

## **Innkeeper 919**

### Chapter 919 Inner temple

Lex heaved a little, and swung his right arm in the air, as if trying to stretch out his muscles. Inferno Blade was not a single attack, but a collection of six attacks, each one adding fire component to the attack.

The one Lex had used right now was the only long-range one he had learnt so far. It could not be mastered without knowing at least some basic sword intent, as it relied on the intent to carry the attack forward.

Of the six, Lex immediately learned the first three, as if they were completely natural. The next three however...

Lex was used to studying. He'd been home schooled and then went to college. After he became a cultivator, he studied all kinds of things, as he was aware that he lacked a foundation in them. One could even say he was good at studying, especially now that his brain had undergone a few upgrades.

But he was used to studying concrete things. He studied math, science, programming and the like. Heck, even art and music had symmetry and patterns, so although he never studied them much, he could comprehend them. The Inferno Blade's last three moves, however, were an entirely different matter.

Unlike the first three, which only relied on a certain level of swordsmanship, sword intent and technique, the latter were strange, and relied on things that Lex could not comprehend. The technique description sounded almost philosophical, and the instructions included things like the feelings of the blade as the fire within it rises, the beginning, end and middle of an inferno as being a living being and that engulfed the evils of the world.

Lex read the descriptions multiple times and then asked Cassandra again, just to be sure his translator wasn't malfunctioning.

Cassandra found his reaction amusing, and she almost seemed relieved that there was something he struggled with. In her words, if everything came too easily to him, it would weaken his willpower.

So, mastering the remaining three would have to wait. It was not as if Lex was unfamiliar with using techniques in battle, but so far the techniques he had used were more or less straightforward. They either blocked or hit something. Impervious hands seemed to be the only exception to the rule, as it became something else entirely when he used it. But for some reason, he felt a kind of resistance while using sword techniques. He suspected that the sword in his soul might be responsible for that.

Besides Inferno Blade, Lex had also learned a defensive sword technique called Stalwart Guardian, but unlike Inferno Blade, Lex mastered that in its entirety. It seemed that even with the Regal Embrace gone, he was still influenced by it, as the vague and philosophical lines did not deter him at all, much to Cassandra's regret.

Lex put the sword away and exited. Next would be his seventh test. Unless Ra broke through the layers in the next few minutes, Lex would finally face him after passing the next test.

He was not nervous, but he took it quite seriously. Cassandra had told him that Ra was regaining power rapidly, which wasn't good.

Once he exited the test chamber, he discovered that the appearance of the temple changed drastically. The halls were no longer massive and wide, and instead looked more regal and yet cozy. There were no paintings or decorations filling the walls, but Lex felt like the hall was the most grand he had ever been in, though he could not say why.

He felt reinvigorated by just breathing the air, and the soft, pastel colors of the walls seemed to soothe his mind and fill him with a cool sensation. He felt like his body was subtly growing stronger just by standing there, and that his cultivation was increasing as well. Most of all... he felt like his soul itself was growing stronger!

"Wow..." Lex could not help but utter, and then was surprised to discover that his voice was different! It sounded... better, somehow.

"You are now entering the inner portions of the temple. Do not be surprised by just this. By inner portion, I do not mean you are reaching the core of the temple, just that you are reaching a slightly better furnished corner of the temple based on your location. Come, let's not waste time."

Lex followed Cassandra, and in only a few steps felt like he had already replenished whatever energy he had expended so far. Every subsequent step he took gave him surplus energy, as if augmenting him.

"Why is my voice different?" he could not resist asking.

"It's due to something called Aether. It's one of the more pure types of energies, alongside divinity. At your level, you don't need to worry about it. Your voice... this is just the best version of your voice that you can achieve. It can only exist in the presence of Aether."

Lex did not fail to notice that Cassandra's voice did not change.

When they finally reached the entrance to the next test, Lex was stunned. He sensed an aura that was all too familiar from the door. It was emanating Dragons Might! Albeit, the aura was weak.

"The aura is there to deter others from taking these tests lightly. They are not easy. Take this one seriously, or you won't escape unharmed.

Lex nodded, and walked through the doors that seemed to open on their own as he approached. Somehow, Lex felt like the doors were reacting to his Domination.

The test area also looked different. Instead of a small arena inside a closed room, Lex found himself standing in the center of a massive stadium, though there was no crowd.

The sun hung directly overhead, marking it as midday, and the faint smoke rising from the ground told Lex that it was probably searing. He did not even feel warm.

A suit of armor appeared in front of him, though this one was taller than the last one by a few inches, and looked much more intimidating than the last one too. It almost looked like a humanoid dragon.