

Innkeeper 912

Chapter 912 From outside the syllabus

Since Lex was focusing on the instructions he was receiving in his mind, he did not notice the faint emotion which emerged in Cassandra's eyes. But since she did not make any additional changes to his training program, it did not seem to matter.

He was repeating the moves as close to perfect as he could, and he felt himself improving with each swing. The reason why Lex always felt like his swordsmanship was lacking was because although the sword swing seemed fine, he was able to detect flaws in his body, or weight distribution, or something else. Sometimes, he did not even know what was wrong except that his instincts told him something was missing.

Following the instruction in his mind made a monumental difference, though. Even the smallest change, such as the angle at which he turned his ankle while standing in a certain posture, made all the difference. It was the difference between a straight line drawn using a ruler and a straight line drawn by an artist.

To the untrained eye, there may not be any difference, or the artist's work may even seem inferior. But someone who could comprehend the complexities involved would see that a straight line, when drawn by someone who had the potential to create a grand master piece, held infinite possibilities. While the same straight line, drawn alongside the edge of a ruler, only ever contained the possibility of being a straight line. The ruler could make nothing else.

It was a level of comprehension into a subject that teetered on the edge of being measurable and quantifiable, and that of being abstract.

In summary, the sword swing now had the potential to become anything Lex could need it to become.

While Lex was making no progress on controlling divine energy, he could subtly feel his sword intent forming.

He spun, following the instructions in his mind, and swung the sword backwards as if deflecting a silent blow that was coming from behind him. The swing was a perfect replica of the image in his mind, save the glowing edge. But the difference this time was that he actually did end up blocking an attack.

But while his form was perfect, the strength of the attack was too great, and Lex was thrown off balance. The image in his mind changed, and Lex, in his emotionless state, followed without missing a step.

But while he managed to block his leg from being amputated, the very fact that his sword was not reinforced by divine energy meant that it could not match up in strength.

In his flow state, he immediately judged that it was possible to effectively deflect these blows using only skill, even with the difference in strength. It was just that the instructions he was receiving were not meant to do that, which is why he kept suffering.

He shifted from his Flow state to his Overdrive state. The Overdrive state lacked the finesse of the Flow state, but it forced his brain to operate at a capacity much greater than normal. When he first unlocked this state, Lex discovered that its consumption was massive and that he couldn't keep it running indefinitely. But the energy reserves for his technique were so massive that he more or less hardly ever ran into an energy deficiency issue.

When considering the kind of boost it provided Lex, it was almost like a cheat.

Lex had been thrown to a side, and was lying on his back. He did not even have time to stand up, his mental guide already transmitting the next move to prevent himself from dying.

Time seemed to slow down as his mind analyzed the next set of instructions, and through them deduced the kind of attack his opponent was making.

He then calculated the difference between the amount of strength he could generate on his own, and that which would be generated if his sword were imbued with divine energy. It was an easy enough estimate to make once he had felt the difference in the outcome that his instructions predicted, and the one that his body suffered from.

With that, he was able to deduce how much stronger the attacker was than himself. With all the information he had on hand, as well as the template of the movements from his instructions, his mind speculated on the best way to adjust for the difference in strength using technique only.

Lex's eyes glowed as his Overdrive state worked better than it had ever done before. He swung the sword, deviating from the instructions for the first time, and once again stimulating a reaction in Cassandra. She could tell exactly what the outcome was about to be, which is why she was surprised.

Lex blocked the attacker, and instead of receiving the attack head on, caused it to deviate, and hit the floor beside him. Completely unaffected by the previous attack, Lex finally got the time to leap onto his feet and observe his attacker.

It was, predictably, a suit of armor - but this one was glowing, no doubt indicating that it contained divine energy.

More instructions came, and Lex's mind quickly dissected them to repeat the process it had just undergone previously. It was not perfect, as there was only so much strength pure skill could account for, but it was enough to ensure that Lex was no longer being manhandled.

When Lex successfully blocked three attacks without being flung across the room, the gleam in his eyes sharpened, and he changed his process once again.

Instead of just dissecting his instruction so that he could figure out the best way to defend, he began figuring out ways in which he could attack.

This time, when the change happened, Cassandra was no longer surprised, but did pick up her clipboard to make a note.

Lex blocked the attack, or rather, touched his foe's sword with his own and gently guided the attack to the side. Meanwhile, he took a step forward, bringing himself closer to the suit of armor. At this distance, the armor could not react in time as Lex flourished his sword, bringing it back from deflection and turning it into a swift attack on its chest.

There was not even a scratch on the suit of armor, but it did stumble. Lex's mind worked even faster as he absorbed this swordplay and made it his own, so that he could use it as he wished.

Two more times, Lex managed to deflect as well as attack, causing the suit or armor to stumble. The third time, a silver tinge appeared around the sword and Lex felt 'something' in the universe around him, responding to his attack.

While his previous attacks could not even leave a mark on the suit of armor, this one caused a soft dent and a crack to form.

Lex grinned and attacked again. The silver energy around his sword became more prominent and seemed to cause a 'sheen' sound as it cut through the air. The suit of armor fell back, and for the first time, fell into a defensive position.

Exhilarated, Lex attacked again and again, refining the silver energy further, causing it to become a thick yet sharp layer around the edge of his sword.

This was not the divine energy he was supposed to master, but it was the sword intent that Lex had long wanted to master. With each swing his intent became sharper and more deadly, and the laws around him responded to his well. Even though this room had filtered all types of energy out, and left only divine energy inside, it could not filter out laws.

Lex's sword intent was directly a result of the sword laws, or sword dao, resonating with his skill and will, and it could not be stopped from manifesting.

Lex continued to attack till there came a point that the sword intent became almost solid, and nearly indistinguishable from the actual sword itself. He could feel that he had already encountered the first roadblock in his path, and if he surpassed it, his sword intent would move to the next level!

Instructions entered Lex's mind, as they had been this entire time, but for the first time, Lex decided to ignore them completely. He could see a better way of attacking. He could see a vulnerability in his enemy, though he could not tell if it was natural or by design.

Regardless, Lex chose to believe in himself rather than the images in his mind. He could also feel that this was the key to breaking through the first shackle in his sword intent.

Letting loose a simple war-cry, Lex swung his sword diagonally at full strength, even though the enemy was some distance away. His sword fell short! But his sword intent, which had thoroughly latched onto the edge of his blade, came loose and flew across the room, turning into an ethereal sword flying through the air!

It was too swift to block, and in one simple slice, cut the helmet in half!