn't stop there. Back then, Rean and Roan could ask questions to the Soul Gem System, and it would at least tell if they had the authority level to get an answer or not. However, the Soul Gem System didn't react at all even after they made several inquiries. It was as if it couldn't even hear their voices.

"Could it be another side effect of the system upgrade?" Rean asked after pondering about how everything had become harder now.

[Unfortunately, I can't tell you anything about it. It's the System's will, and I can only follow its commands.] Sister Orb was also of little help.

In the end, Roan shook his head. "Whatever. In the end, we've gotten a lot more answers from that vision than we expected." After that, he changed the topic. "Now then..." Roan looked at all the kids running everywhere and said, "What will we do with this bunch?"

Celis, who had left so that Kentucky, Rean, Roan, and Sister Orb could talk, came back at this moment. "If it's just food, I can provide some of my sap. For kids like them who have no cultivation whatsoever, half a drop is more than enough for them to not feel hunger for an entire day."

Kentucky confirmed that it was true. "As a World Swallowing Cedar, Celis absorbs all the nutrients you can possibly imagine. His sap is that good. Also, considering his size, this much sap could be regarded as a single drop in the bucket even after taking all the 3589 kids into consideration."

"That's good," Rean said as he sighed in relief. Food would be quite a problem even though they prepared it beforehand. "However, we still need to find a place for them to stay within these next two days. Otherwise, the System will immediately throw them all out."

Roan then moved to the Circuitry Teleport Formation before saying, "First, we need to leave this place. Don't forget that our exit is still inside the Soul Rulers' territory. Not to mention that if we're at risk, we won't be able to enter the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm anymore."

"That's right." Rean also headed above the teleport formation. "Sister Orb, do we still have enough Spiritual Energy outside to not need Spirit Stones?"

[Yes. Celis spent a really long time in this place, so it became a natural gathering of Spiritual Energy. Although the level of Spiritual Energy outside can't be compared to Rank Seven or Eight Spirit Stones anymore, it is still in the realms of a Rank Five or so.] Sister Orb continued, [Of course, this level will quickly decrease since it's still too high. I would say that the average concentration of Spiritual Energy here in the future will be between the Rank Three and Four Spirit Stone level.]

Rean shrugged his shoulders, saying, "That's not our problem. They used Celis for too long already. It's already time for them to cultivate slowly like everyone else. Just use the outside Spiritual Energy and fill up the Circuitry Teleport Formation."

[Alright. Rank Five Spirit Stones are able to charge the Circuitry Teleport Formation up to 21000 kilometers. If you want to teleport further than that, Rank Six Spirit Stones will be necessary,] Sister Orb explained as Spiritual Energy was siphoned from the outside world into the formation.

Rean and Roan didn't mind that much. After all, the Circuitry Teleport Formation had a limit of 3000 kilometers anyway. Not to mention that Rank Six Spirit Stones were way too unrealistic for the twins at the moment.

Eventually, the teleport formation finished charging up as the twins disappeared with a flash of silver light. Rean and Roan didn't even wait for their vision to clear up as they entered the Dimensional Realm again. Sure enough, the Spiritual Energy concentration outside decreased a lot after this first teleport, being equivalent to Rank Three Spirit Stones now. Nevertheless, that was enough for the Circuitry Teleport Formation to send them another 1000 kilometers further.

Rean and Roan didn't want to risk it, though. After all, the Soul Rulers' Ancestors were all above the Elemental Transformation Realm. Who knows what kind of detection ability they had? Perhaps just a few thousand kilometers was far from enough to escape from them.

From this point onward, they couldn't use the outside energy anymore since it wasn't strong enough. With that, they used the Rank Three Spirit Stones that Rean had gained during the auction house back in Vanesi City. There were more than ten thousand of them, so Rean didn't care. As always, 1000 kilometers was the limit for Rank Three Spirit Stones, costing exactly 1000 of those stones to teleport.

Nevertheless, Roan told Rean to not mind it and keep using it to teleport another 10000 kilometers away. Roan was a lot more interested in guaranteeing their safety than saving Spirit Stones. After all, he preferred life and death situations to train. However, fighting the Soul Rulers wouldn't be a life and death situation at all, but just pure suicide.

14000 kilometers away from the Soul Rulers' territory, Rean and Roan finally decided to stay out of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. For the first time, they allowed their eyes to adapt to the outside world to at least see where they were. However, they were shocked by the view in front of them.

"This..."

The ice world...was no more. As far as their eyes could see, there was a patch of green. There were almost no trees, but it was still a stark contrast to the ice world they had always known.

Roan immediately noticed another point, saying, "That's not all. Try to feel the Spiritual Energy in the area."

Rean nodded and absorbed some of it. Sure enough, Rean noticed it straight away. "Higher than Rank One but below Rank Two. The concentration is somewhere between. Incredible."

Little did they know that what they were seeing wasn't the only place like this. The entire world...had transformed.

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Chapter 702: Koran Forest

Rean and Roan then brought Kentucky out. After that, Rean enveloped them all with his Light and Spiritual Sense bending skill before they took off. After that, they kept flying for an entire day. Of course, Kentucky knew about the urgency of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm situation, so he flew to the limit of his speed and energy conservation.

Kentucky was now a Stage Five Demon Beast, a flying one at that. Thanks to that, his flying speed was unmatched on this planet between cultivators and demon beasts of the same level. Although he only had a single day to fly, that was enough for him to cover another 8000 kilometers on his own.

Along the way, Rean and Roan looked at the scenery. They even passed by some of the isolated cities, which was a normal thing on this ice planet. However, it was all the same everywhere. Life was blooming as the ice melted. It was not like all the ice was gone, but they knew that it would eventually happen. The only exceptions were high altitude places and obviously areas close to the planet's poles.

That being said, it didn't take long for the twins to connect to the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm and ask Celis directly, "Celis, does it have anything to do with your disappearance?"

Celis confirmed. "Isn't that obvious?" Celis felt like it was an idiotic question. "I and my saplings around the world were absorbing and concentrating all the Spiritual Energy into specific places. Naturally, that affected the environment, making the planet cooler little by little. Considering that I have been alive for millennia, it eventually turned into that ice world you saw when you first arrived here."

Celis continued, "That was the way the Soul Rulers used to take control over the world. Without Spiritual Energy outside for other forces to develop, how could anyone contend against them? That would be just suicidal." Celis also looked at all the green grass outside as he sighed, saying, "Now that the flow of Spiritual Energy was restored, it's only natural that the planet has recovered its warmth. All the seeds that have been frozen for so long now have a chance to spurt again. That's why there are almost no trees, but a lot of grass everywhere. As time passes, new forests will appear as the planet recovers its splendor. Of course, that'll take many years."

Rean couldn't help but ask, "Still, isn't this concentration of Spiritual Energy a bit too dense? Even if it doesn't reach the level of Rank Two Spirit Stones, it's still higher than Rank One Stones." Rean was comparing the energy density with that from Sunkan Planet. "Back on our planet, the Spiritual Energy in the environment definitely didn't reach the level of Rank One Spirit Stones."

Celis pondered for a bit before saying, "Hmm...I'm not seeing anything different, though. The Spiritual Energy outside is at its previous level before I started to take it away."

He then continued, "There are only two options here. One, our planet always had more Spiritual Energy than your own. Or two, your planet also had someone limiting the amount of Spiritual Energy in the world, just like what I did."

Rean and Roan had been to the Sasamil Imperial Palace, where the concentration of Spiritual Energy was indeed much higher than other places. Nevertheless, it was not even one-tenth of what the Soul Rulers had. "It's probably the first option, then."

"By the way," Celis remembered to ask something else. "Where are you headed at the moment? Do you have an idea of where to settle down?"

Rean nodded, saying with a smile, "During the time I worked with their Formation Masters, I took the opportunity to study the geography of this planet. I also took several jade slips with maps of many different regions."

"Because of their confidence that I wouldn't be able to ever escape, they didn't care when I asked for it. I wonder if they would do the same thing now. Hahaha!"

Kentucky then looked at Rean and said, "Still, you haven't told us where we are going."

Rean calmed down and then explained, "Roan and I thought a lot about this subject. At first, we were planning to go to some area more isolated where we could bring the kids out. However, we believe that the Soul Rulers will come up with the same idea."

Roan agreed with Rean, continuing where he left off, "He's right. That being said, we aren't going to one of those places. Instead, we're going to stay in a more open place. It's just that this area is still rarely visited by other Zasfins."

Celis and Kentucky were still confused when out of nowhere, Kentucky got an idea. "Oh! I see...we are entering a Demon Beasts' territory, am I right?"

"Smart!" Rean couldn't help but smile in response. "That's indeed correct. We would get one or another Zasfin passing by every now and then to train. However, the numbers wouldn't be high. Although we have over 3000 kids, we're still confident that we're able to hide them."

Celis was still puzzled, though. "What about the demon beasts themselves? A demon beast region is anything but safe for kids without any cultivation." Sure enough, that was the main issue.

"That's not a problem. We're going to a Demon Beast Forest called Koran. It is located in the Tribes' Zone, where no Empire has taken place. From what I found out, the Tribes' Zone has so many tribes that none of them have the power to take control over the others and start their own dynasties," Rean replied.

He then continued, "The strongest powers there are the so-called Consummated Tribes, which number in the hundreds. If any of these Consummated Tribes starts becoming too strong, all the others around it will join forces and attack it." He shrugged his shoulders as he added, "In the end, none of them dares to become too big, afraid of being destroyed by the others."

Rean then smiled, saying, "The most impressive thing about that place is that many of the surrounding empires tried to take over the area in the past. However, once an enemy from the outside appears, all the tribes, big and small, join forces and counterattack. Those events happened quite a few times in the past several millenniums, which forced the Empires to give up. In the end, the Empire suffered way too many losses and only made the Tribes even more enraged. The tribes there were simply not willing to submit at all, regardless of how strong the Empires' experts were."

Kentucky's eyes shone as he could not help but say, "They look so cool!"

Rean couldn't help but laugh out loud, responding, "Hahaha! That's because you're only seeing it from the outside. Believe me, you wouldn't want to live with them at all. It was the Tribes' mercilessness that drove away all enemies. There, the strong reign supreme while the weak turn into slaves. Killing, r*pe, robbery, you name it. It happens there."

Kentucky's opinion of the Tribes' Zone immediately plummeted, muttering, "Suddenly, they're not so cool anymore."

Rean agreed with him. "Well, that's true. Fortunately, the Demon Beasts' regions in that place aren't dominated by the tribes. After all, the demon beasts themselves are just as strong. Except for some Demon Beasts' tides against the cultivator tribes, or tribes banding together to subjugate demon beasts in certain places where they become too problematic, they mostly stay away from each other. As I said, the Zasfins only enter the Demon Beasts' territories alone or in small groups to train themselves. It's basically what Roan and I did back on Sunkan Planet at some point."

Rean then went back to Celis's question, responding, "Anyway, all you need to know is that the Demon Beasts' region is the perfect choice for us. That's because the Koran Forest's main rulers are also Stage Five Demon Beasts, just like Kentucky. As you know, Stage Five is equivalent to Nascent Soul Realm cultivators, like Roan and I. Last but not least, we also have you, Celis. With the four of us, it'll be easy to take control of a part of the core region of the Koran Forest."

Kentucky understood, saying, "I see...you're intending to use me as the leader of this group and pretend to be my subordinates, right?"

Roan nodded, explaining, "That's correct. The other Demon Beast Rulers there are already at Stage Five, so they also have intelligence. To prevent them from creating a problem, they must think that you're controlling us. Of course, as demon beasts, they will definitely challenge us for the territory we take, but we aren't afraid of anyone at our own level."

Kentucky's eyes shone as he said, "Does that mean I can order Roan around?!"

Roan snorted in response, saying, "As long as you bear the consequences when the demon beasts aren't looking, sure..."

Kentucky immediately dropped the idea. "Ahem...I'm just joking."

Celis felt something was off, though. "Why does it feel like you wouldn't use me unless you guys have no other choice?"

Roan shrugged his shoulders in response, saying, "Isn't that obvious? First, you're very easily recognizable. There should be no other tree in the Koren Forest that is even half of your size. What if the Soul Rulers spread information, looking for you? Second, we don't know if there's anything in your body that the Soul Rulers can use to track you down. The Soul Gem Dimensional Realm can definitely block any signal from escaping or entering it. But it can't do the same if you're outside."

Celis immediately answered back, "I understand the first option. However, there's no need to be afraid of the second option. I can guarantee you that they can't find my location through any means you might imagine. Don't forget, I've lived for way too long already and had the highest cultivation on this planet. There's no way they could put a tracker on me without knowing. Besides, they wouldn't dare try it since they knew I would rampage. Hahaha!"

Roan didn't believe it 100%, but that was good news nevertheless. "Alright, then. I'll think about it."

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Chapter 703: Around the World

To be more precise, Rean and Roan wished to have traveled for much longer. There were other Demon Beasts' regions that could be used and were situated further away. Unfortunately, there wasn't much choice since their time was running out.

"Oh, I can see it. If the jade slip map isn't wrong, what lies ahead is the Koran Forest," Rean said as he looked at the jade slip with his Spiritual Sense. "Kentucky, let's head straight to the core region. There's no need to stop at the borders."

"Gotcha!" Kentucky quickly acknowledged the orders and pressed forward. Because he was close now, he didn't care about his reserves of Spiritual Energy and increased the speed. Besides, with Rean's Light and Spiritual Sense Bending Skills, no one would notice them passing by anyway.

Just like everywhere, the once frozen forest now had its ice gradually melting. Green could be seen everywhere as the demon beasts left their hideouts more often. Before, they would only leave it to look for food or other important tasks. But now, due to the heat, they could simply stay outside, basking in the sun.

As Rean's group made their way to the Core Region, the world was in chaos. Rean and Roan had always used different appearances ever since they entered the Soul Rulers' territory. After all, they had the makeup necessary for Roan to work with and Rean's Light Transformation Skill. That being said, the Soul Rulers could only post the appearances they showed while they were there.

The Soul Rulers also passed by the Asume Clan, but as one could imagine, the Asume Clan didn't know anything about them either. Until now, they thought Frandin was the real leader of the group, after all. Besides, they simply said that they were given those high Soul Purity Humans and that they could use it to call the Soul Rulers.

The worst part was that none of Rean's group had ever appeared in front of them with their real faces either. All the pictures spread in all Empires were completely different from what Rean's group truly looked like. In the end, all of Roan's carefulness paid off.

However, finding the twins was the least of the Soul Rulers' issues at the moment. All of the World Swallowing Cedar's saplings spread around the world had withered down after Celis's disappearance. With that, all the spots of high Spiritual Energy concentration had disappeared along with them. That being said, the normal flow of Spiritual Energy was restored for the entire world.

With the Spiritual Energy free for everyone to use, Rank One Spirit Stones had now become useless. That was a big problem since it was used as currency before. Then again, one could now get more Spiritual Energy from the space around them than the stones themselves.

At the moment, the Soul Rulers had the situation controlled. However, the fact still stands that the world's main powers now lost their main advantage, which was their better cultivation environment. None of the Emperors, Sect Leaders, Celestial Land Heads, or the Soul Rulers themselves believed that this control would last for long. Eventually, other organizations would take root, utilizing the better Spiritual Energy flow available.

The only question was how long it would take until the controlling powers couldn't hold the reins anymore. Without a doubt, many dynasty-level changes were about to occur in the world. Well, that made sense. After all, the Soul Gem System gave Rean and Roan 30000 Destiny Points as a reward. Not to mention the title and the 13 levels of increased authority. If the changes weren't at least this big, the reward wouldn't have made sense.

At the moment, the Soul Rulers put a bounty on all of Rean's group members. Kentucky, Rean, and Roan had the second-highest bounties. The total offered for any of them was one hundred thousand Rank Five Spirit Stones. Countries would go to war for way less than that. One must remember that until a month ago, the world lacked Spiritual Energy almost everywhere. Spirit Stones were still too important.

Nevertheless, for the Soul Rulers, that was a small price to get the World Swallowing Cedar back. That being said, any information that could lead to the World Swallowing Cedar had a reward of 300 thousand Rank Six Spirit Stones! Some even thought that to be a joke. There was no way someone would pay that amount. Little did they know that the Soul Rulers were willing to pay even more if they could really find Celis.

Back at the Soul Rulers' territory, the Soul Rulers' leader, the elders, and the Ancestors were in the middle of a meeting. Rows upon rows of chairs were placed all around a gigantic hall, each of them occupied. There were a few seats placed higher than the rest at the back near the center, with the highest being occupied by none other than Fikin, the Peak Transition Realm ancestor of the Soul Rulers. He could also be said to be the strongest man on the entire planet now that Celis fell from the peak of the Stage Nine level.

"Have none of you found anything yet!?" Fikin bellowed with a dark expression. It had almost been a month since the event. But even up to now, they couldn't find as much as a single clue. Even Frandin's group had completely disappeared. Well, Rean's group stayed in the Soul Rulers' territory for over two years, so it made sense that Frandin's group had disappeared.

"Ancestor. We have all of our forces spread everywhere looking for them. However, they really evaporated into thin air. Even the World Swallowing Cedar had simply blinked out of existence. We swept everything around our territory up to 5000 kilometers as soon as Celis was gone. Even so, we couldn't find anything," one of the elders said, being responsible for the search.

"It's true, Ancestor Fikin." Another elder intervened, saying, "We were considering the idea that perhaps a high-level Spatial Equipment was used, not a teleport as we initially assumed. If it was a teleport, we would have gotten some readings or felt the changes with our Spiritual Sense, after all."

Fikin narrowed his eyes, saying, "Such Spatial Equipment isn't something that can be made on our planet. Are you telling me that we got visitors?" From the looks of the situation, it wasn't the first time the Soul Rulers received someone from outside.

"We can't be sure since we didn't get any communication. However, if we did, it makes sense that no one contacted us since they wanted to steal our World Swallowing Cedar. The main problem is..." The elder stopped there, not daring to continue.

However, Fikin didn't care and said it himself, "The main problem is that anyone with such high-level Spatial Equipment isn't someone we can deal with." Sure enough, those words affected everyone in the hall. "However, I still think this to be a low possibility. If someone so strong came to us, why would they destroy our headquarters and steal the World Swallowing Cedar? They could have come straight at us and simply take Celis away. There would be nothing we can do if it was really someone like that."

With that, the expression on the other elders' faces relaxed. Indeed, Fikin's words made a lot of sense.

"Does that mean someone has found a high-level Spatial Equipment and used it to rob us? If so, then it might as well be considered a big opportunity," the Soul Rulers' head, who was close to Fikin, commented.

Fikin pondered over it for a bit before saying, "Continue the search. They also took all the High Soul Purity kids away. If they want to take care of them, they'll need to release those children somewhere. Focus your search on the hidden areas of our planet and make sure to check every corner."

One of the elders couldn't help but say, "But Ancestor Fikin, to check all of them would take a very long time."

"So what?" Fikin said in response. "Do you prefer to stay here doing nothing?"

"No, ancestor." The elder immediately dropped his head. "I'll arrange for the search."

"Good. Make sure that once you finish searching an area, it doesn't stay unattended if our targets decide to appear after we leave," Fikin warned

Not too surprisingly, it was as Rean and Roan imagined. The Soul Rulers considered the remote places the best ones to hide the kids. That being said, avoiding those areas was the right decision, which gave Rean and Roan more time to think about what to do with so many kids.

Odbruva Empire, Erstral Country's Capital...

Two Zasfins made their way in the streets as their slaves followed them from behind. So far, there wasn't anything strange with this sight as many other Zasfins were also accompanied by their slaves. However, if Rean and Roan were here, they would definitely identify this group. Obviously, they were Frandin and the others.

Like everyone else, they also were taken aback by the sudden change in Spiritual Energy in the environment. At some point, the Erstral Royal Family came out to make an announcement, saying that this was a temporary phenomenon and that people shouldn't get ahead of themselves.

However, at the same time, Frandin's group saw all the bounties being put up for Rean, Roan, Kentucky, and Celis. Naturally, they could guess that both were connected.

"To think they went as far as having the entire Soul Rulers after them..."

"Well, it's not like we don't know what those three are capable of."

"Hahaha! We can't lose to them, right?"

"True! We need to put more effort into our training."

"Alright, everyone. It seems we'll need to push forward our plans to enter the Valaria Swamp."

The news about the twins didn't scare Frandin's group. Instead, it only put more oil into the fire.

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Chapter 704: Try not to Annoy Him

Back at Koran Forest, Rean's group had finally reached the inner core region where only Demon Beasts at Stage Three and above lived. Their first task was to find a good enough place where they could let the kids live. That being said, Kentucky flew through the region, looking for the best place.

"Hey, look over there!" Rean said as he pointed in a certain direction. Roan and Kentucky immediately turned their heads just to see a valley entrance. Following that, the three looked at each other and nodded.

Kentucky quickly changed direction and flew in the valley's direction. Once they passed between the mountains, Rean deactivated his Light and Spiritual Sense bending ability, revealing their group's presence.

"Is it really okay to appear this early?" Rean asked as he looked at Roan.

"Yes." Roan nodded in response. "We already know that the territories of the Inner Region definitely have their bosses. This valley, on top of that, seems the perfect place for one of them to live in. Since we need to fight for the territory, we might as well arrive with a bang."

The demon beasts in the valley noticed the newcomers, noticing that their level was definitely above their own, especially Kentucky. Kentucky's Stage Five aura was in full display, making most of them run away.

Tremble!

Though, not long after, the ground began to shake as a Spiritual Sense passed through Rean's group location and said, 'Who gave you permission to enter this valley?!'

Sure enough, Roan was right. The local Demon Beast boss really lived there. As expected, he was in the Stage Five level. That's why Rean's group could understand his Spiritual Sense Message. One must remember that a demon beast could only talk with words at Stage Six, so this one could only use its Spiritual Sense.

Rean and Roan looked at Kentucky as they nodded. Soon after, they jumped down and let Kentucky land a few hundred meters ahead. It just so happened that Kentucky stopped in front of a big cave by the side of one of the mountains that made up the valley.

After that, Kentucky opened his wings before answering the Spiritual Sense with his own, responding in an imposing manner, 'I'm here to take over this valley and the surrounding territory. From today onwards, this is my home. Do you have a problem?'

Mooooooooo! 'To think that a puny Initial Stage Five Demon beast would dare challenge me for my valley. You sure have the guts, chicken!'

Tremble, tremble, tremble...

The sound of heavy steps came from the cave as they made the ground quake. From the looks of it, the demon beast inside there was quite big. Eventually, a shadow appeared at the entrance, revealing the body of the creature.

'It's a Blue-Scaled Mountain Bull,' Kentucky thought for a moment.

However, before Kentucky could say anything, the creature pounced forward, trying to collide against Kentucky's body. The Demon Bull was quite confident since it had a cultivation level of Late Stage Five. Its high defense and strength were definitely above most demon beasts at the same level, let alone one two stages below.

Surprisingly, Kentucky just snorted and said, 'Hmph! You want to compare defense against me?!' Naturally, in a contest of resistance, Kentucky was very confident. His feathers turned sharp like blades as the scales under them hardened within an instant. Light and dark flames burst out of his body, increasing his power even more. Kentucky's open wings then flapped right after, creating a huge gust of wind that sent everything behind him flying as he shot forward. Kentucky planned to take the Demon Bull head-on!

'Courting death!' The bull, of course, wouldn't go back on a contest of strength. The bull's horns then filled with Earth Element, hardening even more. At the same time, it seemed like the water in the air condensed, forming some kind of mist around him. Obviously, that was a Water element ability.

'As expected, most demon beasts and Zasfins really have a Water element affinity or use the Water element as their second choice after their cultivation becomes high enough to control two elements,' Rean and Roan thought as they looked at the bull's attack.

Of course, Kentucky didn't hold back either. His body turned into a meteor of light and dark Flames that expanded even more as the distance between him and the enemy decreased. 'Hmph! Who the hell would court that guy? You must be crazy!'

Roan's mouth twitched for a moment, but he didn't say anything as he thought, 'I should really fry that chicken.'

And so, the two sides reached each other.

Boom!

Mooooooooo!

In the next second, all Rean, Roan, and the other demon beasts in the area could see was a Blue-Scaled Mountain Bull flying back like a comet. Light and dark flames also spread around his body, covering it completely.

Bang!

Crumble!

The bull then hit the side of the mountain, making multiple boulders lose their support and fall over him. Of course, due to the Demon Bull's size, those boulders didn't do much damage. At least not as much as what Kentucky did.

Kentucky then glided down in front of the Mountain Bull with a look of disdain on his face, saying through a Spiritual Sense message, 'Hmph! There isn't a single Demon Beast at Stage Five who can beat me in a contest of defense and power. You should have left when I told you to do so.'

The crumbled boulders then began to move aside as the Blue-Scaled Mountain Bull slowly got up. Nevertheless, he didn't seem scared, just angry. 'I've lived in this valley for over three hundred years! I don't mind losing in a territorial fight to another demon beast. After all, those are the rules. However, I absolutely won't give my valley to someone's pet.'

Kentucky narrowed his eyes, responding with a question, 'Someone's pet? What are you talking about?'

The Demon Bull snorted as he replied, 'Do you think my Spiritual Sense can't see it? Those two humans back there came with you, and they have Nascent Soul Realm cultivations. Not to mention that they were riding you. Don't you feel ashamed as a demon beast?' For a wild Demon Beast like this bull, the concept of serving someone was disgusting. He simply couldn't accept he lost to a demon beast with owners.

However, Kentucky laughed out loud before turned his head back. 'Hey, the two idiots over there. Come here right now!'

Rean and Roan knew that the time to start the play arrived. The two then quickly came to Kentucky's side when out of nowhere.

Bang, Bang!

Kentucky stepped on their heads, forcing the two to kiss the ground. Following that, Kentucky asked, 'Tell this idiot here. Who ' your owner?'

Rean and Roan felt like beating the chicken to death at this instant. However, to keep the secret, they had to bear with it. "Master Kentucky is our owner. We serve him. Please, Master, don't kill us!"

'Hahaha! Well said!' Soon after, Kentucky kicked them away as if they were trash before looking at the Mountain Bull's dumbfounded expression. 'Who the hell said that only their side can become masters? Their garbage lives are in my hands. As long as I wish it, they die instantly.'

The Mountain Bull looked at Rean and Roan and could tell with his Spiritual Sense that Kentucky's actions broke quite a few bones of the two. Kentucky didn't inflict any fatal damage, but the way he treated them was definitely brutal. 'Then...why did you let them ride on your back?'

'Because they're too slow, idiot! Do you think a Nascent Soul Realm human could ever fly faster than a Demon Bird at the same level? Ha! What a joke!' Kentucky truly deserved an oscar...if he wasn't enjoying that situation, of course. Just when would he be able to kick Roan without receiving retaliation again? As for Rean, Kentucky felt a little bad for him, but he had to treat both equally. Nevertheless, Kentucky thought it was really worth it. That was a once-in-a-lifetime chance to get back at Roan, even if just a little.

Kentucky then looked at Rean and Roan with disdain before continuing, 'If not because their cultivation is still of some use for me, they would be dead already. Well, at the very least, they can be used as low-level guards.'

The Demon Bull sighed as he looked at Kentucky with a new light. 'Brother, I have to say, I'm proud of being defeated by you.' Sure enough, the bull had to respect Kentucky for his feats. 'I will leave this valley for you, but...'

'But?' Kentucky's expression didn't look good when he saw that the Bull wasn't leaving straight away.

Knowing that he wasn't a match for Kentucky, the Demon Bull swallowed some saliva before continuing, 'It's just that all the territories around have been taken already. Would you mind letting me live on the other side of this territory? There's another Spiritual Vein there with almost the same quality as the one inside this cave. It would help me a lot if I could still use it.' The Demon Bull then sent Kentucky a Spiritual Sense message, showing the location of the other Spiritual Vein.

Rean's group felt their hearts tremble for a brief moment. 'Spiritual Vein!'

Fortunately, Kentucky quickly recovered as he waited for Rean and Roan to tell their decision. Of course, he was discussing with the twins to get to a unanimous decision. Eventually, Kentucky looked at the Demon Bull before saying, 'Alright, but you have to stay away from my valley.'

The Demon Bull sighed in relief as he nodded, responding, 'That's not a problem.'

After that, he warned Kentucky about something else. 'Oh, right! The other Stage Five Demon Beasts will soon find out about your arrival. That being said, I'm sure some will come to pay you a visit or challenge you. Just be careful with the Blue Luan. He's the only Stage Six Demon Beast and the leader of our Koran Forest. Try not to annoy him.'

Death... and me

Chapter 705: Outside

Blue Luan! Rean and Roan were left at a loss for words after hearing that name. They soon simultaneously thought, 'Isn't that the name of another divine beast?!'

Kentucky nodded in response to the Demon Bull, saying, 'I understand. I'll be waiting for them.'

With that said, the demon bull left, heading to the other side of the territory. Even though it was in the same one, the other Spiritual Vein was very far away, so both sides would surely only enter their respective territories by mistake. Besides, it was good to have it owe Kentucky a favor.

Once the Demon Bull left, Rean, Roan, and Kentucky began to discuss with Celis and Sister Orb in the Dimensional Realm.

Celis was the first one to talk, asking, "Could it be that it's an actual Blue Luan? I haven't heard of any other Divine Demon Beast on our planet."

For Celis, it didn't necessarily need to have Kentucky as the one building a nest on it. Though with that being said, Celis had always been interested in any type of Divine Demon Bird, and the Blue Luan was just one of them. Of course, now that he already had a Minokawa as a Soul Partner, he didn't care too much about the Blue Luan.

Rean shook his head, saying, "To be honest, I don't think that to be the case. Perhaps that's just what it calls itself. After all, isn't it too much of a coincidence for a Divine Demon Beast to exist on this planet with the Soul Rulers not knowing about it? Just like they did with Celis, I don't think they would give up the chance of capturing and raising a Divine Demon Beast."

Roan and the others agreed with his thought process. Unless there was some sort of weird situation going on, there shouldn't really be a Blue Luan in this place.

"Alright, let's leave it aside for now," Roan said as he thought about the more pressing matter. "We only have a few hours before the System sends all the kids out. We need to prepare the place for the kids first."

Rean immediately took flight as he brought many items from the Dimensional Realm out. "Alright! I'm going to build a concealing formation around this valley, preventing anyone's Spiritual Sense from prying over it." With that, Rean left right after.

Kentucky couldn't find any place where the kids could live either, so he decided to build a few places where the kids could reside. With his blade-like feathers and strength, cutting a few trees in the forest would be an easy task.

As for Roan, he entered the Dimensional Realm and called Liza and Luna. Soon, he asked the two, "Have you talked with all of the older kids?"

"Yes." The two girls nodded. Soon after, a few kids over ten years of age came out of the crowd. As mentioned before, the older they got, the harder it was to keep their Soul Purity. That being said, out of the 3589 kids Rean's group rescued, only 32 were in their pre-teens.

"That's good enough." Roan then exited the Dimensional Realm with all of them. Liza and Luna were the only exceptions to the rule. "Alright, are any of you still in doubt as to what happened until now?"

A ten-year-old girl then raised her hand in response as she asked, "The uncle Zasfins had always been good to us. Are you sure they did that to the other kids who left first?"

Roan wasn't in the mood to explain everything again, so he used a more thorough method. His Spiritual Sense spread over all these kids and sent his memories of what Rean witnessed in the Soul Stone Formation. Roan didn't care if they would cry, feel fear, or whatever. This was the fastest way to enlighten them.

Sure enough, all the kids, with a few exceptions, began to cry or trembled in fear after seeing that.

"Enough!" Roan shouted, making all of them shut up. "It's exactly because of that happening that we rescued you from there. Instead of crying, just be thankful that the same thing won't happen to you." Roan then pointed in a certain direction before saying, "I brought you outside to tell you that we can't take care of you forever. You'll have to learn how to live outside and take care of the younger kids on your own."

Roan then looked at the few kids who didn't look too surprised from what he showed. "The five of you, come here." Unsurprisingly, those were the only kids at the age of twelve between all the kids. "It seems like you've already expected something like that to happen."

As mentioned before, the majority of the kids were girls. There were very few boys when it came to High Soul Purity. Nevertheless, one of these twelve-year-old kids just so happened to be a boy. He was also the one to come forward and talk with Roan as he said, "We didn't know what happened to them. However, we are old enough to at least doubt what was happening there so far."

The other four girls also nodded in response, although they were still somewhat afraid of Roan.

"That's okay. It seems like that you five lucked out to have kept your Soul Purity up to this point." Roan then patted the young man's shoulder as he looked at him and the four girls. "From now on, the five of you will be in charge of commanding the other kids. As for the others I brought out, you can use them as second-in-command."

The boy couldn't help but ask, "But...we don't know how to do anything."

Roan shook his head as he replied, "Don't worry, we'll teach all of you how to survive in the outside world. Also, you will learn how to cultivate so that you can get strong, just like us. By the way, what are your names?"

The boy immediately answered, "I'm Malo."

The girls followed right after him. "I'm Wataba."

"Poliana."

"Falas."

"My name is Glennie."

Roan then looked at Luna, Liza, and the other younger kids. "Your job is to help these five take care of the other kids. All of you have escaped from eventually dying back in the Soul Rulers' territory, so I don't want to see you dying anytime soon."

Of course, most of them were still afraid or at a loss of what to do. Nevertheless, the kids could only agree with Roan since they didn't have much choice. Following that, Roan began to walk around with the kids, explaining what he wanted them to do. "First, we need a settlement where you and the other kids can live in. Kentucky, that big black and white bird, has gone out to gather wood. You and the other kids will help build houses where everyone can pass the night."

"Houses?" The kids were confused as to what they were. "What are houses?"

Sure enough, the kids' Soul Purities were checked when they were born. Not long after, they were brought to the Soul Rulers' headquarters and put inside the Bloodline Trial Control Formations. That being said, they had never seen houses before. The exceptions were only Luna and Liza or the kids who took care of Calina, Malaka, and Agis' trials. After all, because they were also humans, their memories were also seen by those kids.

Roan sighed in response before using his Spiritual Sense to explain to the kids what he was talking about. Of course, he couldn't go too fast since those kids had no cultivation whatsoever. Using too compact Spiritual Sense Information would only make them confused, not being able to process everything.

"Oh! So that's what a house is!"

"It seems so nice!"

"I've never been in a house before."

"But it looks very hard to make, no?"

"Hey, it's our house, so it's worth the effort."

"I don't wanna put in effort. It's too boring."

"I don't wanna work as well."

"Me too!"

Sure enough, kids always will be kids. Until now, they didn't have to take care of anything. All their needs were provided by the Soul Rulers, after all. Unfortunately for them, Roan, more than anyone else, was used to taking care of lazy people.

"Hehehe. So, you don't wanna work, huh? Good, good! You totally remind me of a certain sister of mine," Roan said with an evil smile.

Achoo!

Somewhere in the Erstral Country's Capital, a 'certain girl' sneezed.

Malaka looked around her and couldn't help but feel a chill on her back. "Holy shit, what was that just now?"

Ignoring the 'certain girl,' Roan immediately started his 'not so gentle' training regime. He already had it ready since it was similar to Malaka's regime when she was young. He just had to account for the differences in the environment.

Soon enough, many cries could be heard coming from the valley, though Roan didn't care. In his hand, there were only two options. Train or get punished. A third option didn't exist in his mind.

Around two hours later, Kentucky finished bringing all the logs necessary for the construction work. However, Roan only allowed him to cut them into shape. The building of the houses themselves had to be done by the kids. No questions asked.

One hour before the time for them to stay in the Dimensional Realm was up, Roan paused his initial training and brought the kids to the valley's center. Rean was there as well, finishing the last touches on his Concealing Formation. As soon as Rean looked at the kids' sorry states, he already understood what happened, saying, "Malaka's routine?"

Roan nodded, responding, "It worked for her, so it'll work for them."

Rean didn't try to intervene since he knew it was for their own good. "Alright, I'm going to activate the formation. After that, we can bring the rest of the kids out."

Death... and me

Chapter 706: Organizing

As soon as Rean finished saying that, he fuelled the formation core with some of his Rank Three Spirit Stones and activated it. In less than an instant, some kind of dome spread around the area, connecting to seven different spots on the valley's borders. Those were the Concealing Formation's supporting structures.

Soon after, that dome seemed to turn hazy until it finally disappeared. If one looked from the inside, one would be able to see the sky without any issues. However, those who looked from the outside would only see a valley covered in mist that prevented Spiritual Senses from entering.

Roan then flew high up in the sky until he escaped the concealing formation to try it out. His Spiritual Sense spread outward soon after, trying to penetrate the formation. Sure enough, it wasn't possible. He

couldn't see anything with his eyes. Even his Spiritual Sense couldn't pass through it. "This is quite a strong formation. This isn't an Earth Level Formation, right?" Roan asked through the twins' soul connection.

"Exactly!" Rean answered straight away with a smile. "When I got to the peak of the Core and Soul Fusion Realm, my Spiritual Energy pool already had as much energy as a Nascent Soul Realm cultivator. That being said, I was able to take another step forward and draw a Heaven Level Formation. Now that I'm in the Nascent Soul Realm for real, it's just an easier task for me."

Rean had received training from Droman back in the Dalamu Sect, who was already a Heaven Level Formation Master. Palaris was obviously at the same level. Not to mention that the Soul Rulers had the most extensive Formation Master Repository in the world, which Rean got full access to. It went without saying that Rean had all the necessary conditions to enter the Heaven Level as a Formation Master.

Roan, of course, was satisfied with that. "That's good, then. I guess the only risk would be the so-called Blue Luan, depending on how strong that demon beast's Spiritual Sense is." The fact that a Stage Six Demon Beast even lived in this place was already unexpected, so they couldn't do much about it.

Kentucky then flew out of the valley and looked around, saying, "This is very good. It's an amazing place for flying around." He then got an idea as he suggested, "Why don't we put Celis at the center of the valley? With Rean's formation and the valley's profundity, it should just be enough for Celis to grow his roots."

Roan pondered over it for a bit before nodding. "Alright. But we'll need him to leave some of his saplings inside the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm to nurture the herb garden I intend to make."

Celis, who was listening to the conversation inside the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm, immediately agreed with the idea. "That's great! Because I detached myself from my saplings around the world, they've all withered away by now," he responded, excited. "I can't divide my mind to control as many saplings as before, but it's definitely enough for a dimensional realm spanning 40 kilometers in diameter."

Following that, thirteen buds began to grow out of Celis's branches. After that, they shot out like bullets, flying all around the Dimensional Realm before piercing through the ground. Not long after, Spiritual Energy began to gather around the places those buds landed on as they began to take root and grow.

Seeing that, Celis was satisfied. "It's done. It'll take a few months before they grow old enough to help with the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm's development. However, it should be enough since your own herb garden will probably take even longer to develop."

Roan agreed with Celis before he flew back into the formation. However, he warned Kentucky to stay outside. "Kentucky, don't come inside yet. There's no protection formation preventing the other Stage Five Demon Beasts from barging inside, so you need to stop them before they try and enter." That was the only method they could use at the moment.

Kentucky wanted to go back so that he and Celis could continue to build his nest. Unfortunately, he knew that Roan was right. With that, he responded with a sigh, "Sigh...fine. Make sure to tell Rean to be quick."

Kentucky then flew even higher as he took the opportunity to check his own territory in detail.

Back inside the Concealing Formation, Rean waited for Roan to get back before bringing all the other kids out of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm.

Vup, vup, vup, vup...

In just a minute, all the 3589 kids had appeared outside. Fortunately, with Celis's disappearance, the world recovered its warmth, so although it was a little chilly, it wasn't an unbearable temperature.

"I'm cold..."

"I want Uncle Dian!"

"Uwahhhh!"

"What is this place?"

"Why did the uncle and aunt Zasfins disappear?"

Sure enough, it was still a chaotic situation. Most of the kids truly believed the Zasfins of the Soul Rulers' headquarters, so they still missed them and didn't want to believe they were just considered resources.

Roan then looked at Malo's group and told them, "Now, it's all up to you to take care of them. Of course, we'll help you during the first few months, teaching you all you need to know. Your first mission is to create several groups with a hundred or so kids, having each one of you as their leader. All of you are the oldest kids here, so you need to take care of the young ones, especially the babies."

Malo and the others still felt overwhelmed, though. After all, it had only been just a few hours since Roan brought them outside as well.

Soon, a bright white light came out of Rean's hands and covered Malo's group. In just a few seconds, all the wounds caused by Roan's training disappeared. "You don't need to be afraid of getting hurt as long as I'm here. Just focus on your tasks, okay? Go ahead. Your little brothers and sisters need you. As the oldest siblings, it is your mission to help them."

Rean, as always, was a lot more gentle, which made the older kids trust him a lot more than the cold Roan.

Malo then gritted his teeth and nodded as he said to the others, "A-Alright. Poliana, Falas, Wataba, Glennie, and everyone else. Let's separate everyone."

Following Malo's lead, the 32 kids that would become the leaders began to organize the younger ones. Of course, neither Rean nor Roan expected it to work well. After all, they were just too young to have such a high level of organization. Nevertheless, they still needed to start working on it, so it was a good opportunity.

The entire process took over three hours, and it was done very clumsily. Rean and Roan had to intervene several times as fights between the kids would happen every now and then. However, Roan scared these kids so badly that they wouldn't dare to cause problems again. In this specific point, Roan was still the best choice for control, while Rean was the kids' soothing light.

Roan nodded as he looked at the separated groups and said, "Very good." Roan then looked at everyone's appearance and pointed at the river running through the valley, telling them, "Now, it's bath time. All of you, head to the river."

Rean then looked at three specific groups of kids. In those groups, there were just thirty kids who were all about eight years old. As for the rest, they were all babies of two years of age or less, too young to take care of themselves. Those three groups had only one responsibility, which was to raise the young ones. As for the ones leading those groups, they were Poliana, Falas, and Glennie, three of the five twelve-year-olds available.

"Poliana, Falas, Glennie. You three have the most important job, which is to take care of these babies. You can leave all the rest of the work to the other kids. Just make sure you treat them well. Their lives are literally on your hands," Rean said with a serious expression. "As for food and other things, I'll arrange them all."

The three girls nodded in response, knowing that Rean put them in charge because of the difficulty of this task. Once again, Rean's group didn't expect them to do a good job at first. It would take a very long time until they got used to it. Nevertheless, it was still a start.

When the first kid arrived at the river, he couldn't help but complain, "It's too cold! I don't wanna enter it."

Only then did Rean remember that the ice at the top of the mountains surrounding the valley would take much longer to melt if they melted at all. Naturally, the river they filled up would be very cold. Especially since it was a frozen river in the past.

"Alright, everyone. Stay by the river's side. I'll take care of it," Rean said that as he flew to the border of the river where there were no kids. Using his power, Rean excavated a pond before connecting it to the river so that it would be constantly filled with water. Following that, he took a few materials from the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm and made a double-layered formation. One of them was a Spiritual Energy Gathering, while the other was a simple Circuitry Heating Formation. That way, the water in that pond would always be around 30 or so degrees.

Naturally, all the kids were amazed by Rean's display of strength. Not to mention that taking a bath in hot water was much better.

And just like that, the lives of the kids and the twins' group in the valley started.

Death... and me

Chapter 707: Visit

As the kids occupied themselves in the pond, Roan headed to an open area at the bottom of the valley, looking for a good place. Thankfully, it wasn't hard to find since, until some time ago, the entire place was also covered by ice and snow, so once it all melted, only clear terrain remained.

"This will do." Roan then focused on his control over the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm before sending Celis out. Celis then fell on the ground as his roots immediately pierced through the surface. They couldn't go that deep anymore because of his cultivation, but it was still deep enough for his own cultivation.

"Very good. Let me check the surroundings," Celis said before using his Spiritual Sense, which had an easier time passing through the ground to analyze the field. "Alright, I've spread my roots around the valley up to the mountains. I stopped just a few meters away from the Spiritual Sense Protection Formation."

Without anyone noticing, most of the Spiritual Energy hundreds of kilometers around the valley and the mountains surrounding it began to be pulled in the valley's direction. "With this, I should be able to raise the concentration of Spiritual Energy of the valley to around the density of Rank Three Spirit Stones."

Roan nodded and then asked, "That's good. However, wouldn't it attract the attention of the other Stage Five Demon Beasts?"

Celis disagreed, saying, "No. I'm not sucking almost everything as I did back then in the Soul Rulers' territory. First of all, my roots aren't strong enough to reach that level anyway. At the moment, I can only bring around 20% of it to the valley. That shouldn't be enough for anyone to feel that much difference. All the Stage Five Demon Beasts would most likely think that this is just a side effect of the sudden change of the environment. Not to mention that this is our territory, so they wouldn't care."

Roan was satisfied with that answer. "What about the Spirit Vein in that cave? Does it have any use for you?"

"Not really. Considering my own ability as a World Swallowing Cedar, you could say that I'm a Spirit Vein myself. The Spirit Vein in this mountain has a similar power to the Spiritual Energy I'm providing to the valley." Celis then thought about something else as he said, "Oh, right! Instead of having Sister Orb absorb the outside world's Spiritual Energy, why don't you move that Spirit Vein into the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm? At the moment, the Dimensional Realm's own ability to generate Spiritual Energy isn't even at the density of a Rank One Spirit Stone. That should alleviate the burden on the System itself."

Roan had to admit it was a good idea, though he soon asked, "Indeed. But wouldn't the Spirit Vein be damaged if we move it away?"

"In normal circumstances, it would. However, did you forget that I'm a Demon Tree? Spirit Veins are very similar to me and even have a chance of gaining sentience one day. Of course, such a thing is extremely rare, and it's highly likely that we wouldn't even be able to see one," Celis answered as he explained. "Anyways, I can use my roots to separate the vein from the mountain without damaging it. You just need to prepare a good place in the Dimensional Realm for it."

Roan didn't even think twice as he replied, "Leave it to me, then. With your saplings and the Spirit Vein, I'm sure the herb garden in the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm would turn out perfect."

Celis laughed in response, saying soon after, "That's not all. The Spirit Vein will nurture the land, just like my saplings. That means the development of the Dimensional Realm as an individual atmosphere will definitely speed up."

With that said, Roan and Celis immediately began to work.

Back on Rean's side, he was left alone to command all the kids. "Sigh...this isn't working out. We're lacking in helping hands."

Sister Orb then gave him an idea. [In that case, why don't you head to one of those tribes outside and take a few of their adult human slaves? I'm pretty sure they'll love to know that they can live an easier life here.]

"Hmm..." Rean pondered over Sister Orb's words. "That might really work. We did pass through some small and big tribes on our way here. If I bring Kentucky together with me, perhaps we can be back in just a few hours."

Roan, who heard the conversation through the Soul Connection, decided to intervene, saying, "It's fine if you want to go out and bring a few adult humans. However, don't bring Kentucky with you. Just head out alone. Kentucky's watching over the valley to prevent any Stage Five Demon Beast or higher from approaching."

Rean didn't mind as he shrugged his shoulders in response. "Sure. That just means I'll take a few more hours to go there and come back. Will you be fine if I leave the rest in your hands?"

Roan nodded, responding, "Obviously. I can also use Light Element to heal the kids in case something happens to them. In any case, the older kids can still do some simple work like taking care of the younger ones."

Rean didn't continue the conversation as he took flight right after, asking sometime later, "Alright, how many adults would we need?"

Roan pondered over the question for a bit as he felt Rean flying away through their connection. "I don't want to take any risks, so bring around ten or so. Also, focus on those without any attachments so that they won't think about running away later."

"Very well." Rean's Light and Spiritual Sense bending skill then activated around his body as he headed high up in the skies. In the very next moment, he selected a direction before zooming at breakneck speeds.

Roan then spread his Spiritual Sense to watch over the kids as he and Celis worked on the Spirit Vein. On Sister Orb's side, Roan asked her to select the best place to put the Spirit Vein once they finished extracting it from the ground.

Everything went well for the next hour or so when out of nowhere, Kentucky entered the Spiritual Sense Concealing Formation for a moment to warn Roan, 'We have company.' After that, he left again.

Roan, of course, immediately stopped everything and headed out of the protection formation as well.

In the end, the Demon Bull was right. The news about a new Stage Five Demon Beast taking his territory spread quickly, and the others who were in nearby territories came to check.

Death... and me

Chapter 708: That's a Secret

As soon as Roan arrived outside of the Spiritual Sense Protection Formation, he saw three Demon Beasts floating in the air in front of Kentucky. Like cultivators in the Core and Soul Fusion Realm and above, Demon beasts can also fly independently of their race at Stage Five.

At the moment, there was a black wolf with two horns, a snake with blue scales and three eyes, and a green-colored demon bird with four wings. The first one was a Shadow Splitter Wolf, which was not so rare on this planet. The second one was a Streak Python. As for the last one, it was a Wind Sazan, also quite common like the Shadow Splitter Wolf in the Tribes' Zone. Of course, these beasts at the Stage Five level were very rare nonetheless.

Roan then approached Kentucky and bowed before asking, "Master, do you need my help?"

Kentucky, knowing that Roan was acting like before, snorted as he responded, "Hmph! Do I look like someone who needs help?"

The demon beasts in front were taken aback by that scene. "So, that idiot bull was saying the truth, huh?" the black wolf said as he looked at Roan's respectful expression.

Hearing that, Kentucky said, "What do you want? I got this territory from a proper fight. If you want to take it, you'll have to pass over me first." Kentucky kept his overbearing act, not showing any fear from the disadvantage in numbers.

However, the Wind Sazan shook its head as he replied, "We didn't come here to fight you. First of all, only weak demon beasts would need the help of others in their own fights. That being said, we wouldn't gang up on you unless there was a good reason for it."

The Streak Python nodded, continuing where the previous one left off. "The Wind Sazan's words aren't lies. We only came to verify whether the idiot bull was telling the truth or not. However, after seeing this human's behavior towards you, we can only believe in it."

Kentucky couldn't help but say in response, "Isn't that obvious? If I got a Zasfin, then it was fine to doubt whether or not he was my slave. However, this is just a human. Do you think I would submit to something like that? It was only out of convenience that I helped this thing reach the Nascent Soul Realm." Kentucky then looked at Roan before asking, "Isn't that right, idiot?"

Roan suppressed the urge to kick Kentucky as he nodded, responding, "Yes, Master. Thank you for keeping me alive."

Kentucky was satisfied with that answer, saying, "That's good." After that, he turned his attention to the demon beasts and asked, "So, is there anything you want to do? To be honest, that demon bull was just too weak. He lost in just a single exchange. If some of you don't mind, I would be very happy to do some sparring."

The three demon beasts then looked at each other after that. They heard from the Demon Bull that it had lost in a single strike. However, they doubted that. Nevertheless, seeing Kentucky talk with such confidence made them have second thoughts.

Nevertheless, they were still demon beasts. Since Kentucky challenged them, how could they step back? Demon beasts had always been very prideful, and it wouldn't change even now.

"Oh, I like your spirit," the Shadow Splitter Wolf said in response to Kentucky's words. "In that case, let me see what you're capable of."

Kentucky smiled and immediately flew back to the ground as he soon said, "Good. In that case, I'll give you the ground advantage. I'm a demon bird, after all. If I fought you in the air, it would be too much of a handicap for you."

The wolf's mouth twitched after hearing that. That was the same as saying that Kentucky could win on the ground where he was at a disadvantage. "Hmph! If you want to get hurt that badly, then let me fulfill your wish."

The Streak Python and the Wind Sazan looked at each other for a moment. The wolf was obviously better on the ground, so it was a good chance to see Kentucky's power. That being said, they decided not to intervene and see what would happen before making any move. Besides, even if Roan was a slave, he was still in the Nascent Soul Realm, so he could at least bother them for a while.

Well, the truth was that Kentucky already fought head-on against the Demon Bull, who had greater raw strength than the Shadow Splitter Wolf. If even the Demon Bull couldn't break through Kentucky's defense, then let alone the wolf.

Arrrrgh!

The wolf was much faster, so he was able to last longer than the Demon Bull. In any case, Kentucky was just too strong against other demon beasts of the same level. In the end, the wolf was taken by surprise by one of Kentucky's attacks before receiving quite a few serious injuries. With that, he hastily shouted, "I...I give up."

Kentucky smiled as he flew in the air again. He had no intention to kill the wolf from the very start. "You were weaker than the bull but lasted longer, so it was quite fun." Kentucky then looked at the other two before asking, "I still have a lot of energy remaining. Do any of you two want to give it a try?"

The Streak Python and the Wind Sazan immediately shook their heads as one of them replied, "As demon beasts, we wouldn't usually refuse a challenge. However, the disparity in power between you and us is just too big. There is a difference between being brave and being an idiot. Fighting you would obviously be the second option."

Kentucky didn't mind that, saying in response, "Well, it's up to you. In any case, this valley is mine now. So, don't try to enter it without my permission."

The three demon beasts nodded after hearing that. However, they still didn't leave as their tasks here weren't finished yet. "That's fine. Still, we didn't come here just to pay you a visit."

Kentucky put on a puzzled look as he asked in response, "What else do you need?"

The three demon beasts looked at each other for a moment before nodding. Soon, one of them answered, "The Blue Luan heard that you got two Nascent Soul humans as slaves. He wants to know how he can get a few of them himself."

Kentucky was taken aback for a moment by that. Those guys were obviously talking about the Stage Six Demon Beast, the only one capable of threatening his group in this place. Though, not long after, Kentucky received a Spiritual Sense Message from Roan, telling him what to say.

"Isn't that obvious?" Kentucky then pointed at Roan and explained, "Look at his neck. I'm also using those slave collars to control him, just like the Zafins did. It was quite expensive, but it's worth the price once you make them work for you for as long as they did for me." Sure enough, those fake slave collars came in handy once again.

"So, that's how it is..." The injured wolf nodded before asking something else. "However, aren't you afraid of him breaking out of it and attacking you at some point?"

Kentucky shook his head in response as he replied, "Nope. After all, I'm too strong. Hahaha!"

If the ones in front of him were Zafins or humans, they would think Kentucky was getting ahead of himself. However, they were all demon beasts, and the mighty was right in their world. Kentucky's actions were well within how a demon beast should behave.

"Alright, last thing. What race are you from?" And with that, the question that puzzled everyone there came out.

"That's a secret. Hahaha!" Too bad Kentucky had no intention of answering it at all.

Death... and me

Chapter 709: Selecting

Those demon beasts couldn't force Kentucky to tell them, so they were forced to ignore it.

It was then that another voice echoed in their minds, saying, "I told you he was strong, didn't I?"

From a distance, an enormous Demon Bull came flying in their direction. The other demon beasts nodded, not doubting him anymore. "Indeed. He's truly strong. No wonder you told us to be careful," the Shadow Splitter Bull responded.

Kentucky looked at the Demon Bull and said, "So, it was you who told them to come?"

"Yes," the bull confirmed. "That was the fastest way to spread the news that you took over my territory. Once the others hear that you defeated both me and Blacky there, they won't come and find a problem with you anymore."

"Who the hell is Blacky?" the wolf snarled as he looked at the Demon Bull with a dark expression.

"Hmph! And who were you calling idiot bull?" Sadly for the wolf, the bull didn't show the least bit of respect either.

Kentucky, on the other hand, didn't care too much about it. "Alright, that's enough. If you guys have nothing else to talk about, you can head back to your own territories. I'm busy building my new nest in the valley." This part wasn't a lie.

Nevertheless, the Demon Bull couldn't help but ask, "Just one thing. Why do I feel like the Spiritual Energy here had suddenly decreased?"

Kentucky shrugged his shoulders, saying, "How the hell would I know? The world has been going through these changes everywhere. I came from quite far away, but the same thing's happening in other locations. All I know is that this amount of Spiritual Energy is still many times higher than what we had in the past, so I don't care."

The other demon beasts had to admit that Kentucky was right. "Well, we all hope that this isn't a temporary thing. Anyways, let's go. Our new friend here has his own things to do." After that, the four demon beasts turned around and left.

Kentucky and Roan sighed in relief after seeing them leave. The only issue for them would be if they decided to forcefully enter the valley. It still didn't have a protection formation, and it would take quite

some time for Rean to add one capable of blocking Stage Five Demon Beasts. That's why Rean didn't even try making one yet.

Roan then looked at Kentucky and said, "I'm going back to continue working. Stay out here and keep observing. Although it seems like there won't be others coming, we better be safe."

Of course, Kentucky felt somewhat annoyed by that. "And here I thought I could finally go back and build my nest..." Nevertheless, he knew Roan was right. "Alright, I'll tell you if someone appears."

Roan nodded after that before heading back into the valley.

Far away, the wolf, python, and bird had separated from the Demon Bull and flew into the distance. Along the way, they looked at each other before the Wind Sazan spoke, "We need to report this to the Blue Luan."

The Shadow Splinter Wolf nodded as he pondered over something else, asking, "Do you think that Demon Bird is also a Divine Demon Beast?"

The Streak Python and Wind Sazan narrowed their eyes as one of them replied, "We don't know. However, he's just in the Initial Stage Five level. As for us, we're all in the Middle Stage Five level. Nonetheless, I don't believe we could win against him even if we three fought against him at once. And that's already considering that his slave won't help."

The Streak Python nodded in response to the Sazan's words as he continued where he left off. "Correct. That's not the type of power a simple demon beast would be able to show, especially when it has lower cultivation. We definitely need to report it to the Blue Luan."

The three nodded their heads in agreement before increasing their speed, soon disappearing in the distance.

Back on Rean's side, several hours had passed. Because he wasn't with Kentucky, he took a lot longer to leave the Koran Forest. "Hmm...if I'm not wrong, I saw a small tribe around 100 kilometers away from here." Rean then used the landscape as his guide before darting forward.

Sure enough, it didn't take long for him to find the tribe his group passed by along their way to Koran Forest. Rean then spread his Spiritual Sense inside, trying to see if there was anyone able to feel it. After all, his Spiritual Sense could still be detected even if others couldn't detect his body with the same method. It's only that the other side would need to have a similar cultivation level to Rean.

Soon, a picture of the entire tribe entered Rean's head, which showed the cultivation of everyone present. 'Hmm? I hadn't noticed it before because Roan, Kentucky, and I refrained from spreading our Spiritual Senses. However, even the humans here have cultivation.'

The tribe had over 30 thousand members. Of course, in a place like the Tribes' Zone, it was still considered a small tribe. Otherwise, how could such a place with no real controlling powers defend itself against the invading empire for so long?

In the middle of the tribe, most humans were in the Body Transformation Realm, but quite a few were in the Energy Gathering Realm. Rean even saw three humans in the Foundation Establishment Realm. Considering how humans were treated and the incredible lack of Spiritual Energy of the planet just a little while ago, those were impressive achievements for humans.

'Well, the Zasfins are obviously the ones leading the tribe. I can even see three at the Core Formation Realm. As for Foundation Establishment Zasfins, there are more than thirty. Not to mention that all the humans in the Energy Gathering Realm and above still have slave collars,' Rean thought as he paid attention to everything.

Humans were still humans. In the entire tribe, they made up around 30% of the population, but they were responsible for all the menial tasks. Rean decided to ignore the humans at the Energy Gathering Realm and above. After all, they might cause problems for the kids in the future. He mainly focused on the humans who seemed to be oppressed and had the lowest cultivations.

Above all, Rean had one last criterion. The humans he selected still had to have some life in their faces. They couldn't be like the others, who looked just like zombies who had lost the will to fight against their fate. That wouldn't be of any help for what Rean's group was trying to achieve.

Death... and me

Chapter 710: Capturing

Suddenly, Rean noticed that a small commotion was happening on one of the corners of the tribe. He focused his Spiritual Sense there, just in time to see a few Zasfins rushing out of the tribe walls in pursuit of a shadow in the distance.

"It's that idiot again! Catch him!"

"I'm going to break all his bones this time!"

"First of all, who the hell let him escape again? Whoever was taking care of the farm this time around will definitely receive a beating."

The shadow in the distance saw the Zasfins quickly approaching him. However, he gritted his teeth and tried to run even faster. One could see many scars on his body. In fact, he even limped a little due to some old injuries. Nevertheless, he kept running despite the threats. It was obvious that he wouldn't be able to escape, but he didn't give up. "So what if you break all my bones? That only means I'll die. At the very least, you'll just lose a slave to work. Hahaha!"

Rean couldn't help but smile after hearing that. He became a bit curious as to how far the man would go, so he followed him close while keeping his Light and Spiritual Sense bending skill active. He even deliberately put a few obstacles on the man's front, making him trip and slow down even more. Of course, neither the man nor the Zasfins behind him found it strange, only thinking that the man was unlucky.

He didn't stop running, though. He would get up and charge forward every single time. There was fear in his eyes, but the hatred inside it was much bigger. Even if he couldn't escape, he would make it as hard as possible for the Zasfins in pursuit.

Eventually, a voice echoed in the limping man's ears, saying, "Very good. You will be the first one."

Before he even had a chance to say anything, his body flew up in the air, shooting toward the skies. Obviously, the man was frightened by that view as he looked back, thinking that the Zasfins did it to him. Too bad for him since he was wrong. He immediately saw the Zasfins stop in the position he was just a moment ago, looking everywhere.

"Where did he go?"

"He was here just now!"

"I don't understand. He simply disappeared right in front of my eyes."

"Did he trick us to come here?"

"What else could it be? Quick, spread out! He couldn't have gone too far!"

Only then did the man notice that the Zasfins had nothing to do with it. "What's happening here? I'm right above their heads. Why can't they see me? Also, how the hell am I flying?!"

"That's because I'm holding you with my Spiritual Energy," a white-haired young man replied to his question, who suddenly appeared by his side like a ghost.

"Ah!" As expected, the man was frightened by the guy's sudden appearance. "Wh-who are you?"

Rean smiled at him as he patted his shoulder. Following that, a burst of white light came from Rean's hands and entered the man's body, quickly healing all his injuries, even the old ones that he thought he would need to pass his life with. "Me? I'm a human, just like you."

The man was shocked to hear that...well, more like just shocked overall. First off, it was because he heard the word human from that guy. Second, his body had never felt so good before since he was a kid and was put to work. "This...are you here to capture me?"

Rean nodded, saying, "Well, that's not wrong. I'm in need of a few adults that could take care of a bunch of human kids. How about it? Are you interested in the job?"

Naturally, the man was even more puzzled as Rean explained his purpose for capturing him. "What are you talking about?"

Rean laughed in response, shaking his head as he said, "Hahaha! It's fine, it's fine. You'll understand later. At the moment, all you need to know is that I can give you a much better life than what you have here."

As overwhelmed as the man could be, he wasn't in a hurry. He tried to calm down first and then said, "So basically, I'll become your slave instead of those guys, right? Hmph! No need! Put me down."

Rean looked at the young man with surprise as he said, "Now, that's a surprise. I thought you would take the first opportunity to leave this place even if it was somewhat suspicious."

"Somewhat?" The man's mouth twitched as he responded with a question, "Is there anything in this situation that isn't extremely suspicious?"

Rean had to admit the man was right. "Well, that's true. Anyway, I don't want to make you my slave. I'm a human, too, after all. I'll explain everything later, and if you want to leave, I won't stop you. How about it? Would you at least give it a chance?"

The man narrowed his eyes in response. But as he looked at the ZASFINS scattered below, he knew that he wouldn't have a chance to escape if he was left here. "I'm warning you. I didn't submit to them, and I'm definitely not doing submitting to you."

"Fine by me," Rean said as he shrugged his shoulders with a smile. "By the way, I still need nineteen or so people. That's why I'm here. Do you know anyone like you in this tribe?"

The man couldn't help but ask, "Like me? What do you mean?"

"Simple. I need people who are unwilling to submit to the ZASFINS. I have no need for those who gave up on their fates because they're slaves, so those don't count. Also, they must not have high cultivations. Anyone at the Energy Gathering Realm and above is out of the question. Oh, right! I would need at least half of them to be women since they're better at taking care of kids," Rean answered as he explained.

Not knowing whether or not to trust Rean, the man went silent for a few minutes. However, Rean didn't rush him and waited. Eventually, a look of determination appeared on his face as he pointed at the tribe,

saying, "I don't know all the humans in the tribe, but I do know a few who think like me. However, let alone nineteen, there are only three or four of them."

Rean smiled after hearing that, saying, "That's enough. They might know more as well. Show me the way."