

Evolution 135

Chapter 135: Sensing Dark Energy.

"...Never mind." Levi smiled wryly, "Call me when you are done. We need to head to the market to get your materials for the evolution."

"Aight, I will wrap it up!" Arthur's excited voice escaped from the other side briefly before the call ended.

Having nothing to do before the market's visit, Levi decided to spend some time exploring the dark energy within the Spiritual Bridge of Darkness.

It had been months since he had been introduced to the concept of dark energy, and yet, he had never once sensed it.

By now, he realized that maybe time and repetitive practice might not be the answer, despite Ash'Kral's claims for him to be patient.

As for his Origin Sun Seed? Levi was already inching closer to 5%... The divine light responded much better to the Sun Seed than the Crimson Seed.

He only needed one more session, and he would unlock his first innate ability and weapon in no time.

But he wasn't in a rush since the Sun Origin Seed had its solution. The real problem was the Void Origin Seed.

Right now, it was the one setting up the pace, and it was slow as hell. Levi knew that the more time it delayed him, the worse it would get for his chosen approach.

He decided to leave the two seeds at 5%, then evolve to the next rank. In this case, he wouldn't need to leave only one seed behind.

Ash'Kral had warned him that if he prioritized two seeds and left one behind, it was much worse than leaving two seeds behind.

He explained that those Divas loved to share misery.

If two of them were left behind, it wouldn't sting as badly... This resulted in weaker flares compared to one concentrated flare from a single seed.

Thus, as long as he didn't figure out a way to absorb dark energy efficiently, it would always slow his progress.

"Dark energy... It's everywhere, but feels like nothing... How can you sense nothing?" Levi scratched his head in confusion as he 'looked' at the infinite darkness before him.

He felt like he was a kid trying to catch wind with his bare hands... Impossible.

"Darkness doesn't hide by standing still... it hides by silencing everything around it...." Levi murmured as he analyzed the darkness before him.

Ash'Kral told him that the Spiritual Bridge of Darkness was not truly empty... It was cloaked in a field of null presence, where dark energy folded itself into silence.

Normal senses, even spiritual ones, were dulled here. However, dark energy still responded, not to sight or sound, but to contrast.

Levi didn't pay much attention to this at the beginning, but now... He realized that he might have been approaching the absorption process a bit too straightforward.

He was attempting to use the same method that worked on the other seeds, the known manual cultivation process... But the creators of this process didn't have dark energy in mind when creating it.

It acted on a different note than the rest of the energies, which meant it also deserved a different approach.

Then a thought sparked.

If light reveals by contrast... maybe sound can too.

Levi dropped into a crouch, setting two fingers to the polished shaft of his staff. Slowly, carefully, he whispered a low hum through his teeth... not from his mouth, but from deep in his throat.

The staff vibrated slightly. Barely. A vibration traveled outward.

He waited.

Nothing came back.

He tuned the hum lower... then again, softer. This time, as the pulse slipped into the void, he felt something; not a return, but a break. A space where the sound disappeared too fast, like it had been swallowed.

"There you are..."

He adjusted the vibration, pulsing it again. This time, he felt the pattern: clean, clean, clean... broken. A dead spot in the emptiness. Levi believed this spot held a concentrated level of dark energy!

Instead of spreading his senses thin like always, Levi used the pearl to refine his spiritual sense to its limit before sending it to the dead spot.

A few moments later, Levi's spiritual vision suddenly picked up on a floating cloud of darkness. Although the Spiritual Bridge of Darkness was pitch-black, this cloud appeared more concentrated and contained!

Without losing focus, Levi used his spiritual presence to visualize the cloud of dark energy getting absorbed by his Void Seed.

Just like a peasant being called by his king, the cloud of dark energy hastily entered Levi's body the moment it sensed the presence of the Void Seed in the vicinity.

It was the same reaction with light and the Sun Origin Seed!

However, as he was absorbing it, Levi couldn't help but knit his eyebrows in irritation. Each time a wave of dark energy touched his skin, he felt a bone-chilling sensation like his body and soul were being brushed by a frosted hand.

This cold sensation only grew stronger with more dark energy absorbed. Fortunately, Levi finished the whole dark cloud before the discomfort turned into a horrible pain.

"What was that..." Levi murmured, shivering in his place.

"Where light stirs particles, quickens motion, and brings vibration and warmth, dark energy slows everything down... not just physically, but spiritually." Ash'Kral clarified calmly, "It seeps into matter and spirit alike, suppressing life, numbing thought, and draining momentum. It doesn't radiate, it pulls inward. The more it gathers, the more silence and stillness it creates."

"Hence, the coldness."

Hearing this, Levi nodded in understanding.

Without heat, only coldness remained... What Levi was doing was absorbing the origin of coldness itself, the void, nothingness.

How could his body and soul not be frozen over when the dark energy was pulling all of the warmth out of him?

"Light is warm because it wants to be known... Dark is cold because it never does."

Ash'Kral shared casually, summarizing the relation of light, heat, darkness, and coldness in one sentence.

Realizing that he would be dealing with heat flares and chills during both his cultivation sessions made Levi's brow twitch.

'What a sadistic cultivation method.'

But when he gazed at the Void Seed and noticed a crack on its gloomy surface, he forgot the pain and smiled in delight.

"I can finally advance all three paths."

"At last." Ash'Kral murmured, "Not bad, considering the few hints I have given you."

"Huh, wait, you knew a method?" Levi suddenly frowned.

"What do you think?" Ash'Kral said indifferently, "I never tell my partners the methods to sense dark energy; just hints, and it's up to them to find out the best way to trace it."

Hearing this, Levi recalled that Ash'Kral had indeed told him a hint every time he failed to sense dark energy. He said that dark energy didn't exactly reside within the confines of the Spiritual Bridge of Darkness...Instead, it was in the Shadow dimension, but the bridge was the only spiritual connection to it.

Thus, it was a must to be connected to the bridge most of the time to be able to absorb the dark energy of the Shadow dimension without needing to physically be there.

The other hints were also related to the final answer.

"Why?"

"Why not?" Ash'Kral replied calmly, "Do you expect me to spoon-feed you answers for everything in your life? If you can't even solve this issue with the amount of hints I gave you, you can forget about solving the Three-Body Problem."

Although Levi preferred if Ash'Kral came straight and told him the method, he realized that he made sense.

When it came to situations that required his immediate answers, Ash'Kral never hesitated to ensure Levi wouldn't be unnecessarily slowed.

But in the case of the Void Seed, he knew that it wouldn't be important in the first months, which made him push for Levi to reach the answer on his own.

This way, Levi wouldn't be too reliant on him, and this partnership could actually be called... a Partnership.

"Nothing is easy with you, huh?"

Levi shook his head and dropped the matter at once. He refocused on absorbing more dark energy, strapped for time... He had less than a week to push it to 5%.