

Evolution 291

Chapter 291: Suicidal.

"The same goes for you..." Levi replied indifferently, "You have used your dominion, which means your energy level is below 10% or even less... You are far from any source of sunlight to restore it, and I doubt growth totems will be much of a help considering the size of your energy pool."

Hearing this, Azhukar chuckled as he reached out to his dimensional wallet. Just the wallet itself was a work of art, resembling a small, handheld purse in the shape of a decorated pyramid.

Then, he pulled out close to five growth totems... but once Levi saw them, his brow knitted in confusion.

He could tell that they were growth totems as they shared a similar shape, size, and appearance to the ones he was using. However, the material itself wasn't the same.

The growth totems sold in markets were crafted out of dull beige wood, but the ones around Azhukar were milky white with a tint of divinity to them... A single look was enough for anyone to claim them to be of the highest possible quality.

Ash'Kral confirmed it right away.

'Boy... don't place your faith on outlasting him...' Ash'Kral uttered solemnly, 'Those are SS Grade Growth Totems... which used to be called Divine Growth Totems. They are crafted from the healthiest part of the Primordial Tree of Life's bark and can store enough sunlight to fully recharge half of a Tier 7 Powerhouse's energy tank.'

'...'

Levi was left silenced at such damning news... without needing to ask Ash'Kral, he could tell that such Growth Totems must have either gone extinct or were reserved solely for Radians, Oblivars, or other Ancient races. He was certain about it because the rarest grade of Growth Totem was S grade, and it wasn't available for purchase in the network.

This realization made Levi glance at Azhukar's dimensional wallet. He could tell it was filled with treasures far greater than anything left in the royal treasury... if Azhukar hadn't already stripped it of its best relics when he chose to pursue the Glorious Evolution. That would also explain why N'ibby never suggested using the treasures Jasmine found there... they simply weren't good enough to save her.

"Ohoho, I can smell your greed." Azhukar smirked while lifting the dimensional wallet in front of his face, moving it left and right, "You want it? Come get it."

Levi didn't get enticed at all; his emotions were beyond in check due to the void... at the moment, the only thought going through his mind was fulfilling his suicidal strategy... especially when he realized that Azhukar could do this all day. This made him understand that he needed to bait him with the chance to finish him off.

In an instant, Levi blinked next to Azhukar while mid-swing of his voided staff, but Azhukar blocked his attack with his twin blades.

Without hesitation, Levi slipped into his ghostly form, causing the twin blades to go through him and Azhukar to lose his balance slightly from the momentum of his swing.

The moment Levi's staff drove through the Emperor's chest, Levi switched to his solid form, causing his staff and arm to harden within him!

"Devour him," Levi uttered expressionlessly as he released the true horror of his void form... the ability to devour anything and everything until nothingness remained!

And yet, Azhukar showed a mere cruel smile.

"So predictable," he said again.

A layer of plasma wrapped around Levi's arm and his staff, locking it in place and feeding the void with so much concentrated plasma energy, it simply couldn't devour it in time and move to Azhukar's flesh!

With that brief moment earned, the Emperor merely uttered coldly, "Helio Fusion Ray... end this vermin!"

The cannon behind them pointed at the Emperor's back... and then, it fired a bright, blinding ray of concentrated plasma in their direction, hitting them both in a flash!

The ray wasn't like the ones used before... it was concentrated, but at the same time so wide, it covered kilometers in radius with Levi and Azhukar in the center of it!

Jasmine and N'ibby were left silenced at the sight... watching as the fusion ray blasted thousands of kilometers in length and was still going, harvesting the river of rubble nonstop!

The level of destruction was so potent, none of them doubted that it was an artifact above an S grade... and this kind of destruction was born from Azhukar in his worst possible environment with no laws in his favor at all!

They knew that if he was in his dominion or just around the sun, the attack might have doubled in potency if not more.

But it didn't last more than two seconds... fading gradually until it vanished completely, leaving behind nothing but a beating red heart, the dimensional wallet, and fragments of the emperor drifting through kilometers of empty void, shrouded in red clouds of burning plasma.

As for Levi? They were stunned to see him floating in the same place... missing only an arm!

'Levi...' Jasmine whispered in a daze, having no idea how he survived this.

She could tell that Azhukar was no idiot... if he was going to blast both of them, he would ensure that he would be revived, and that his attack would get rid of Levi once and for all.

But, for all his intelligence and battle experience, he did one thing wrong... he started underestimating Levi the moment he realized that he was part of the Daywalkers invading his empire!

Instead of treating him with the same kind of respect and fear he had given him when he assumed he was a true Oblivar, he thought lowly of him and planned to erase him the instant Levi got close to him again.

That's why he allowed him to pierce his torso with his voided arm... it was the only way for him to catch and keep him in place until he finished him off.

But what he didn't bother to assume was that Levi predicted his prediction... it wasn't that he failed, but he didn't think for a moment that a mere mortal like him could think that far ahead, knowing that he would be putting his life on the line to pull it off.

'Your suicidal plan has worked... but now what? Even broken apart, his body and soul are going to rejuvenate faster than your void can consume him.' The Titan warned sternly, 'Do not underestimate the Phoenix Race's rejuvenation prowess... it is one of the highest in the universe.'

He knew that Levi had planned to have himself 'killed' by Azhukar, understanding that the moment Levi tried to pierce his body with the void, Azhukar would already be prepared to stop it.

Levi didn't know exactly how he was going to achieve it, but he could tell that it was going to be powerful enough to erase him... The Cannon was the only thing capable of amplifying his powers to such insane levels within the void, which made him predict that he was going to use it.

Thus, Levi kept his focus on the Cannon more than Azhukar once he caught him... the instant he noticed the concentrated plasma getting fired, he willingly exposed his caught arm to the insane plasma!!

No void, no protection, nothing... he wanted it gone in an instant.

He received his wish... his arm was burned in less than a millisecond from the insane heat within Azhukar.

This freed him to switch back to his ghostly form in just enough time to survive the rest of the beam, unlike Azhukar!! A mere miscalculated millisecond was enough for Levi to be a goner!

Azhukar might have insanely high resistance to plasma, fire, and such... but it wasn't a perfect immunity. Against that ludicrous beam that was powerful enough to pierce through a planet, there was no way he was surviving it in one piece.

Right now... he was proving the Titan correct as his heart started absorbing the clouds of burning plasma around it. The faster it beat, the more plasma clouds were absorbed!

'He can rejuvenate faster than the void can erase him... but, I don't need to erase him personally.'

Seeing this, Levi extended his shadowy palm above the beating heart and then uttered emotionlessly, "Darkness Coating... enslave him."

As new muscles were forming around it, Levi's palm was flooding the heart and the newly constructed body with pitch-black darkness.

He knew that Darkness Coating was a perfect ultimate ability created by the Void Seed as a reward for Ellina... Usually, it shouldn't be possible for it to work on powerful beings like Azhukar.

However, in Levi's current form, all of his void-based abilities were amplified to match his level... when added to the fact that Darkness Coating worked best if the target wasn't resisting, Azhukar had handed himself on a silver plate to Levi!

His bones reassembled, organs regrown, and even the thrown crystallized Shadowlife seed was called back in by the heart, returning to his abdomen and starting to decrystallize and grow at an insane speed.

From a crystallized miniature tree... it returned to its normal size, its roots and branches spreading across his body akin to a nervous system... the only difference was that they became black, just like the rest of his body that was literally reborn with darkness coating as the main ingredient!

His regeneration wasn't clean... it was as violent as it could be... however, because his failed evolution had twisted his DNA beyond repair, the result was the same abomination.

The only difference was that his new appearance was now covered in a permanent, shadowy veil with a single crimson eye.

Since Darkness Coating was affected negatively only by sunlight, not flames, plasma, or regular light, his powers weren't going to remove the darkness coating unless he wielded Sunflames.

And yet still... Azhukar didn't seem to have been fully enslaved. Usually, Umbral Servants would kneel the moment their transformation was complete, but Azhukar? His crimson eye kept flickering nonstop... expressing intense emotions without saying a word.

'Levi, you're playing with fire.' Ash'Kral warned solemnly, 'His will and soul aren't easily enslaved even if he was reborn with Darkness in his heart.'

'He is right, he can break off your ability's chains through pure will.' The Titan supported sternly.

'I can see that...'

Levi nodded in understanding as he watched Azhukar's soul cleansing itself rapidly of the darkness... he could tell it was nothing but a matter of time before he got rid of the darkness within him.

'Don't worry... I have him enslaved for a single reason.'

Levi pulled the resisting Azhukar with him in the direction of the Hungering Dark... When Azhukar saw this, he felt a sudden chill course down his spine.

"S..t..op... y..o...u... b..as...tar..d..."

He stuttered with great difficulty, feeling like he was fighting against his own mouth to speak up.

When Levi heard him speak, he knew that he didn't have much time... all he could do was keep reinstating the Darkness Coating over and over again to delay his escape.

However, like his tenants said... his will was too powerful to be enslaved by him. For such beings, only Radians and these kinds of races had the will necessary to enslave others and keep them in line for eternity.

Thus, he swiftly flew through the river as fast as he could... but since he couldn't switch to his ghostly form without leaving Azhukar behind, he could only evade the rubble as he got closer and closer to the Hungering Dark.

Whoosh!

In no time, he passed by Jasmine's Erasure Barrier and glanced in her direction briefly while pulling Azhukar from his leg.

'You can do it...'

She prayed for him softly, knowing that he planned on throwing Azhukar near the Hungering Dark's event horizon... It was the only way to ensure his death, as not even Jasmine's erasure barrier could kill him faster than his insane rejuvenation. Especially, not when she was in this weakened state.

It didn't matter how powerful an Aspect was... its true potency depended on its user's level. As much as Levi's prowess was enhanced by the Void Form, it was just enough to be on somewhat equal grounds to Azhukar, but enough to overwhelm him. The same applied to Jasmine.

Meanwhile, Levi didn't look back once... if it was up to him, he would have used Azhukar's lifeforce to help out Jasmine, but it was too much of a risk.

Levi could tell that the moment Azhukar broke free of his ability, he wouldn't hesitate to use his Dominion at the first opportunity, even if it meant burning through his lifeforce.

While he couldn't really use it on Levi as long as he remained in his ghostly form, it would kill any chance Levi had of finishing him off.

In other words, this was it... Either now, or never.

'This is not how I go... Never!'

As Levi was getting pulled faster towards the Hungering Dark, the closer he had gotten to it, Azhukar was fighting against the darkness, taining his soul and body nonstop!

They might have been taken by it, but his consciousness and will belonged to that of an Emperor...

He gritted his teeth, fueled by pure hatred... and then, his fingers moved! It wasn't much, but this signified regaining control!

'THIS IS NOT HOW I F*CKING DIE! NOT TO A CHEAP OBLIVAR COPY! ARGHHHHH!!'

As he roared on top of his voice inwardly, Levi was left with a deep frown, sensing that his darkness was getting cleansed faster than he had anticipated.

He lifted his head and gazed at the infinite darkness, but he could tell that the Hungering Dark was still too far off... this left him two options.

He could either give up on killing Azhukar and return to escape with Jasmine, or risk another battle near the Hungering Dark to finish him off.

'What do I do...'

Chapter 292: Giving a Voice to The Voiceless.

(Suggested Song: "Experience" – Ludovico Einaudi ft. Daniel Hope)

...

Levi refused even to acknowledge the idea of letting Azhukar leave scot-free after everything that he had done to his brother and friends. His emotions might be sealed in the Void Form, making it near

impossible for them to cloud his judgment; however, this didn't mean he was going to give up just because a situation got difficult.

Thus, he didn't have two choices... he had only one.

'How am I going to finish this? Think, think, think...'

As this question took root in Levi's mind, he thought of new ideas, but nothing seemed enough to stick... Azhukar was simply too difficult to kill. He had thought of using the Cannon, but such an option wasn't viable considering that Artifacts were name-bound.

This meant Azhukar had it registered in his name, like Levi did with the Sensebound Pearl... as long as it was registered under the emperor's name, Levi could not use it since it wouldn't accept his solar energy. Without solar energy, it became nothing but a decorative piece.

As for the dimensional wallet? Levi had already picked up on the incantation whispered by Azhukar to unlock it. However, he knew that the wallet of an emperor wasn't going to have a pocket dimension no bigger than a room like the ones in his possession.

Just from the fact it survived the Fusion Ray, Levi discerned that it must be of the highest quality, which implied a dimension with multiple kilometers, if not more.

The time it would take him to search for something useful might be all he had before Azhukar broke through his darkness bindings.

He couldn't risk everything on a chance of finding something useful, knowing Azhukar would have most of his stored artifacts registered under his name.

'Wait... the dimensional wallet... its absence is the solution.'

However, as Levi's thought process went down this road, he realized something vital... Azhukar had shown him the divine grade growth totems, but he swiftly stored them back in his wallet.

This meant...

'He didn't feel like I was worth wasting a divine grade growth totem to finish me off... his tank should still be around 10% or less... his dimensional wallet is nowhere near him anymore.'

Levi knitted his brows coldly as he gazed at Azhukar, who was still giving it his all to break free.

'You thought I couldn't outlast you? I will show you the grave price of looking down on me...'

Without an ounce of hesitation, Levi used his aetheric grasp to take hold of Azhukar, desiring to free his lone arm. Then, he summoned his staff and activated False Sun.

The moment it emerged as a mini-copy of the Hungering Dark, the False Sun started pulling Azhukar's soul from within his subconscious barrier while keeping pace with them as they flew straight ahead.

When Azhukar felt the painful tugging on his soul, he merely scoffed in ridicule. 'He thinks he can pull my soul out? How foolish.'

Sure, it was painful, but for entities of this level, pain was nothing but a close companion on their journey.

However, Levi was only getting started. He cast the Veil of Forgetfulness as well, intending to chip away at Azhukar's mind. Whether it worked or not, Azhukar would be forced to fend it off to save his memories from being covered in a veil of darkness.

And yet, Levi wasn't done.

Levi lifted his staff and placed the bottom crown under his chin. Then, he murmured, "Requiem of Despair... Switch."

The staff began to break into segments and fold into itself, reshaping until it turned into a pitch-black giant violin with a connected, chained bow. It was tainted with his Void Form, making it release a shadowy mist, like an instrument from the abyss.

When the tenants saw this, they couldn't help but be reminded of Levi's grueling violin lessons he had taken ever since he decided on this weapon.

Sure, he wasn't a master yet... but they had seen him master a few songs and embed them with his spiritual prowess, creating pure spiritual attacks with sound.

But Levi didn't switch to the violin for that alone... the violin served a bigger purpose, no, the main foundation of his plan.

'Is that a Cello? How can his weapons change form nonstop? Isn't he a Daywalker like the rest of the rats?' Azhukar frowned. His soul and mind were under attack, yet this situation still piqued his interest.

Levi took a deep breath and tuned himself with the violin. Then, he manifested an aetheric concentrated arm and held the bow with it.

His real arm held the violin, but since it was bigger than a standard violin, he extended it with aetheric energy, making it seem like he had two extra green arms.

This situation didn't surprise the tenants. They had seen Levi train mostly with aetheric arms because it was physically impossible to play the violin the normal way.

But after intensive training, Levi showed no discomfort. He brought the bow onto the strings and didn't play any of the tunes he had mastered.

No, Levi was emotionless in his Void Form, but he wanted to use the violin to express himself... to rage, to cry, to feel despair and hope after everything he had endured. He couldn't show his emotions, but music was one of the greatest expressions of them in the universe.

And so... he just played.

The first notes were slow and soft, echoing like forgotten memories. Following their birth, Levi's form started releasing tendrils of shadows... tens, hundreds, thousands. The tendrils of darkness danced to the tune as they spread out to engulf every piece of rubble around Levi.

Then they slid out like smoke, wrapping around the fallen ruins of the planet... broken buildings, pieces of land, rivers of sand, water, and the Corrupted.

The moment they were covered in darkness, they started to awaken with a single purpose, their shapes transforming into humanoid entities or beasts.

Some were as much as hundreds of meters tall, others as small as pebbles. Their hollow crimson eyes flickered with faint light, their bodies shaped from nothing but shadow, dust, and a will... the will of their creator.

"Arise and avenge yourself..." Levi murmured as he floated in a world of pitch-darkness with only his tune to paint it alive.

In the silence of the void, Levi's music kept awakening one piece of debris after another, highlighting them in the darkness.

This made him feel like he was performing amidst the stars.

Each rubble deserved a voice, a light.

Each rubble and Corrupted was a victim of Azhukar's ambition.

Each of them represented the planet's despairing cry... it wanted to live too, to exist, to matter.

That's why Ancient Distorted Sites were born, reaching across dimensions for a helping hand, anyone willing to listen, anyone willing to save it.

Just because it had no voice didn't mean it was any less deserving of life... and yet, it was being destroyed simply for existing. Levi might not be able to save it, but the least he could do was give it a chance to strike back at its abuser.

As his bow moved again, the awakened army of Umbral Servants and any floating Corrupted turned toward the sound and began to move.

But when the melody grew faster, sharper, they rushed forward in fevered waves toward Azhukar, answering their master's tune without hesitation.

In an instant, they engulfed Azhukar, building on each other, throwing themselves at him over and over until he was surrounded by a massive sphere of moving darkness.

The moment Levi saw this, he swung Azhukar toward the Hungering Dark with his aetheric energy and kept playing as both were pulled toward their damnation.

"GET OFF ME!! GET OFF ME, YOU BASTARDS!"

Azhukar roared while unleashing faint bursts of plasma rays, cutting through hundreds of them, but it didn't matter. It wasn't enough.

For every shadow burned away, a thousand more replaced it. The darkness spread like a sea, with Levi at its center. Surrounded by a celestial sea of rubble that seemed infinite, Levi had all the energy and resources he needed to keep this for eternity.

All he focused on was the rhythm he built. He was in peaceful harmony with it, feeling less like a soloist and more like a conductor expressing his own emotions and the planet's.

He might not feel his own emotions buried in his tune, but there was someone else who did.

Jasmine covered her mouth in stunned silence, her eyes no longer reflecting the universe's chaos. No, there was only Levi, playing the violin with such intensity and emotion. The tune was haunting, sorrowful, and despairing, yet beautiful, silencing the noise of the Reality Limbo.

Her chest felt heavy, and the strange rhythm made her heart race. Then came warmth... something she couldn't describe, something that filled her chest so suddenly it hurt.

The song wasn't just sound; it was alive. It carried pain, longing, and something deeper than words could touch.

Her eyes started to water. She didn't know why. The violin's notes sank into her bones, resonating through every part of her that had ever been silent... deaf.

Every stroke of Levi's bow felt like it was calling out to her, not as an Umbral Servant, not as a survivor, but as a person who had always lived behind walls of solitude.

It was as if he was telling her... it was okay to step into the light, to be herself.

"Levi..."

The darkness around him should have been terrifying, and it was, but not to her. It was breathtaking to watch the shadows move with his melody. Even in chaos, there was harmony.

For the first time in her life, Jasmine felt like the universe was finally speaking a language she could understand.

The more he played, the more she felt drawn in. She pressed her hand to her chest, trying to steady the strange pull inside her, unsure if it was the song... or something more.

Meanwhile, Levi's playing grew more intense, faster, until sparks seemed to fly from the strings.

He was no longer controlling just the Umbral Servants with his melody... The False Sun, the Veil of Forgetfulness, and everything else he used to overwhelm Azhukar fell under his symphony.

A violin.

A single violin.

A single melody.

And yet, Levi controlled the symphony like a natural-born maestro. The more in tune he became, the stronger his control over his powers grew...

Chapter 293: The Boy Who Made The Void Sing...

Levi didn't usually use multiple attacks at once with his other weapons in fear of losing control, but as he stood amidst the sound waves of his creation.

He didn't know why... but he felt like all of his senses were connected to everything.

And so... he didn't care about Azhukar's desperate attempts to free himself from his darkness bindings... he let his violin do the talking for him.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

The Umbral Servants threw themselves at the raging Azhukar, merging, collapsing, and pressing together each time he seemed like he was getting close to free himself.

But inside it, he struggled to break free, his energy rapidly declining as he was forced to defend against spiritual attacks, mental attacks, physical attacks, the insane pull of the Hungering Dark...

He felt like the entire universe was against him... wanting his fall, his death.

"Never!!!"

He shouted... but as he opened his mouth, the darkness flooded in nonstop, waiting for just the opportunity to own him.

This drove him to realize that the only way for him out was to use his dominion on Levi... but, Levi kept his distance from him, standing in the middle between two False Suns.

One Spiritual behind him and the other physical around Azhukar.

"ARGHHHHHHH!!!!"

Azhukar roared as he unleashed immense plasma explosions around him... alas, he managed to burn a thousand Umbral Servants, halving the dark sphere's size.

And yet... the pressure only mounted as Levi's tune switched in melody, seemingly getting closer to its conclusion.

The Umbral Servants seemed to feel the same... that their end was near.

In their final moments, they obeyed Levi's music completely... every motion, every strike, every collapse was part of his growing symphony until a much bigger sphere was born, leaving Azhukar in despair as he could sense the immense pull of the event horizon getting closer and closer.

But, he was out of options... He couldn't use his dominion on Levi with such distance between them as he could easily notice his spiritual aura reaching out to him and blinking away.

He had abilities that could produce enough power to blow the entire darkness sphere, but he wouldn't survive in one piece, possibly exploding his body again... but the worst part wasn't that.

It was the fact his energy levels were at a critical level due to being to defend himself against Levi's overwhelming nonstop attacks.

This left him with a single option... burning through his life force as an energy source. But, the darkness binding was continuously restoring due to the Umbral Servants.

He could tell that even if he burnt through it... nothing much would change unless he could use his dominion since Levi could easily throw his heart in the Hungering Dark before he could revive himself.

As his body was buried in a gigantic darkness sphere that had tens of kilometers in radius.... Azhukar was left pressured under his own thoughts and the faint melody of Levi's tune.

With the rhythm built toward its peak... Levi released one last, long note... and then, he stopped, the final note echoing in the distance like all of this was nothing but a dream.

Levi lowered the violin slowly, the shadowy mist around it fading as the silence returned... but his vision was affixed on the sphere weakening.

Without music, Levi couldn't spot rubble and such in the silence of the void... but he no longer wanted to add more servants.

He watched as Azhukar struggled to free himself, creating mini explosions of plasma to clear a path ahead... but the darkness just kept pouring in nonstop.

Even without new Umbral Servants to restore the lost volume of the sphere... Azhukar's grit and unrelenting determination had amounted to nothing.

Because the Hungering Dark was pulling him and the sphere at a standard speed... a pulling speed that nothing could go against regardless of what they did.

The Event Horizon... the area where not even light could escape.

Levi waved his hand, releasing the Umbral Servants from his control... knowing that the more he kept them alive, the more persona corruption was being stored by the Void Seed from his soul.

As the darkness sphere faded away... a compressed sphere of rubble and corruption was left in the shape of a planet.

Yet, even without the darkness holding them, the fragments drifted together, locked in place by the black hole's unyielding pull.

Levi stood before the sphere, his posture calm and solemn... slowly, he bowed, arm tucked close to his side. His violin floated beside him, almost as if it bowed too, responding to his silent appreciation.

He wasn't bowing to Azhukar... not in a million years.

This was a bow for the fallen planet, for the world that had perished in silence.

For a planet that, in its final moments, had burned with a light of glory one last time... and Levi honored that fleeting brilliance, carrying its memory for as long as he lived.

"THIS ISN'T OVER, YOU HEAR ME!!"

"I WILL BE BACK!! I WILL BE BACK AND SHOW YOU TRUE HELL!!"

"OBLIVAR'S COPY!!! THIS IS NOT WHERE I PERISH!! I AM AZHUKAR! THE LORD OF RADIANCE! DARKNESS WON'T CLAIM MY SOUL!!"

"JUST YOU WAIT!! JUST WAIT!!"

As for Azhukar? He was left cursing and shouting like a deranged madman, incapable of moving an inch against the pull... but no one was there to hear him.

When even light couldn't escape, how could sound? The instant he entered the Event Horizon, he became blind and deaf, able to see nothing but pure darkness.

It wasn't the good kind of darkness...

'Ash'Kral... is there any chance he can survive being in that realm?' Levi asked.

'The Realm of Endless Consumption is not a place for the weak... especially not for races outside of the Shadow dimension.' Ash'Kral shook his head, 'It's called the Realm of Endless Consumption for a reason... anything that falls in it with a tint of life force or sunlight will be devoured and fed to the Primordial Tree of Death.'

'Falling inside the Hungering Dark is the same as falling inside the stomach of the Primordial Tree of Death...' The Titan confirmed, 'It's over for him...'

'I see...'

Levi merely nodded in understanding... he didn't seem happy or excited about any of this. He just turned and walked away, allowing the violin to fade into a cloud of shadowy flowers.

His first destination? Not the cannon, not the dimensional wallet... Jasmine, desiring to check on her condition first.

When Jasmine saw him floating in her direction, she wiped off the tears from her eyes and looked at him... gazing at the boy who made the void sing.

She knew it wasn't for her... but she was the one, who was blessed by his tune the most... as she kept staring at him while ignoring the emerging noise of the universe, she felt like this was the first time she truly saw Levi.

He wasn't a just captain, a teammate, a friend, a teenage kid like everyone saw him... he was something that no one could truly understand, veiled in so many mysteries, she couldn't understand half of them... Starpiercer, Violin, Staff, Void Form, Void abilities, and the list goes on.

She saw so much of him, and yet... her confusion only deepened. But one thing she was certain about... she didn't want to lose him, just like he did everything in his power to not lose them.

As Levi stepped inside the inked sphere... he removed the void from his face and signed with a frozen emotionless expression.

-I am back.-

When Jasmine saw his emotionless grayed expression... she couldn't help but tear up a little as she was the only one, who understood the kind of sacrifice Levi had done for their sake.

To reach out for such a strength way above his level... it could never be achieved without sacrificing or paying an expensive price.

She reached out with her shaking hand to his exposed cheek and touched it softly... then she signed with the other hand:

-Welcome back, Levi...-

Levi felt her hand touching his skin and yet... his heart was as dead as his expression.

-Thank you.-

Chapter 294: Exposed Secrets... What's Next?

After Levi checked on Jasmine for a moment, he swiftly went to retrieve the cannon and the dimensional wallet... he knew that they were strapped for time, and he needed to be quick if he wanted to pull off the story he prepared for the authorities back on Earth.

Once he had collected them inside his wallet, he returned to the inked sphere... Then, he told Jasmine that he was going to search for anything that could help her inside Azhukar's dimensional wallet.

Levi raised his hand and placed it over the strange pyramid-like wallet... then, he whispered a short incantation under his breath, one that only he and Azhukar knew. If Azhukar had been underestimating Levi the moment he figured out he wasn't an Oblivar, why would he bother to take extra precautions when using the incantation?

He whispered it so faintly under his breath inside the Shadow Dimension... this was enough to kill anyone's ability to catch it on, but not Levi's.

Cling!

The wallet cracked open from the top of the mini-pyramid as its tip broke off and began to levitate slightly. In an instant, Levi's spiritual vision and Harmonic Spine were blurred for a split moment... and then, without warning, his consciousness was pulled inside.

When Levi regained his focus, he found himself floating in a wide stretch of land that seemed to go on forever... The ground was mixed between grass fields, gardens, and desert biomes. Usually, the dimensional wallet's sky was just a peaceful black void. But in this case... the sky was cloudy blue with a miniature representation of a sun.

Levi could tell that it wasn't real, just a massive white fireball resembling a sun, and illuminating the entire pocket dimension.

'You boy sure have struck the jackpot...'

Ash'Kral uttered with a wide grin as he gazed at countless structures shaped like pyramids, each one several stories tall... they were arranged in neat rows, stretching far into the horizon.

Every pyramid had a wooden door at the front, with engraved words on it.

Artifacts.

Natural Treasures.

Clothes, Accessories, Feather Products, etc.

Rare Collectibles.

Library.

Experimental Lab.

Each name was written in ancient Ilthorien language...

"As expected of an emperor... he has a personal town here with everything he needs."

Levi murmured as he stepped on the ground, walking between them... he could tell with his Harmonic Spine that each storage was filled to the brim.

If he weren't in his Void Form, he would have already dropped to his knees and started praying for such a blessing.

Just the dimensional wallet alone must have cost millions of credits, and this wouldn't be enough... because such detailed and environmentally friendly wallets weren't easy to find, and one needed deep connections to get some intel about their sale.

At the same time, Levi's Void Form stopped him from freaking out and focused on the task at hand... finding natural treasures with enough life force to help Jasmine.

"It must be here..."

Levi stood in front of the vault for Natural Dimensional Treasures... then, he pushed the wooden door wide open and stepped inside.

The moment his foot touched the interior, dozens of crystals hanging from the ceiling or affixed on the walls started illuminating dimly, casting a faint light on the insane treasury before him.

The inside was enormous... much bigger than the pyramid looked from the outside. Shelves as tall as the library's shelves lined the walls and extended down long aisles... Each shelf was filled with glass containers of all shapes and sizes, emitting peculiar lights depending on the content.

'This is truly a forgotten kingdom of wealth... I see things here that have been sold for quite high prices even during my time...' The Titan smiled.

Meanwhile, Levi did recognize some natural treasures from the network, but the majority were foreign to him... on the first shelf alone, he saw orbs of golden flame floating in glass jars with a sticker written on their surface... Nirvana Cores.

They were burning nonstop after who knows how many years... Nearby, long crystal tubes were holding radiant orange feathers... they were shimmering nonstop like they were blessed by the heavens themselves... their sticker said, Dawn Phoenix's Baby Feathers.

Yet, Levi ignored anything and everything without a rich life force to them... he just kept walking deeper and deeper, feasting his eyes on natural treasures with affinities to Sun, Radiation, Plasma, Fire, and Soul Aspects mostly.

If he had to guess, there should be around 60% of them, while the remaining 40% had mixed affinities to other Aspects.

After walking for some time, Levi was lured to a shelf at the far back... unlike the others, it had only three glass containers, each one long enough to occupy their own shelf. Levi took a closer step and saw through his Harmonic Spine as those three treasures were emitting immense, rich life force.

It was so potent, he was forced to tune out the life force frequency to be able to see the treasures emitting them.

That's when he found three wide, milky white, thin pieces that resembled tree leaves... Levi tilted his head slightly in confusion, but Ash'Kral and The Titan were left with raised brows in astonishment.

'Primordial Tree of Life's leaves... Azhukar must have been really cherished amongst Radians as their follower.' Ash'Kral commentated.

'These are Primordial's leaves?' Levi frowned, 'How? I assumed the leaves should be as big as stars...'

'They are even bigger than that... but these are still considered its leaves.' The Titan explained, 'The Primordial Tree of Life sheds the decayed parts of its leaves every hundred thousand years... The Radians are responsible for collecting those decayed parts and cutting them into small pieces shaped as leaves... they share them amongst each other, allies, and followers if they were favored.'

'Decayed leaves... and yet, they possess such intense life force? How much life force does the real thing have...'

Levi couldn't help but wonder, feeling like he was being told a mystical myth... these three leaves had the most potent life force he had ever seen in his life. Yet, they were nothing but discarded trash by the Tree of Life.

'One man's trash is another man's treasure... truly.'

Levi shook his head and asked Ash'Kral how he could use one on Jasmine... Levi had no interest in wasting time by gathering other treasures with decent life force to save up on a leaf.

He knew that the longer they remained here, the harder explaining themselves would be to the authorities. Most importantly, he had no idea how much life force Jasmine required, and he would rather use the best thing right from the start.

'Just put it on top of her like a blanket... she will automatically feed off the life force from the leaf.' Ash'Kral answered.

Not bothering to continue his exploration, Levi touched the glass container... immediately after, he found his consciousness returned outside with the giant leaf in his hand.

But Jasmine was no longer in a passable condition... he found her seizing on the floor while her entire body was switching colors nonstop like she was glitching in a video game.

Without further ado, Levi shattered the glass on the side and used his aetheric energy to hold the milky white leaf... then, he gently put it on top of Jasmine, covering her entirely.

'Is that?'

N'ibby showed a flicker of interest as she felt the gentle, soothing, rich life force pouring through Jasmine's body and soul like she was being blessed by a divinity.

"Primordial Tree of Life's leaf... Azhukar was really favored by the Radians." N'ibby remarked depressively.

"That's what I said." Ash'Kral narrowed his eyes at N'ibby inside the spiritual Bridge of Darkness.

"And? You want a gold star?"

N'ibby gave him an unbothered side-glance, leaving Ash'Kral's eyelids to twitch in annoyance... he had a theory about N'ibby's origin, but he realized that it wasn't going to be easy to confirm it.

But he didn't give up.

As he watched Jasmine's true colors slowly return while the blinding light of the leaf continued to fade away, he spoke his thoughts aloud.

"To suck up the life force of an entire leaf... she must have used a Dominion minimum... nothing else can explain such an astronomical price."

Seeing Ash'Kral side-glancing at her, N'ibby knew that he was attempting to find more information about her and Jasmine, considering some of her secrets were in the open.

However, Jasmine wasn't the only one exposed today.

"Your little partner sure has put out a show for us..." N'ibby spoke with a deadpan expression, "Half-Oblivar, Half-Human, three distinct weapons, three distinct spiritual auras, and a form that increases his

strength to rival that of Tier 6+ powerhouses... If I knew no better, I would have assumed that he didn't have a Shadowlife Seed at all... Maybe, dare I say, an Origin Seed? And not a single one at that..."

Hearing this, even Levi felt exposed for a brief moment... But he didn't respond, focusing mostly on Jasmine... He trusted Ash'Kral to handle it.

"Well, well, well... you sure have a vast imagination." Ash'Kral smirked, "I believe this is the side effect of possessing The Origin Seed of Creation and Erasure..."

"I sure hope you get well... Miss Heir."

"..."

N'ibby went silent for a moment and kept staring at Ash'Kral... as their eyes met, they could see the richness of experience and history embedded in them. This made her understand that Ash'Kral was no regular Nightcrawler... he might not be a Nightcrawler at all. But she kept those questions to herself and switched her focus back to Jasmine.

"She will decide." She uttered.

Hearing this, Ash'Kral turned to Levi and gave him a slight head nod, seemingly telling her the same thing.

Decide on what? It was clear in Levi's mind...

They were leaving them to decide how they were going to continue their relationship moving forward with all of their secrets in the open.

Chapter 295: Embracing The Chill... Together.

Fortunately, Jasmine didn't remain out of it for long... after the leaf lost its brilliance and showed multiple cracks on its surface, Jasmine finally escaped the Reality Limbo.

The vision of the entire universe's timeline and its noise died out bit by bit until her vision was cleared again... Jasmine rubbed her muddled eyes and tried to remove the leaf. But with a single touch, the leaf shattered into fading dusty white particles.

Jasmine stood up slowly, a masterpiece of ink bathing under the fading milky white particles' glow... Yet, she didn't seem happy, but lost? She smiled bitterly for a moment as the world went quiet again, incapable of hearing anything.

Pure silence.

Levi noticed her reaction and signed: -Are you okay?-

-Yes...- Jasmine nodded with an appreciative smile, -Thank you, Levi... for everything.-

Levi shook his head: -As long as I live, you don't have to thank me for anything... You saved my little brother, that's a debt I shall never forget.-

Jasmine waved her hands in his direction, seemingly not wanting him to feel this way.

-I saved them because they are my friends... I will always do so.- Jasmine smiled innocently, -Isn't this what friends are supposed to do?-

Levi remained silent for a few moments... he gazed at Jasmine's expression and heartbeat. He could tell she meant every word of it and had not an ounce of deceit.

For her to genuinely believe that friends were meant to sacrifice themselves for each other... this meant she never had friends before who broke her heart. She still had the idealistic version of what it meant to be close friends with one another.

Meanwhile, Levi was far from reaching the same kind of mentality as Jasmine.

Sure, he cared about Shia, Nurah, Jojo, Jasmine, and the rest of his friends... but he would never throw his life away for their sake unless his brother was involved.

That's how he saw the world... The Larsons Brothers against all.

But as he looked at Jasmine's innocent breathtaking silver eyes and recalled what she had done for their sake, he couldn't help but have a slight change in this mentality... not for all, but just for Jasmine.

She proved her loyalty to them because she believed that was the norm... and Levi didn't know why, but he felt like he would hate himself forever if he were ever to show her otherwise.

For now... he left those thoughts in the back of his mind and got into the serious talk.

-Jasmine... do you have any method to negate coldness or emit heat?- Levi asked.

-Hmm? I don't know about heat, but I can erase coldness and other affinities.-

Jasmine nodded, having no plans of hiding her powers anymore from Levi. She could tell that it was related to Levi's punishment for such an insane void-based power-up.

-Good... I will leave it to you.-

The moment Levi signed this, he let out a long exhale and deactivated his Void Form at last... Levi's Void Form faded away slowly as the dark layer around him peeled off until his real body was exposed.

The moment it did, the chill hit him.

It wasn't just normal cold air... it was something that left him with a shaky breath, skin turning instantly pale, and a body shaking nonstop on the floor... it felt like the cold had entered his blood, his bones, his mind, and even his soul wasn't spared.

He tried to stay still, but every nerve in him hurt like hell... the smoky chill emitting nonstop from his body was enough proof. Jasmine froze when she saw him fall like this, trembling and gasping for air.

-Levi...-

She got close to him and reached out with one finger... the moment she touched his skin, her whole body stiffened as a sharp, biting cold shot through her hand and went straight into her chest and head!

For a brief moment, it felt like her soul was being stabbed... Then it stopped, leaving her shaking and shocked.

Her eyes widened. 'This is what he is feeling nonstop?'

Levi didn't move... his face was pale, his lips purplish blue... he looked like someone who had been trapped in an ice lake for days and somehow was still surviving by some miracle.

While the Void Seed stored the corruption, it did nothing much to the side effects on the body... Levi had expected as much and prepared some solar totems to help him heat up, but knowing Jasmine's unique prowess made him question if she could do one better.

Jasmine bit her lip, her eyes looking sad.

'If you knew it's going to end like this... why did you fight him? Why did you stick around? Was it for me? Revenge? Or treasures?'

She thought inwardly as she lay down next to him and wrapped her arms around his shaking body... she winced through the pain of the chill and started releasing a white ink from her palms, which were holding Levi's tightly... The white ink covered them both gently and slowly, spreading like a soft fog, closing them inside a small cocoon.

As the white ink slowly sank into their skin, it erased the cold that had buried itself deep inside them. It took no time before Levi started to feel it... the warmth from her body and the fading painful chill.

Without thinking, Levi hugged her tightly, pressing her face against his shoulder... There was nothing weird about it, and Jasmine felt that Levi did this out of instinct. Like a child reaching out to a blanket during their sleep to seek warmth.

Jasmine let him be, even though she seemed quite shy about it. If it weren't for her ability limited to only negating effects that targeted her, she wouldn't have been this daring.

But the situation called for direct contact, so the chill could invade her body, and the targeted erasure ability would cleanse them both.

A few steps away, Ash'Kral and N'ibby were watching this development with two different expressions.

N'ibby looked annoyed, her face hard to read... Ash'Kral, though, had a wide grin, like he was enjoying every second of it.

'That's it, Levi... first a hug, then a kiss, and before we know it, she is inseparable from you.' Ash'Kral thought, 'My dream is within reach... as long as they keep growing, it shall be achieved...'

...

After a short period... Levi slowly began to regain himself as the chill was barely noticeable anymore. Since the chill had assaulted his Harmonic Spine, his auditory vision became a cloudy wave of colorful frequency, leaving him incapable of recognizing anything.

All he felt was something warm and soft pressing against him... to feel like this while trapped in a hellish blizzard, Levi could only want more.

'Huh?'

However, as the chill died out and his auditory vision restored, the first thing that appeared in his vision was Jasmine's stunning face... her eyes were closed shut, and her plump lips were trembling softly.

Levi felt his heart skip a beat... the same feeling he had when he first saw her for the first time. He didn't know why, but this time, he didn't silence his heart.

Sensing the change in his breath that was hitting her forehead, Jasmine opened her eyes and lifted her head... when she noticed that he was awake, she smiled softly and removed the white cocoon from them.

The moment Levi separated from her, he felt a sharp tingling pain assault him in his left shoulder, breaking him from his trance.

He gritted his teeth and swiftly held his bleeding shoulder tightly... even his pierced right shoulder started hurting.

Only now was he reminded of his torched-out left arm, and other wounds... When he was in his Void Form, the chill froze the wounds over. But now that the chill was erased, his left shoulder was bleeding nonstop.

-Your arm... it needs medical attention.-

Jasmine's expression turned solemn as she summoned some of her recovery totems. She placed them near Levi's mouth and nodded at him, seemingly telling him to activate them. Usually, she relied on N'ibby's assistance to activate them.

Levi uttered the incantation for each recovery totem and allowed Jasmine to heal him... she fed him what needed to be fed and applied what needed to be applied on his wounds. Though they didn't have a recovery totem to restore an entire arm.

-Can you check the emperor's wallet? He might have a high-grade recovery totem.- Jasmine advised with a concerned expression.

-No need to heal it now... this will help our case.- Levi shook his head.

-Case?- Jasmine tilted her head to the side. -Are you planning to lie?-

-We have to...- Levi said. -I have already erased everyone's memories starting from the moment they stepped into the pyramid... your secret is safe.-

Jasmine remained silent for a moment and then pointed at herself. Her expression was enough to let Levi understand what she meant. She was asking him if he also planned on erasing her memories.

Levi didn't answer right away... he understood that their situation was too complicated since they had signed contracts ensuring that they wouldn't lie to the authorities or hide any discovered treasures from them.

This was a standard protocol in situations where the exploration of the ancient distorted sites was sponsored.

In their case, the SAS Headquarters was the one sponsoring their exploration, which meant they couldn't bypass the contract signing.

This was applied to the others, but not Levi... he had it covered.

-Jasmine... do you trust me?- Levi signed with a solemn expression.

Jasmine didn't know what he had planned in mind, and yet, she still nodded... after what she had witnessed and what had happened between them, Jasmine didn't know why, but she felt like Levi wasn't going to do anything that could harm her.

Levi showed a faint smile and signed, -Leave everything to me.-

-Ok.- Jasmine smiled back... her smile as sweet as honey.

Chapter 296: Blow Off Steam.

Sometime ago... In the fallen Sphinx's Region.

Dominic, Feng Ling, and the rest of the staff were chilling in the camp near the pyramid... they had received news about the Hound targeting the site ten minutes ago or more. Yet, instead of going to meet him, they remained near the site. With Dominic nearby, there wasn't much the Hound could do besides getting his ass beaten.

Though the news of his release did sour the mood since it meant the death of Seraphis.

"Were you close to him?" Dominic asked Feng Ling while barbecuing a fish stick on a bonfire.

"Not really... but I did respect him." Feng Ling sighed, "He was responsible for the mentorship of many decent Daywalkers in our region besides the latest generation. With him gone, the standard might fall to shit again."

"I know what you mean." Dominic smiled wryly, "It's easy to become a Daywalker... one only needs to have a decent light affinity to attract a nightcrawler. But becoming a useful Daywalker is a different story."

Everyone nodded their heads in agreement, knowing that most Daywalkers' fate was sealed to remain as Seed Farmers for the rest of their lives.

"What's worse... the kids are risking their lives to save their instructor." Feng Ling let out a long puff of smoke, "What do we tell them if they were to succe..."

RUMBLE!

Before Feng Ling could finish his sentence, the ground suddenly shook, taking them by surprise... they stared at each other for a moment, and then their expressions turned grim after they noticed the Pyramid of Khufu shaking nonstop!

Dominic was the first to arrive next to the pyramid in a single electrifying blink... Feng Ling was a close second. They ignored the pyramid and focused on the immense, disruptive, chaotic energy being released from the closed gate.

But it was no longer closed... in fact, it had blown up and was taking down the pyramid with it!

"Shit, the dimensional membrane must have shattered... how?" Dominic's expression turned solemn, "We warned them extensively to use their powers tamely."

"Their hands must have been forced, or something has played a role in this." Feng Ling knitted his brows, "The site might be fractured, but still... they shouldn't be able to shatter the dimensional membrane unless they went all out."

Hearing this, Dominic didn't have the time to join in speculations... he swiftly reached out to his people in the SAS Headquarters and told them to be prepared to receive the teams. The dimensional contracts were linked to the dimensional mirror of the World Tree, which meant there wasn't really any reason to remain near the site besides collecting information.

Rumble!

The ground began to rumble harder as sand and small stones rolled down the sides while cracks started to spread across the pyramid's base.

When Feng Ling and Dominic sensed the immense chaotic energy within the pyramid, they couldn't help but let out a deep sigh... they wanted to save it, but they could tell nothing was going to save it in such a state.

As expected... a loud shattering sound came from deep inside, followed by a sudden flash of chaotic blinding light.

Seeing this, Dominic and Feng Ling swiftly retreated to a safe distance... then they watched as one of the greatest symbols of human civilization and history twisted like it was crafted out of paper.

They knew the chaotic spatial energy was pouring out from the other side, letting them know that the planet was being devoured.

Fortunately, this reaction was just a distant aftermath of that horror... the moment the chaotic spatial energy reached its peak, a blast of energy was released as a pillar into the sky, piercing through the clouds in a straight line.

Everyone watched this sight in solemn silence... besides worrying about the condition of the teams, everyone felt their hearts grow cold each time they witnessed or heard about these phenomena.

"The final death gasp..." Dominic murmured. "That's the last sound a world makes before it dies for good."

When the dust started to settle, the pyramid was almost gone... just piles of broken stone and a massive crater in the middle where the gate still stood.

After gazing at it for a few moments, Dominic wiped his face with his hands and then rechecked the teams' situation.

-Negative, Sir... no one has emerged yet.-

"It can't be..." Dominic frowned, not liking the sound of it.

He knew that the dimensional membrane shattering meant nothing was going to remain on the planet... in simpler terms, the longer they remained inside, the harder it would get for them to leave together.

-Keep me updated.-

"They are still inside?" Feng Ling asked.

Dominic nodded.

"That's a problem."

"There isn't much we can do about it... We can only place our faith in them to return safely." Dominic suddenly looked into the distance and uttered coldly, "Wanna go blow off some steam?"

"When is that even a question?" Feng Ling replied indifferently.

No hesitation, both of them took off in a flash, heading west.

As they were flying, Dominic received news of the teams' return... However, before he could feel delight, the bad news came... eight Daywalkers were missing, and the ones returning safely had no fresh memories.

Hearing this, Dominic relayed the news to Feng Ling with a deep frown.

"Eight missing? How?" Feng Ling asked solemnly, "And who went missing?"

Dominic narrated the mentioned names, starting with Nick... as he reached the final two Daywalkers, he uttered sternly, "Jasmine and Levi are also still inside."

"..." Feng Ling and Mao were left stunned.

They could understand the death of Tyrese's and Evangeline's teams... however, it was different for Levi and Jasmine. In their eyes, their strength and unique powers should make it harder for anything to kill them on the same level... unless.

"Something terrible must have happened inside." Feng Ling knitted his brows, "The site might be A grade, but it should never have something stronger than Solarbound rank... we know the Corrupted will have no energy, which will weaken them immensely."

"I know... something is indeed fishy, but my staff are telling me that they seem in shock." Dominic replied, "They all told the same story... the last thing they remembered was stepping inside the pyramid after Levi's team saved the other two teams from a sea of Corrupted."

"..."

"..."

Feng Ling and Mao remained silent for a moment, realizing that the situation had developed beyond anyone's understanding or preparation.

"This is pissing me off... we can't be losing such talented Daywalkers... we just can't afford it."

Dominic's expression turned frigid, his mind replaying images of all the missing Daywalkers. With him this pissed, he didn't have plans to spare the Hound from a beating to vent a little.

"Let's deal with him quickly, so we can check on them."

In a flash of lightning, Dominic pierced through the clouds as a lightning bolt, disappearing from Feng Ling's radar instantly.

Feng Ling lit up another cigarette and smoked it off slowly... not in a rush. He knew that Dominic wasn't going to need his help.

'I hope they are safe,' he wished under his breath. 'The future is in their hands...'

Chapter 297: Blow Off Steam. II

Sometime later...

As the Hound ran across the ground with a bright golden aura burning around him, everything in his way broke apart... he was still using Unstoppable Pride, having no plans on stopping until he reached his destination.

However, as he kept piercing through the forests and trampling over the ground, creating a functional new road, his instincts suddenly tingled.

No hesitation, he lifted his head with his guard raised. And yet, a blinding flash of blue light came down from above.

Before he could even blink, a powerful, thick lightning bolt hit him straight from the heavens! The blast was so strong, his body shook briefly, and then he was hurled flying across the forest in front of him.

Ka-booom!!

The thunder came a few seconds later, resounding across the skies as he was sent rolling with immense momentum! He smashed through the forest, breaking a river apart, and finally crashing into a giant boulder, shattering it into fragments!

He was left buried deep into the ground, leaving a massive cloud of dust and smoke to chase his trail.

Szllzllz!

Dominic manifested above him, still wearing the Hawaiian vacation outfit, looking quite relaxed with his hands in his pockets... though his expression was nowhere near as friendly as before.

"Bishop's Dog... I knew you had become too daring lately, but to target a site I supervise?" Dominic uttered coldly, "What? Does your master think nothing of my existence?"

The Hound rose from the rubble slowly... the golden light had dimmed out, leaving his burnt-out clothes exposed.

'Dominic...'

The Hound's expression turned solemn as he gazed at Dominic's expressionless visage... as a user of the Slaughter Aspect, he could detect malice and bloodlust from tens of kilometers away in a single breath.

As he stared at Dominic... his eyes reflected a raging, crimson, murderous aura. He realized at once that Dominic was hoping that he would give him an excuse to finish him off.

And yet... he couldn't back down. He was now a user of the Pride Aspect. He understood that retreating with his tail tucked between his legs was going to weaken his Pride-based abilities permanently.

Sure, the Pride Aspect was powerful... but its power was linked with one's pride. The more prideful he was, the stronger he became... to the point that it could allow him to skip a full rank if he truly had the right mentality to support it.

"Dominic... An Ecliptic Daywalker, and still, deciding to ambush someone lower than you?" The Hound sneered as he walked out of the rubble, his cold gaze affixed on Dominic.

"What? You thought being an asshole was exclusive to the kind of you?" Dominic scoffed, "Today... you aren't walking out of here in one piece."

Hearing this, the Hound immediately reached out to the Bishop... he sent him a single-dimensional message that oozed with unshakable proudful trust in his strength.

-I am killing Dominic.-

Then, he turned off the dimensional messaging system... he knew that his master was going to order him to retreat or be diplomatic at least to ensure that they had the upper moral grounds.

But he didn't care about politics or the bullshit unofficial peace treaty between the Savors and Conquerors factions... he craved two things: blood and recognition. Both could be achieved against Dominic.

As for the thought of losing the fight? It didn't cross his mind for a second... he was already cocky and proud before, but now... it was weaponized.

"Let's see what the strongest Daywalker on Earth has to offer..."

The Hound released his spiritual aura to the limit with an ear-piercing howl... the wind blew in rage around him, launching dust and pebbles everywhere.

Then... he lunged in Dominic's direction as he shouted, "Crown of Dominance!"

A noble golden crown manifested above his head, releasing an immense forceful aura that was integrated with his spiritual aura... while wearing the crown, anyone in his presence with a weaker pride than him would enhance his powers to match his enemy.

Unfortunately for him... while Dominic was friendly and acted like a careless jokester, he was still the strongest Daywalker on the planet. His pride was on the high end, even if he seldom expressed it in the open.

Thus, the instant the golden aura touched him, it didn't overwhelm him... instead, it was repelled, incapable of touching Dominic's skin, leaving him merely glowing in golden light.

"What a childish utilization of a respected Aspect fit for kings..."

Dominic sneered as he instantly disappeared the moment the Hound entered his personal space... after a blue electrical flash, he reappeared above the Hound while already pulling a spinning kick directed at the Hound's face!

He wasn't wearing sandals anymore... he had summoned his signature awakened weapon, which was two pairs of metallic silver boots. They were crackling with an intense electrical surge!

And yet, when his feet landed on the Hound's twisted face, what resulted wasn't just a discharge of electricity...

Ka-booom!!!

A thunderous fireball emerged in the sky as the Hound was launched many kilometers across the ground... the force was so powerful, his strapped arms were freed. Still, the Hound refused to move them from his waist, ignoring them like they didn't exist... like they weren't part of him.

Szlzlzl!

Meanwhile, Dominic's legs had both fire and lightning running up them for a moment... they died off only when he closed the tiny vents on his boots, which were releasing a flammable gas under his will.

Many fell under the false perception that Dominic was a Lightning Elementalist... in reality, he was an Explosion Elementalist, as he commanded two main aspects: Lightning/Sulflare.

Sulflare was a type of gas that resembled the Immersive Cloud Aspect of Yanhuan... it was easily flammable and irritable, making it possible to create powerful explosions stronger than dynamite the instant it touched a spark.

"DOMINIC!"

Meanwhile, the Hound swiftly regained his balance and shouted his name hatefully while removing the broken muzzle from his mouth. Then, he summoned his own signature awakened weapon. It was a long, narrow red muzzle that followed the curve of his dog-like snout and exposed jaws.

The front narrowed into sharp edges where the upper and lower teeth came together... each tooth and fang was covered in a blood-red gleam.

It might be called a muzzle and looked like one, but it did nothing to stop the Hound from connecting those sharp teeth... instead, they enhanced his bite to a ludicrous level, where even the toughest pieces of material couldn't stand against it.

"Blood Carnage Arts: Butcher's Rhythm."

The Hound's eyes narrowed as a low growl released from his throat... Suddenly, a crimson haze surrounded him as his muscles tensed, his reflexes sharpened, and he felt every heartbeat syncing with an insatiable murderous desire. A steady stream of bloody mist was released from his mouth, curling around him like a fog that tasted of iron and blood.

But he didn't stop there.

His eyes turned golden for a split second as he unleashed Predator's Majesty, a pride-based enhancement that fed off his own dominance.

Every strike he imagined, every step he took, became stronger, faster, and deadlier... the two aspects intertwined just like Dominic's two aspects!

"You're just as guilty as the fallen king... a mere standby in a leadership role that you have no business being in... Die!"

The Hound channeled all of his anger and blood thirst into a single lunge... without even needing to bend his knees to the max, his speed broke through the sound barrier as he emerged right in front of Dominic's face.

The Hound had his broken-jawed mouth wide to the limit, resembling a monstrosity that was about to bite off Dominic's head in one go!

Alas... Dominic wasn't a slowpoke either.

Before he could bring his jaw together, Dominic swiftly evaded to the side and continued with the momentum, leaving his legs to come up on top.

No hesitation, he spun around with extended legs while his feet were covered in electrical discharges accompanied by the potent release of Sulflare gas from the vents!

Yet, instead of exploding... the weapon was designed to release pressurized gas as well, based on Dominic's will.

This turned him into a spinning, flaming tornado that was powerful enough to devour the trees underneath in an instant!

Chapter 298: Static Inferno Arts

The spinning flame tornado began to fade, but the Hound was still there... he toughened through the raging inferno and charged forward. His body was set in flames, but the crazed look in his eyes made it seem like he wasn't in pain at all.

"BLOODY CROSS!"

He roared as he smashed his monstrous feet square in Dominic's chest, catching him in a bad position. This resulted in a bloody cross to emerge from his back, like his kick had burst his blood vessels in that shape!

And yet... Dominic neither groaned nor showed a pained expression... the moment the Hound's foot made contact, a sharp electrical current shot through his body, numbing him from the pain and sending it back to the Hound!

Sz!z!z!z!

The shock was so strong it made his muscles lock and twitch, freezing the Hound mid-step. As the smoke emanated from his skin, Dominic was already flipping through the air, using short bursts of inflamed gas from the vents in his silver boots to steady himself.

He landed lightly, sliding back across the cracked dirt... he touched his chest and noticed the Hound's dirty sole imprint left on his tattoo.

"Oh... you have done it now." His expression turned icy.

As for the damage? His skin already absorbed it and generated active electricity that coursed through his system... a perk of many hidden mutations he unlocked across his long evolutionary journey.

After all, it was nearly impossible to arrive at Ecliptic rank without a couple of perfect evolutions along the way.

Dominic ignored the charging Hound in his direction and glanced upward to the clouds above them.

Then, he raised one finger and murmured, "Static Inferno Arts: Explosive Thunderstorm."

The sky responded instantly... Clouds merged across the horizon nonstop, building on each other like troops who had received a royal decree to mobilize.

They rumbled with thunder that shook the sky... Within seconds, the entire area darkened a bit, casting a gloomy atmosphere.

Whoosh!

Dominic swiftly blinked to another location the moment he noticed a cloud of dark red blood was spat in his direction by the Hound... he knew that kind of blood carried with it the diseases and plagues of corpses capable of killing one with a small taste.

The Slaughter Aspect was one of those Aspects that had a broad spectrum of powers, touching dozens, if not hundreds, of other powers... This gave the Hound multiple ways to slaughter somebody!

"Why're you running away?!"

The Hound cursed after noticing Dominic was now a hundred meters away... he took pride in his speed, but Dominic's speed was on a different spectrum.

"I am just setting up the stage."

Dominic sank his feet into the earth with a faint, cruel smile... meanwhile, the Sulflare gas poured from his boots rapidly and spread into the soil.

He controlled it, directing the gas to form small, hidden, concentrated bubbles scattered across the battlefield.

'I am the strongest! I am the fastest! I am above all!'

As the Hound was hyping himself up with self-fulfilling delusion, the Pride Aspect responded in support, not mockery.

His body released a potent beam of golden light as his muscles fed on this grandiose delusion, giving him a real sense of enhancement beyond his capabilities.

"I AM THE STRONGEST!"

Whoosh!

Before this delusional shout could bless Dominic's ears... he found the Hound's nasty mouth already near his neck, aiming to decapitate him.

This time... Dominic anticipated it.

Just as the Hound's weaponized teeth were about to touch his neck, Dominic moved it to the side and released an intense electrical surge from a single finger that was already positioned near the Hound's sacred jewels.

Zaaaaaap!

The electrical discharge hit the Hound's testicles with close to five hundred million volts. It stunned the Hound in place, his jaw incapable of closing in.

All he felt was such intense pain that it left him paralyzed head to toe.

"You... dirty... bastard."

The Hound uttered with great difficulty as he landed behind Dominic, his body twitching nonstop... Dominic smirked coldly, uncaring about fighting dirty. When dealing with such scum, he would use any means possible to win.

But against the Hound? To be honest, he did it just for the sake of putting him in agony. This whole fight was to torture him, not kill him.

And now that the stage was set, it was time for the true torture to begin.

With the Hound's insane rejuvenation, his body twitched for a second or two at most before he let out a low growl and stood back up. His burns were already fading as if he had never been attacked.

However, just as he wanted to think of other ways to deal with Dominic, he found him standing a hundred meters away again... but this time, he was pointing a finger at him like a gun.

Before he could react, Dominic pulled the trigger.

A blinding white flash followed as a lightning bolt came down from the thunderstorm and struck the Hound directly... as he was seizing all over, the ground under him erupted after the gas bubble was ignited!

Ka-BOOOOOOM!!

A massive explosion thundered across the area as dirt, trees, and shattered stones were thrown into the air!

The Hound wasn't spared either... even with his great defenses and rejuvenation, he still found himself bleeding all over... his blood dark blue and slightly gooey.

And yet, the moment he landed on the ground, the Hound was already climbing to his feet again... his body smoked with blackened marks stretching across his skin... but those marks closed fast, his flesh rebuilding itself almost instantly.

'No wonder Seraphis lost against him... he is an undead walking.' Dominic frowned, not fond of the Hound's insane toughness. But for now, it suited him as it meant committing to a much more serious beatdown.

"DOMINIC! FIGHT ME!!"

As the Hound was sprinting and shooting off dark, bloody projectiles, Dominic evaded them easily.

"As you wish."

Dominic embraced a melee fight, but he kept focusing only on evading and leading... the moment he had the Hound near another gas bubble, he waited until the Hound's foot crossed it before blinking above him. Then, he brought down a powerful back heel kick that was covered in electrical discharges.

With the Hound refusing to use his arms for some unknown reason, he could do nothing but attempt to evade it... While he succeeded in moving his head to the side just enough to dodge it, Dominic's heel kept on moving until it smashed on the ground.

Then, he disappeared in an instant and left the Hound to eat the full brunt of another explosion, vanishing before the smoke could devour him!

This was just the beginning of the Hound's worst nightmare...

When Feng Ling finally arrived at the site... he lit up a cigarette and sat comfortably on top of his saber, watching his best friend switch to demon mode.

Boom! Boom! Boom!!...

The entire battlefield was filled with lightning strikes from the heavens and thunderous fireball explosions on the ground. As for the Hound? He was being tossed around like a helpless ball, slammed from one explosion to the next!

Dominic didn't give the Hound a split second to breathe... his face was emotionless as he kept blinking from one place to another, striking the Hound from above, the sides, or behind.

Each blow sent him flying through another gas bubble, triggering another lightning strike and explosion.

All the Hound could do was use whatever defensive means in his arsenal and brace himself... his thoughts were all jumbled as the pain and dizziness consumed him.

With each lightning bolt, his body stiffened... he had been getting hit so many times now, he felt like his nerves were fried beyond recovery.

Only now were his survival instincts awakened, the delusion of killing Dominic was zapped out of his mind and heart...

Chapter 299: A Bluff.

The instant those doubtful thoughts infested his heart, his pride-based enhancement weakened immensely, leaving him even more vulnerable against this nonstop onslaught. It got so bad, he finally learned what it meant to be afraid.

If this was Dominic's strength without using his Dominion, he didn't dare imagine what would have happened to him inside of it.

Boom! Boom...

"What a beautiful tune..." Feng Ling smiled as he watched the performance and recorded it as well for Levi and the others.

He knew this wasn't enough to offset the news of Seraphis' passing, but it was something to help them blow off steam a little... to see the villain that ended their instructor getting turned into a burnt rag doll wasn't a recurring event since not many could put a Blazewarden in such humiliating state.

Unfortunately... the music had to stop.

Meanwhile, inside the Inverse Sanctum... the Bishop's expression turned frigid after feeling a sharp poke at the heart of his Shadowlife Tree.

It was like a piece of him was being torn apart. He understood what it meant... Dominic was beating the living crap out of the Hound.

Since the Hound had turned off his dimensional connection, the Bishop was forced to reach out to none other than... Dominic!

He didn't move an inch, merely sending him a dimensional message.

-For every grave wound you give him, a holy region will fall on this continent... If you keep going, this land will drown in nightcrawlers... test me, if you will.-

After receiving the message, Dominic merely sneered coldly and continued with his beatdown.

He landed another blow, lightning flashing around his leg as he sent the Hound smashing against a boulder... Then, he answered calmly, -I'm looking forward to it.-

He didn't add anything more... but that simple answer was enough to make the Bishop fall silent. For someone who thought too much about everything, the meaning behind Dominic's words carried more than one layer.

He knew that Dominic was the one caring the most about the stability of the unofficial peace treaty between the two factions... after all, if a war were to start, the natives would be the ones suffering the most.

Whether the Conquerors and Saviors won or lost... this was not their planet, their home... it was just another battleground for their eternal war.

And now... Dominic sounded like he actually wanted the Bishop to go for it and be the first to break the peace treaty.

He could tell this kind of confidence would never come from an empty place... Dominic was simply too strict to risk an entire continent to kill one of his dogs.

'Sun Amulet... they must have retrieved it.' The Bishop narrowed his shadowy eyes, 'Dominic is going to hand it to the supervising Radian, and he can ask him for a favor... that favor might be just getting rid of me since I will be caught destabilizing the balance between the three factions.'

Although the Bishop's intel was limited, he could tell that Dominic didn't invest so much in this exploration for nothing... the Sun Amulet was a legendary treasure that he knew of as it was part of the infamous Ashora Empire's collapse.

If Dominic put this much focus on it, it meant that a Radian wanted it... as arrogant as the Bishop was, he would never be dumb enough to put his name in the crosshairs of a Radian.

'If my assumption is true... then, I have to call in a meeting with the rest of the Bishops.' The Bishop frowned, 'Natives receiving a Radian favor almost always results in the Saviors' faction getting strengthened to another level to win over the planet.'

This situation was more serious than his dog getting beaten up... because he understood that it threatened his empire and all the efforts they had invested in corrupting this planet.

Why was it so important to succeed in corrupting a planet whole? Simple... the bonus award from the CRS Platform was almost always an S grade!

These kinds of treasures weren't something easily found or purchased in the network... they were so rare, the easiest method to obtain one was actually this!

For Powerhouses like the Bishop... only such treasures could move their hearts anymore since their evolution to the final Tier 9 included only S Grade natural treasures, and sometimes even soul bound artifacts.

-I am done with him... send someone to collect your trash, and never, ever, use your dogs to target any holy region... otherwise, you might not like the response.-

Suddenly, the Bishop received this message from Dominic, leaving his expression slightly grim... he didn't fear Dominic for even a second, treating him like a slightly stronger livestock than the others.

But, he could smell Radians behind this newfound confidence of his... and he had no plans to make any kind of move anymore until he confirmed his suspicion with his peers.

'I am on to you, Dominic... we will find out the truth sooner or later.' The Bishop murmured under his breath, 'For your own planet's sake... you better not be bluffing.'

Meanwhile, Dominic had left the entire place resembling an area struck by a meteor shower... not a single tree was still rooted. The ground itself was filled with craters and burnt marks all over.

In one of those craters, Dominic had his foot placed on top of the Hound's face... the Hound was barely breathing or moving, his body looked like it went through a hundred failed experiments.

"A day will come when you will answer for your sins... once and for all." Dominic whispered as he leaned closer, his feet digging through the Hound's cheek, "But for now... enjoy your little freedom, and say hi to your master for me."

Not waiting for the Hound to respond, if he was even capable of it, Dominic blinked and appeared next to Feng Ling... then, both of them took one final look at the Hound and left him there, barely alive.

If it was up to either of them, they would have slain him in a heartbeat... but Dominic might be daring, but he wasn't suicidal.

He gave the Hound a well-deserved beatdown and bluffed his way against the Bishop, knowing that a single sentence was enough to make him question his confidence. But, if he were to kill the Hound, it was a different story.

He would definitely make a move against the continent even under the false threat of a Radian... after all, the Bishop's ego was above all else. How could his ego handle having his dog killed by livestock under the eyes of his peers?

Thus, Dominic didn't want to push it over the edge as the safety of everyone mattered more than killing a single dog, of which there were many.

However, just as they were about to use a dimensional gate to return to the World Tree, Dominic received a new message.

-Sir... Jasmine and Levi have returned... and Levi said that he remembers everything and also found the Sun Amulet!-

The moment Dominic heard this, his face lit up with delight. Not only had two of the most prominent figures of the new generation returned safely, but the fact that he had brought the Sun Amulet back with him made it all the more incredible.

Just the notion of having it was enough to put down the Bishop in his place... if they really had it, everything was going to change for the better. That's the overwhelming authority of a Radian.

Alas... before he could share his excitement with Feng Ling, another message came through.

-The Sun Amulet is broken.-

Chapter 300: The Story.

Sometime later...

Levi and Jasmine were lying on beds near each other inside the medical ward of the SAS Headquarters. After they stepped out of the dimensional mirror and the staff members saw their terrible condition, they didn't ask too many questions.

Only two questions... do you have your memories intact, and what happened to the rest? Jasmine told them the last thing she remembered was entering the treasury, while Levi told them that he still had his memory intact, and that he found the broken Sun Amulet.

Hearing this, the staff took them straight to the infirmary... Levi's arm was still missing, and he looked like shit. As for the rest? They were all in a deep slumber inside their assigned rooms.

-Levi... what happened?- Jasmine asked, looking confused.

-I will explain later.- Levi smiled wryly.

-...Oki.- Jasmine didn't press him any further.

She didn't lie to the staff members earlier... she had her memories indeed veiled by Levi after he handed her about 20% of Azhukar's treasury in the wallet.

He had explained his plan to her, and Jasmine accepted it... But since her memories were veiled, she wouldn't be breaching the contract no matter what she said.

On the other hand, Levi had signed the contract using the Void Seed... this meant, although the contract appeared legit on the outside, in reality, Levi's soul was connected not to just one seed, but the combination of three seeds.

In simpler terms, almost any contract he signed using those seeds would not result in a penalty, as they were considered dummy seeds... the keyword here was almost any contract.

The CRS Platform contracts were simply too strict and inclusive about almost every possible detail or loophole to have their penalty bypassed. Thus, although Levi had signed with the Nocturnal Ring and CRS Platform with two different seeds, they still could penalize him even though he was seen as a different individual with two contracts.

On the other hand... such standard contracts left some loopholes for him to abuse with his ability to sign with any of his seeds or all three together.

As Levi was lying on the bed, having his severed arm regrown through potent recovery totems, he was thinking about the story he had prepared to tell... he knew he needed to practice it as he was going to tell it in front of Feng Ling and Dominic.

This time, he couldn't be caught in a lie.

'I guess it's good that the Void Seed left some corruption within my soul.' Levi smiled in self-mockery.

He had already entered his Leywell to check on the damage... however, he found only a small black cloud swimming across his soul. The rest of the debt was being kept by the Void Seed. And yet, even this small cloud of corruption had made him notice some difference related to his emotions.

He didn't know how to explain it, but they seemed a bit cold? Like he was becoming a psychopath with no ability to perceive such emotions. For now, he could still feel them... but at the same time, the coldness was unmistakably there.

This drove Levi to question if he would even survive the real deal? The full debt?

'No.' Levi let out a long exhale, 'This is my life now... I can either keep descending or do something drastic with the Sun Seed to rebalance the debt.'

Levi was told by his tenants that his corruption debt would remain hanging over his head until the day he chose to abuse the Sun Form with a fitting persona change.

At that time, he wouldn't really fix the issue, but he would have two debts... it was a must for balance to remain between them, so the moment he split his soul and poured the debts into them, there wouldn't be any glaring difference.

No seed above all.

After some time of rest, Dominic and Feng Ling came knocking on the infirmary room. Levi let them in, knowing that he couldn't leave them waiting for long.

"Sirs... my apologies." Levi smiled bitterly while bringing out the Sun Amulet the moment he saw them, "I found it in this shape in the throne chamber next to my teammates and the others."

The Sun Amulet was indeed cracked all over and seemed quite dim and fragile... Dominic frowned for a moment after seeing its state, but he didn't comment on it for now. He asked about Levi's and Jasmine's well-being.

Only after checking on them did he sit on a chair next to Levi while Feng Ling sat on the other side... then, he requested with a solemn tone, "Levi, I heard you kept your memories... I want you to tell us everything, spare no details."

Levi nodded and started narrating... his tone fixed and natural, as if he were speaking about things he was actually seeing happen before his own spiritual vision.

He began with what happened in the temple and the letter they found, then moved on to the rescue attempt for the two teams.

"To be honest... I decided to help them because I assumed that if we didn't, they might end up shattering the dimensional membrane and throwing us all out... I knew they would rather fight to the end against the Leviathan Phoenix and the Corrupted."

Levi shared truthfully, letting them know that as long as he was under the contract obligation, he wouldn't bother to lie.

When they heard him, they didn't see anything wrong with it... Instead, they appreciated the honesty and the thought process as they knew it was the healthiest.

Levi didn't even mention doing it for the sake of being kind... such foolish thoughts escaped his mind forever. Now, he based his decisions on his rationality and a list of pros and cons like he always wanted to do without having his mother's teachings affect his judgment.

This didn't mean that he wouldn't be doing any kind acts, but... he wouldn't do something just for the sake of being kind, especially when the situation wasn't in his favor.

No more.

"I stole the Leviathan's attention and led it as far as possible from the capital while my friends handled the rescue... I told them I would group up with them in the pyramid, but I didn't expect the Leviathan would be so hard to lose." Levi raised his newly grown fresh arm and said with a wry smile, "This is the price I had to pay to finally lose it."

"If you ask me... you came out cheap." Dominic chuckled, "I admire the decision, but you're lucky the Leviathan had no energy reserve available."

Levi nodded in agreement.

"What about the others?" Feng Ling asked solemnly, "How did all of them lose their memories while six Daywalkers are still lost?"

"I don't know the full story of that." Levi shook his head, "When I got rid of the Leviathan Phoenix off my tail, I did a big circle and returned to the capital... the moment I neared the pyramid, everything started to collapse around me and fly upward. I knew then that the dimensional membrane had shattered."

"I entered the pyramid to avoid getting pulled upward, but..." Levi's body suddenly shuddered, "That's when I saw the spiritual aura of a humanoid bird... It was so massive and powerful, I believe its owner's true power was above Tier 7."

Hearing this, Dominic and Feng Ling knitted their eyebrows deeply as they glanced at each other.

'You think he saw the Emperor or the Dawn Phoenix?'

'I don't know...' Feng Ling asked Levi right away to describe the spiritual aura.

Levi went on and described Emperor Azhukar, but not in so much detail... just enough to paint the picture. Then, he told them how he decided to hide his presence, even though he knew it would be extremely difficult to achieve against such an entity...

"I don't know why, but that entity seemed to have switched his entire focus from us to the shattered dimensional membrane." Levi sighed in relief, "He transformed into a living flaming phoenix and took off towards the sky, possibly to close the spatial tear or slow it down... That's what I thought at the moment, but I didn't waste time speculating about him."

Levi switched his tone and continued, "I went straight to the throne chamber, following the map's details from the priest's letter... Once I reached the throne, I found my friends and some other two teams laid on the ground passed out, and affixed on the ceiling. I didn't know what he did to them, but I was glad that they were at least fine... I woke them up and saw that they were disoriented and seemed to remember nothing."

"With so little time in my possession, I didn't ask them about anything. I used Tyrese's dimensional gate and sent them out, then I picked the broken Sun Amulet, which was also affixed on the ceiling. Next, I went to search for Jasmine. I saw her spiritual aura inside a room some floors lower than the throne chamber. I assumed that they must have sent her to the treasury as I knew my friends aren't foolish enough to guide the other two teams to the treasury we found on the map." Levi took a pause for a breather and added while glancing at Jasmine, "I found her passed out too, and when I woke her up, she had no memories... I knew then that powerful entity must have erased their memories or done something to them... I don't know what it was, but it didn't look good considering that I saw some particles of ashes inside the throne chamber, with a strong smell of burnt flesh."

"I knew then... if it wasn't for the dimensional membrane shattering, everyone would have been killed... me included." Levi smiled bitterly, "We survived through pure fortune..."

"..."

"..."

Feng Ling and Dominic were left silent... they knew that Levi couldn't and wouldn't lie to them with the contract still active.

This meant, instead of spending their energy wondering if he was telling the truth or not, they focused more on the identity of that powerful entity and the secret behind the broken Sun Amulet, the priest's letter, and such.

The first conclusion they arrived at was:

"The Sun Amulet was a seal for Emperor Azhukar, broken after he was released by your friends,"
Dominic uttered solemnly.