

Lightning 121

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Chapter 121: First Job

It had been nearly a week since Gravis started living in the Heaven Sect. One would think that Gravis could finally relax in that timeframe since he was not being hunted anymore, but that was sadly not true. When there were quiet moments without a potential enemy to occupy his thoughts, Gravis started thinking about Gorn again.

The nightmares had also started again after they had stopped for a while. When Gravis was on the tree together with Skye, it was bearable since the potential danger occupied his thoughts. At that time, he had no time to think about Gorn. Yet now, having no strong external pressure, Gravis started falling into guilt again.

Gravis felt the pain of the guilt, and he wished that he could turn back the time to make a different decision. Sadly, time didn't work that way, and the only thing that Gravis could do was to do his best to help the Lightning Sect when he was strong enough. But when Gravis thought about the Lightning Sect and the Lightning Guild, he could only laugh pitifully.

"I want to repay Gorn by helping the whole Lightning Sect, yet the only thing I have done until now was killing tens of their disciples. What kind of repayment is that?" Gravis mumbled to himself.

Of course, Gravis knew that he had to kill the disciples that came to hunt him. He knew that he had no other choice in the matter. Gravis would still continue killing his enemies, but that sadly didn't make it any easier. Sure, Gravis could theoretically let them kill him, and they would have gotten their revenge, but would that repay what he has done?

No, there was a difference between revenge and redemption. If Gravis died, then Gorn would have died for nothing. That wouldn't help the Lightning Sect or the Lightning Guild in any way. So, the only goal that Gravis could work towards was getting enough strength to repay the Lightning Sect. Gravis knew that this wouldn't redeem his actions, but it was the most he could do.

He couldn't think of anything else that he could do to redeem himself. He couldn't give up now! There was a way out of this situation! Gravis only had to keep going and keep at it until he reached it. "But it's so hard," Gravis mumbled again.

He could make all this pain and guilt go away if he just gave up. It seemed so easy, actually. Yet, every new day, he decided to keep on going. His family, his own ambition, and the possibility to repay Gorn drove him forward.

Learning the Heaven's Balance Cultivation Technique wasn't really difficult, and Gravis managed to grasp it in two days. After that, he grew unoccupied again and decided to go outside with Skye. Gravis could come and go as he pleased, and he decided to spend the last couple of days, before his job started, with Skye.

Skye had occupied itself by flying around the area and hunting in the forests. Due to Skye's speed and power, it managed to hunt a lot of food. Additionally, it had also fought two mid-grade Energy Beasts in

those days. Normally, there wouldn't be so many mid-grade Energy Beasts in the surroundings, but they seemed to be congregating here.

'It's probably the higher Energy density,' Gravis assumed. Gravis had only noticed the higher Energy density when he had had some time for himself. The closer one got to the building of the Heaven Sect, the higher the Energy density. Inside the building, the Energy Density was around double the average of the Middle-Continent. That was probably Heaven's blessing or something similar. Gravis wasn't sure.

The further one got away from the Heaven Sect, the more the density returned to normal. However, the density was still higher than average at a distance of 100 kilometers. The strong beasts wanted to remain in this high density of Energy, so they all congregated here. Of course, only the strongest beasts could secure a place. The weaker ones would be driven away or killed by the stronger ones. Thus, the surroundings of the Heaven Sect were like a holy training ground for Skye.

Gravis had accompanied Skye in its training and managed to distract his mind from thinking about Gorn and his guilt. Gravis had also attempted to find out Skye's gender but failed. Birds procreated with their cloaca, and Gravis didn't know enough to judge its gender based on that. He only found it out when he had painstakingly explained the concept of genders and bird-sex to Skye.

Skye pointed at the male-symbol, but Gravis was not sure if Skye understood him correctly. Skye had never met another bird of its kind, so the instinct to procreate had not appeared yet. Gravis sighed and wiped the symbols away. "It's 50/50 with or without Skye's input," He grumbled. Gravis just sighed but didn't care any further. They were companions, and that was all that mattered.

After two days of learning the Heaven's Balance Cultivation Technique and five days of running around with Skye, one week finally passed. Gravis had waited for this moment, and he was happy that he could finally do something. Even though he had a lot of fun with Skye, it felt like he had wasted his time.

He had also tried to find mid-grade Energy Beasts but, of course, failed. Even though Heaven had taken a significant loss with Gravis joining the Heaven Sect, it hadn't given up yet. It still tried its best to keep Gravis from finding strong enemies. The only good thing about that was that Gravis was pretty sure that controlling such strong beasts was probably exhausting to Heaven. So, even though Gravis had not managed to temper himself, he could at least say that he made Heaven work overtime during these days.

On this day, Gravis knocked on Aion's office. Gravis waited for a couple of seconds, but nothing happened, so Gravis continued waiting patiently.

"Ugh, just come in," Gravis heard from behind the door and then promptly entered. At this point, Aion's office probably didn't need much description since it was just as luxurious as the rest of the building. Yet, what surprised Gravis was not the office, but Aion.

Aion wasn't really inside his office but on an adjacent balcony. He laid on some kind of mattress and was bathing in the sun. Gravis had thought that Aion had to work, but it seemed like he had been mistaken.

"Man, you really need to stop being so stiff," commented Aion, not looking at him. "You didn't have to come exactly after a week. Why not take some additional days off?"

Gravis decided against that since he was already feeling like he was just wasting his time away. "Senior brother, I would like to start my work," Gravis said directly.

Aion looked at Gravis and groaned. Some documents levitated to Gravis, who caught them. Gravis looked through them, and one of his eyebrows rose.

"Those are your first targets," Aion commented.

Gravis waited for Aion to say more, but nothing further came. "I thought I was supposed to fight criminals two levels higher than me," Gravis said.

A drink levitated over to Aion's mouth, and he took a swig from it, releasing a refreshed sigh after drinking. "Just be happy, Gravis," Aion said. "That's a present from me. I'm sure you will enjoy this."

Gravis furrowed his brows further. "What kind of present is killing two people on the third level of Magic Gathering and two people at the fourth? Don't we already have someone for that level?" Gravis asked.

Aion snickered like he had expected the question. "Sure we do, but those four are special," Aion smugly said. "Why don't you check the crime they committed?"

Gravis read more of the dossier and then finally understood why Aion had sent him. The two on the third level and one on the fourth level had reported about Gravis' whereabouts when he had left Earth Town. A light of recognition appeared in Gravis' eyes as he remembered the three Lightning Guild disciples, which he had spared back in Earth Town.

Gravis looked at the last guy in the fourth level and realized that this was the survivor from his fight with the Lightning Guild and Fire Guild on the tree. Aion was allowing him to take revenge.

Gravis thought for a bit and decided to go through with it. He had given the three from Earth Town a chance to survive, but they hadn't taken it. The other guy had also tried to kill Gravis. Even though it felt like he was bullying children, Gravis decided to go through with it.

'If I were weaker, they would have killed me already,' Gravis thought as he said his goodbyes to Aion.

With that, Gravis left the Heaven Sect with Skye, heading straight for the headquarters of the Lightning Guild.

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Chapter 122: Getting Sidetracked

Gravis and Skye had been flying for about four days, with the occasional break, until they started closing in on the southern Lightning Guild of the Middle-Continent. The closer they got, the more serious Gravis got. He knew that this would not be pretty. In the Lightning Guild's eyes, Gravis was a traitor that had killed tens of their disciples, and they would probably make this matter problematic.

Gravis made Skye land when they could see the Lightning Guild on the horizon. How did Gravis know that what he had seen, was the Lightning Guild? That was mainly because of the oppressing, thick layer of black clouds that continually shot lightning onto a vast congregation of black buildings.

Gravis took a deep breath due to his shock. The Proxy-Lightning Guild and this Lightning Guild were like night and day. The Proxy-Lightning Guild had been spartan and simple like a village. There were only grey houses and the essential buildings to keep the guild running.

Yet, this Lightning Guild oozed power. The sound of thunder exploded throughout the surroundings, and Gravis could still hear the thunder very clearly, even from several kilometers away. Most of the buildings were rather sizable with, at least, five floors each. Gravis estimated that the Lightning Guild went on for several Kilometers.

Gravis didn't know what the buildings were made out of, but the material looked incredibly sturdy. He could also see several, even more gigantic, buildings splattered around the guild. Gravis could also see a way bigger version of the Lightning Tower in the middle of the guild. They probably needed more space for their higher number of disciples.

Gravis remembered that the Proxy-Lightning Guild had around 100 people. The chance of people in the Body Tempering Realm being able to sense the latent Energy in the air was only 10%, so one would think that only 10% of the disciples of the Proxy-Lightning Guild would ascend to the Energy Gathering Realm.

Yet, that way of thinking was wrong. Who were the Elemental Sects? They were the overlord of this world, only being under Heaven and the Heaven Sect. Not even their Proxy-Guilds accepted anyone with just average talent. Gravis expected that probably over 90% of the disciples of a Proxy-Elemental Guild would reach the Energy Gathering Realm.

So, if every guild sent 90 disciples every couple of years, and with the Outer Continent being the biggest Continent, by far, one could guess how many disciples an Elemental Guild in the Middle-Continent had.

Gravis knew that breaking into the Spirit Forming Realm required an intense will. He had learned about that in the theoretical lessons back in his homeworld. People might not need a Will-Aura to break through, but they needed to be close to having one. How many disciples could build such a will? Not many, so Gravis was sure that there were a lot of disciples remaining in the Lightning Guild for their entire life.

Someone in the Energy Gathering Realm could easily live for 200 years. With so many disciples joining the Lightning Guild from all around, Gravis expected the Lightning Guild to have an absolute minimum of over 10,000 disciples. That was a terrifying force.

The more Gravis thought about the size and power of the Elemental Guilds, the more his surprise increased that they couldn't put up a fight against the Heaven Sect. Heavenborn probably didn't even make up 0.1% of the experts in this world, so every Heavenborn would need to kill over 1,000 disciples to average out.

Gravis narrowed his eyes. 'But that is only how strength works for mortals,' he thought to himself. One person at the Self-Stage of Spirit Forming could roll through an army of people at the Seed-Stage of Spirit Forming. Gravis grew even more grave when he remembered that Forneus had also said that it was a genuine possibility that people at the illusory fourth realm would exist in a lower world.

Forneus never told the class much about the fourth realm. He only said that they would know what to do when they reached the Self-Stage in the Spirit Forming Realm. Yet, Forneus had told them that they

had to survive a tribulation from Heaven when they reached the fourth realm. After they survived that, they could ascend back to their homeworld, which was different from people born in a lower world.

People born in the lower world would ascend into the "parent world" of the lower world. Apparently, the worlds everyone ascended to were predetermined. People from this world always ascended into a specific middle world. The world was always the same.

Surprisingly enough, world categories never crossed, except on very rare occasions. A lower elemental world would always lead to a middle elemental world, and people from elemental worlds never ascended to natural worlds or battle worlds. The same was, of course, also valid for the other kinds of worlds. This pattern would continue for the higher world, and after that, the ascenders would arrive in Gravis' homeworld, the peak world.

Every ascender from every world followed a path until they all arrived at Gravis' homeworld. Only then would different cultivation systems from different worlds clash with each other.

Gravis sighed when he thought about that. Thinking about how many disciples were in the Lightning Guild made Gravis sidetrack. 'I shouldn't think about these things. All of this is far in the future, and I don't need to care about that right now,' Gravis thought as he started walking to the Lightning Guild.

As a precaution, Gravis left Skye outside the guild and told it to hide. Skye might get killed by the disciples of the Lightning Guild "by accident". Gravis guessed that the Lightning Guild was hating him immensely, and he couldn't guarantee that they wouldn't stoop so low to hurt him.

Before Gravis left the Heaven Sect, he had put on his new uniform. For the first time in a long while, Gravis was not wearing black cloth pants and a black shirt anymore. Just like every other member of the Heaven Sect, Gravis wore some white robes with golden rims.

Sometimes, Gravis got a little distracted due to all the added cloth and felt a little restricted. The robes were layered and went down to the floor, which made them touch Gravis' legs when he walked. He was unused to that.

When Gravis was about 100 meters away from the gate, four disciples suddenly shot at him with their weapons drawn. Gravis could feel that three of them were at the eighth level of Energy Gathering while one was at the ninth. Yet, despite the vast power gap, Gravis didn't grow afraid. He was wearing the Heaven Sect's robes, and the Lightning Guild would not dare to hurt him. If they did, the Lightning Guild would get annihilated.

"Traitor!" shouted the man at the ninth level of Energy Gathering, as they all surrounded Gravis, their weapons pointing at him. "How dare you appear before our Lightning Guild after what you have done? Have you not hurt the Lightning Guild enough?"

If it had been a couple of days ago, Gravis would have felt a deep pain in his chest from hearing this. Luckily, he had gotten over his emotional low and had regained his will to move forward. One thought had taken a significant burden off his shoulder. 'If I kill more, I only need to repay them more in the future. When I am strong, I can repay all their deaths.'

Of course, that thought only counted for the disciples of the Lightning Sect. Gravis knew that he couldn't repay Gorn, no matter what he did. Gravis could only do his best for now.

"I am here on official business," Gravis said as he took out the dossiers of the four criminals. Gravis had met some others from the Heaven Sect in his week of "relaxation" and had learned some tricks. Gravis inserted his Energy into the dossiers, and they shone with a heavenly light. This was a proof of authenticity. Only a branch manager of a Heaven Sect knew how to create this particular Formation Array.

The disciples looked at him and grimaced. They wanted to tear him apart and take revenge for their fallen brethren, but they couldn't. Some of them might even be fine with dying to the Heaven Sect after killing Gravis, but they couldn't implicate the Lightning Guild. Gravis was on the property of the Lightning Guild, and everything that happened to him here would be the fault of the Lightning Guild.

The leader loudly slammed the butt of his spear onto the ground two times, and the main entrance of the Lightning Guild opened.

"Step inside," the leader said coldly.

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Chapter 123: Lightning Palace

Gravis didn't wait for another second after the leader of the guards told him to enter. He walked through the door and looked at the guild behind the gates. Just like he had seen from far away, he saw a lot of imposing buildings. What he hadn't seen from a distance though were all the disciples walking around. It was actually very lively in the Lightning Guild, and a lot of disciples walked around the streets. This Lightning Guild was not as desolate as the Proxy-Lightning Guild.

Gravis saw a lot of people peddling their wares and even sparring a little. He could even see signs for different shops. There were probably many disciples who tried to sell stuff that wasn't exchangeable in the Exchange Hall or things that were sold at a lower price than in the hall. The Exchange Hall probably only accepted Energy Stones as currency, but trading with other disciples would remove the currency restriction.

Some of the disciples noticed Gravis, and their expression quickly changed. Nearly every single disciple looked at him like he had killed their family, which was also probably not far from the truth. The disciples looked at each other like they were actual brothers and sisters, so it was understandable why they reacted like this. Gravis tried not to let those venomous glances discourage him. He only had to reach the peak in this world. Everything would resolve itself then.

BANG!

One guy picked up a stone and threw it at Gravis violently, shouting "traitor!" The disciple was in the third level of Energy Gathering, and he had only used his physical strength, so the stone did nothing more than stain Gravis' robe a little.

BANG!

One of the guards rushed to the disciple and hit him in the stomach with the butt of his spear. The disciple keeled over and fell to the floor, clutching his abdomen. The other disciples were first shocked and then enraged. They seemed like they were about to riot as they started shouting insults at Gravis. Gravis just crossed his arms and waited with narrowed eyes.

"Stop!" a mighty shout from the leader of the guards echoed throughout the whole Lightning Guild. The leader was in the ninth level of Energy Gathering, and his shout shook the disciple's bodies. "We know how you feel, but he is now a representative of the Heaven Sect! Everything that happens to him inside the Lightning Guild will fall back onto our shoulders!" he explained with his loud voice.

If anyone else had thrown a stone at Gravis, he would thrash the person, but Gravis accepted it from the Lightning Guild's disciples. He had killed their family, and they were not unjustified in their anger. The stone didn't even tickle him, so Gravis let the matter pass. If it had actually hurt him, he might have acted differently.

"The Lightning Guild apologizes to the Heaven Sect," said the leader of the guards, only showing the bare minimum of courtesy. The guards were not apologizing to him, but to the Heaven Sect.

"It's alright. It didn't hurt, so I will let it slide," Gravis said.

The guards and disciples were surprised that Gravis let this insult just pass like that. Wasn't he the enemy of the Lightning Guild? Of course, they were only surprised, and their feelings towards Gravis had not changed by even a little bit.

"Follow me," said the leader of the guards as he continued walking, while the other three guards surrounded Gravis. They probably wanted to intimidate him and to make it as uncomfortable as possible for Gravis. Gravis didn't object since they would just say that this was for protection. He just ignored them.

Gravis followed the leader of the guards until they arrived at a massive, black palace. It was nearly as big as the palace of the Heaven Sect, but Gravis could judge that the monetary value of both palaces was like Heaven and Earth. Gravis had seen the storage of the Heaven Sect, and he also felt like the material the Heaven Sect's castle was made out of was way superior to this castle. Even with tens of thousands of disciples, the Lightning Guild probably couldn't compare to the Heaven Sect in wealth.

Other guards were standing before the castle, all four of them in the ninth level of Energy Gathering. The leader of the guards escorting Gravis explained the situation to the other guards, and they nodded after a while. The guards from the entrance of the guild left, while the guards from the palace surrounded Gravis.

"Show the proof of the mission," demanded one guard, and Gravis felt some pressure. Gravis' eyes narrowed as he looked at the guard. The guard was actually releasing his Will-Aura on him. Yet, how could this newly created Will-Aura compare with Gravis'? Gravis didn't care about the Will-Aura and just showed the shining dossiers.

The guards were surprised that Gravis ignored the Will-Aura of their captain. They narrowed their eyes at Gravis and realized that Gravis was not as simple as they had thought. Nevertheless, they acknowledged the official dossiers and opened the door for Gravis. "Follow me," the leader of the guards told him.

Gravis followed them into the castle, and they walked up multiple stairs. It took a while to get to the top, but when they did, the guards stopped and blocked the stairs. The leader stepped forward and pointed at a majestic door at the end of the hallway. "Go inside," he said coldly.

Gravis could already guess who was behind that door. Gravis didn't hesitate and walked to the door, but it didn't open. "You need to use your lightning," Gravis heard the leader say from the back. Gravis followed his advice and infused his lightning into the door.

WROOM!

The door shook and then opened by itself. Gravis entered, and the door behind him shut immediately. Gravis didn't see the absolutely confused and shocked looks of the guards. They wanted to embarrass him because the door was only openable by people at the fifth level of Energy Gathering. Gravis was at the fourth level, and it was absolutely impossible for him to open it. What was going on?

Gravis looked at the hall behind the door. Many decorations of lightning and clouds adorned the room while the light grew brighter and dimmer at times, similar to the light released by a lightning strike. Around the room, Gravis could see a lot of people sitting on different kinds of thrones. Most of the people were, at least, middle-aged or older, though not all of them.

All the people sat around the middle of the hall. Most of them sat on black thrones with nine sharp spikes coming out of the top of their thrones. Gravis guessed that those spikes probably represented that those people were in the ninth level of Energy Gathering, the widely accepted highest level of Energy Gathering in this lower world. Only a very select few ever reached the tenth level.

At the end of the hall, Gravis saw three people sitting on different thrones. One throne was more prominent than all others and had a middle-aged man sitting on it. Gravis saw how the man used his strength to try to crush some metal balls in one of his hand, but without success.

The other two thrones were slightly smaller than the previous one, and they were also placed a little lower. Gravis saw those three thrones and could infer that those three people were probably in the Spirit Forming Realm.

'I didn't expect three people in the Spirit Forming Realm to welcome me,' Gravis thought.

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Chapter 124: His Side of the Story

Gravis looked at the hall as all the people watched him with serious eyes. Gravis was not sure, but he felt like the people inside the room looked at him strangely. They all looked like they hated him, which was expected, of course, but Gravis felt like something was not right with their expressions.

"Show me the proof of mission," said the middle-aged man in the central throne, his deep voice echoing through the hall. Gravis took out the shining dossiers and held them up. Shortly after Gravis took out the dossiers, they started floating over to the man, who looked through them.

After some seconds, the man furrowed his brows, but he knew that there was nothing he could do. This was an official document from the branch manager of the south-eastern Heaven Sect. He knew the branch manager, and he realized that this came directly from him.

The dossiers floated to a sitting old man on a normal throne. "Bring them here," said the Guild Master of the Lightning Guild. The old man bowed slightly and left the hall. The Lightning Sect couldn't fight the Heaven Sect, so the even smaller Lightning Guild could not even hope to change anything.

They didn't even need to think about the central Heaven Sect. Aion was one of the two strongest people in the Middle-Continent, the other being the branch manager of the north-western Heaven Sect. Aion could tear down this Lightning Guild just by himself.

Everyone waited in silence for several minutes. The Lightning Guild was massive, and the elder would probably take some time to return. Gravis planned to say several things, but he decided to wait until the official business was over. On the other hand, the elders didn't want to discuss official business while an enemy was in their hall. No one talked, and one could cut the thick tension in the air with a knife.

They waited for an entire hour in this silence. After the hour was up, the doors opened, and five people entered the hall. One was the elder from earlier, while the other four were the crestfallen disciples that Gravis had already met at Earth Town and the tree.

Judging by their expression, they were probably already told what would happen. Gravis guessed that it took an entire hour for them to get here so that they could get their affairs in order. When the four disciples spotted Gravis, their expression turned to hatred. The elder walked back to his throne while the four disciples looked at Gravis.

Gravis looked at them with narrowed eyes. Even if they were way weaker than Gravis, they had still tried to kill him. The concept of enmity ignored the concept of strength. Gravis was the perfect example since he was still very weak in the grand scheme of things, while his enemy was the highest Heaven.

BOOM!

Gravis shot his lightning at them, and they couldn't evade all of it in this small hall. The lightning hit them, and only a short shrill scream echoed throughout the hall as the disciples got reduced to ashes. Gravis didn't care about what they wanted to say. There was no point in talking.

Gravis turned back to the Guild Master, who violently tried to crush the steel balls in his hand to calm down. The death of the disciples was a slap to his face, and he was frustrated that he couldn't do anything about it. The Guild Master of the Lightning Guild was obviously in a bad mood.

"The official business is over," said Gravis to the Guild Master. The people inside the hall only looked at Gravis with hate, wanting him out of their sights. Yet, contrary to expectation, Gravis didn't leave. Instead, he did something inconceivable to them.

PLOMP!

Gravis sat down on his knees like the martial artists in the Martial Hall, back in Body City. All the elders in this hall knew etiquette, and they knew that this pose symbolized respect. That Gravis sat down in this position meant that he showed respect for the Lightning Guild.

"How dare you!" shouted the Guild Master angrily as he stood up. "How dare you show respect after you have killed four of my disciples right in front of my eyes!? Leave!" his voice echoed throughout the whole hall.

Gravis' hair got blown back by the imposing voice, but his demeanor didn't change. "I will now tell you about my situation and about what I have done in the Proxy-Lightning Guild," proclaimed Gravis in a neutral tone.

"Who cares about what you want to say! You have killed our disciples, so we don't care about what you want to say!" shouted another elder angrily at Gravis. The others followed suit and shouted aggressively at him to leave.

It was incredibly challenging for Gravis to keep his cool when an entire room of people stronger than him shouted at him to leave. If Gravis hadn't had a very powerful will, he probably would have faltered. Yet, even with all these aggressive shouts coming his way, he still remained upright in his kneeling position.

"I have met Gorn at the yearly entrance exams of the elemental guilds..." Gravis started narrating. The other voices overwhelmed him and shouted at him to shut up and leave, but who were these people? Those people were all expert cultivators in this world, and even if the whole hall shouted at him to leave, they could still understand everything he was saying beneath the avalanche of shouts.

Gravis told them about everything that had transpired in all his time in the Proxy-Lightning Guild, except for the arrival of Aion or about his Destruction Lightning. If he told them about how Gorn helped him against Aion, they would learn that he was not a Heavenborn. Gravis was not so naïve that he would trust the Lightning Guild with his life.

Gravis was also unsure how they would react if he told them about his Destruction Lightning. They looked at him as their enemy, and if Gravis told them that he had reached the never-before-seen 100% Destruction Lightning, they might sacrifice their whole guild to the Heaven Sect just to protect the Lightning Sect.

Slowly, the shouts started to subside as Gravis told them more about what Gorn had done for him. About how Gorn had given him the Lightning Codex without any payment. About how Gorn had given Gravis the best house to keep an eye on him. About how Gorn had saved him from the cesspool. About how Gorn increased the output of the Lightning Tower to satiate Gravis' mad thirst for power.

Before Gravis had arrived, they had thought that he was a cold, traitorous killer. When Gravis told them about some things that Gorn had done for him, they only grew angrier since they knew that Gravis had killed him.

Yet, as time progressed and more of Gorn's good deeds appeared, they started thinking. If Gravis wanted to defend his character, he would have said that Gorn had abused him, but Gravis only sincerely told them about what Gorn had done for him.

The people in the hall fell completely silent when the tale reached the part where Gravis ran amok in the Proxy-Lightning Guild. Gravis told them about how everything seemed to be an enemy in his eyes and that he could only see Jaimy everywhere he looked.

The people in the hall were all experienced, and they had already realized by now that Gravis had been under the influence of lightning. They could empathize with him since they were all linked with the lightning element. They also had to battle with the temperament of lightning.

Did it excuse what Gravis had done in the Proxy-Lightning Guild? No, definitely not! When someone was drunk and killed another person, they were still responsible for their actions.

When Gravis reached the point where Gorn died, Gravis breathed heavily. He always tried his very best to ignore this memory, but he needed to tell his story to the people. He wanted them to understand him.

Gravis knew that this would not solve their enmity, and the Lightning Guild would still hunt him. Gravis only wanted them to understand his pain and to show that he had never seen the Lightning Sect as his enemy.

Gravis finished his story at the point when he fled out of the Proxy-Lightning Guild.

The hall remained silent, and Gravis looked deeply into the Guild Master's eyes.

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Chapter 125: Talking About the Past

The hall remained silent as everyone was waiting for the answer of the Guild Master. The Guild Master moved the steel balls in his hand around a bit, no longer trying to crush them. While he looked at Gravis, he seemed to be in deep thought.

"If you regret what you have done, why have you not come in for punishment? Why have you continued slaughtering my disciples?" the Guild Master said with a severe tone.

Gravis didn't falter. "I know that killing me would be just and fair. I have killed Gorn so I can only bring justice with my death, but is that the best? I trust in my strength, and I know that I can repay the whole Lightning Sect for every death when I reach sufficient strength. If I were to die now, how could I repay what I owe? Gorn's death would be not only tragic, but also useless. If I manage to repay the Lightning Guild, his death has, at least, meaning."

The elders and the Guild Master listened to Gravis and fell into thought. Was killing Gravis just? Yes, he obviously deserved to be punished for killing his Guild Master. It would be fair for everyone if Gravis were executed for his sins. Yet, what Gravis said would also be true. The guild would have acted just, but both deaths would be meaningless.

"You act like a gambler," said the Guild Master after some seconds. "You have already lost so much money, and yet you continue betting to hope to make up for all your losses. Do you not see that your path leads to nothing but destruction and pain?" he asked.

Gravis sighed but remained stalwart. "I realize that I am acting like a gambler, but there is a clear difference between a gambler trying to get his money back and me," said Gravis with shining eyes.

"And what is that?" asked the Guild Master, leaning back on his throne.

"A gambler has minimal control over the outcome of their bet while I have full control over my strength and what I do with it," said Gravis with shining eyes. "I have many reasons to become strong, and all of them drive me forward. It's impossible for me to fail on my way to strength because that would betray Gorn's expectations and the expectations of even more people. I can't fail!"

The Guild Master released an unamused laugh. "How very grand and arrogant of you," he said. "I could crush you with only one finger, and there are many more powerful people than me in this world. How can you speak of having control over your destiny when so many people can just destroy you?"

Gravis didn't falter. "I trust in my strength, and I don't need to win against everyone to become strong," Gravis explained. "I don't need to think about winning against my enemies. I only need to survive, and as long as I survive, I will become strong."

The elders in the hall were discussing silently with each other. They had never been in this situation before. They did have very talented disciples in the past who committed a grave crime, yet those disciples either accepted their punishment or became enemies of the Lightning Guild. Gravis didn't accept his punishment, but he also wasn't the enemy of the Lightning Guild, at least from his point of view.

"So," started the Guild Master again. "If we continue sending disciples after you, you will continue on your way, even if it means killing them?" he asked Gravis.

Gravis continued unabated and looked deep into the Guild Master's eyes. "I have no choice. I need to become powerful to repay my debt and to not betray Gorn's expectation. He wanted me to become strong, and if I don't, then what meaning does his sacrifice have?"

The Guild Master sighed a little. "So, no matter what happens, you will continue killing our disciples in the future, even if you don't want to, all to reach the strength necessary to repay the Lightning Sect. There is truly no good way out of this situation. The whole fight brings only pain to both sides."

"It is necessary to continue on my way to not make Gorn's death senseless," Gravis said.

The Guild Master laughed bitterly. "Gorn's intentions may not be as pure as you believe, Gravis," he said with a mix of amusement and helplessness.

Gravis' eyes wavered. The Guild Master had called Gravis by name, which meant that he was no longer looking at Gravis like he was an evil slaughterer. Gravis also hadn't considered Gorn's intentions. "What do you mean?" he asked with a deeper voice.

The Guild Master leaned back in his throne. "As you surely know, it needs a powerful will to compress the Magic inside of you to reach the next level in Magic Gathering," the Guild Master started explaining. "Disciples whose wills were too weak to compress their Energy have two decisions. They either go out to temper their will or decide to stop their path to power."

"Gorn was part of the second category of disciples," the Guild Master said. "We sent him to be the Guild Master of a Proxy-Lightning Guild so he could help the guild, even with his weak strength. Of course, the Guild Masters for our Proxy-Lightning Guilds need to know a lot about lightning and how it works."

"So," the Guild Master leaned forward in his throne. "Do you honestly believe that Gorn didn't know about the lightning's influence on your temperament when he allowed you to increase your strength further? Did you think he didn't notice your susceptibility to the lightning's influence?" the Guild Master asked with a serious face.

Now, Gravis started faltering and looked down at himself. His hands on his knees balled into fists as his thoughts fell into chaos. Gravis thought for nearly half a minute until he looked back at the Guild Master. "Please enlighten me," he said. He wanted to know more about Gorn, even if it might not be positive.

The Guild Master nodded. "When you decide to stop becoming stronger, your will slowly weakens over time. You feel how your strength decreases every day, and you start regretting your decision. As soon as you give up your dream, you become a husk of a man. Your life loses meaning, and everything that drove you forward in the past vanishes until you get used to your own stagnation."

The Guild Master laughed bitterly. "I know because the reason why I am the Guild Master of this Lightning Guild is the same as the reason why Gorn was your Guild Master," the Guild Master commented dryly. "I have given up my way forward, and now I am here," he pointed to the hall, "wasting away."

Instead of being shocked or angry, the elders could empathize with the Guild Master. Were they not here for the same reason? Gravis furrowed his brows. "What does this have to do with Gorn?" Gravis asked.

The Guild Master laughed slightly. "You still don't get it? Imagine losing your ability to become stronger, wasting away, and knowing that you have not changed anything in the world and that no one will remember you. You get complacent in being weak, and you accept that changing the world is impossible."

The Guild Master stood up and started walking around while explaining. "After years of remaining this weak, you find an incredibly talented disciple. You see something in that disciple, and you feel like they could reach the peak. Suddenly, your broken dream gets reignited. You want to make something lasting, something that changes the world! Something that you created!"

As the Guild Master continued explaining, Gravis' mind shook, yet the Guild Master didn't stop. "It doesn't matter what that disciple does with his strength. It only matters that they remember you when the disciple becomes strong. It doesn't matter to you if you create a messiah or a demon king. You only want to be remembered and see that you have brought change to the world."

"So," the Guild Master turned to Gravis. "It doesn't matter how you feel. It doesn't matter if you are happy, sad, furious, filled with hatred, or filled with kindness. You only need to become stronger and remember him. Gorn knew that so much lightning would make you go crazy, yet he didn't care. If he actually cared about you, he wouldn't have allowed you to cultivate with this madness. Some weeks of rest wouldn't have impacted your increase in power."

Gravis looked at the ground, crestfallen. His breathing grew heavier, and his thoughts were in a mess. It was not easy to shake Gravis' will, and it didn't matter what people said to him. He would always remain stalwart. Yet, what the Guild Master explained made sense to him, which shook his being.

"Does his death matter?" asked the Guild Master. "He probably doesn't care that much about it. Yes, he surely wouldn't be a fan of dying, but if it meant realizing his long-dead dream, he would probably accept it. With his death, he would always remain in your memories, even after you have lived for a long time and have already ascended to a higher world."

The Guild Master walked closer to Gravis, who, by now, felt all kinds of emotions. "Do you still believe Gorn only wanted your best? Do you still think Gorn was a good person?" he asked.

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Chapter 126: Hidden Danger

After a while, Gravis lifted his head and looked at the Guild Master. "His intentions behind what he had done, do not matter. He has risked his life for me and gave me everything that he could. The reasons behind those actions don't change the actions themselves. I will remember him for what he has done, not for what he might have thought."

The eyes of the Guild Master betrayed a small glimmer of recognition and interest. "We have talked enough," said the Guild Master as he walked back to his throne. He sat down and looked at Gravis. "We now know each other better, and we also understand the other side, but our relationship doesn't change. We need to uphold justice for all our disciples. Nothing will change."

"But," he said loudly after sitting down. "This Jaimy has played a huge part in this tragic situation. This disciple has killed someone of their own guild and that is not how the disciples of my Lightning Guild should behave." He turned to an elder. "Search for this Jaimy and bring him here."

The elder nodded at the Guild Master and left the hall. The Guild Master turned to Gravis and waved his hand in dismissal. "That is all!"

Gravis nodded as he stood up. "I will repay all deaths in the future," said Gravis as he turned around. He reached the closed door and used his lightning to open them. "I will make the Lightning Sect the overlord of this world." Gravis stepped through the door. "Bar none!"

BOOM!

The door closed, but the people inside the hall didn't talk. They thought about the whole enmity and how tragic it was. They could understand Gravis, and they could also understand that it would actually be better for all of them if they didn't try to kill him. Yet, that was only a fantasy. The Lightning Guild had to uphold justice! If they spared Gravis, they would betray all victims and persecuted criminals in the past.

"Our meeting is over," said the Guild Master after around a minute. "Vice-Guild Masters remain."

The elders nodded and bowed slightly as a goodbye. They all left the hall, and only the three people in the Spirit Forming Realm remained. They remained silent for a while until the Guild Master finally spoke. "What have you noticed about him?"

The first Vice-Guild Master laid his head on his hands in thought. "He has somehow cultivated lightning with at least 80% Destruction Energy," he commented. "Everyone in the hall noticed. There was simply no other way for him to open the door."

The door of the hall worked according to the density of Destruction Energy in the lightning. The earliest someone could open the door was at the fifth level of Energy Gathering with 40% Destruction Energy. Logically, someone with lightning with a ratio of 30% Destruction Energy or less would need to be in the sixth level of Energy Gathering to open the door.

The density of the Energy doubled with each level. It was impossible to compress the Energy further while not increasing their realm. Everyone had the ability to feel Gravis' Energy, and they all saw that he didn't have a denser Energy than someone at the fourth level of Energy Gathering. So the only way he could have opened the door, was that the Destruction Energy inside his lightning was at least double of 40%.

If Gravis knew that the secret about his lightning had been exposed to everyone in the Lightning Guild, he would not be so calm anymore. If they realized his power and potential, they might sacrifice the whole Lightning Guild to protect the Lightning Sect. Gravis' status as a Heavenborn could not protect him then.

This was the first time that Gravis had not noticed a scheme of Heaven after it had taken effect. Was it a coincidence that Gravis got sent to the Lightning Guild just when he had achieved the strength to open the door? Of course not! If Gravis had been at the fifth level of Energy Gathering, no one would have cared. Yet, he had come when he was at the fourth level.

Gravis didn't notice Heaven's scheme this time, which made it even more deadly. His secret was exposed! In the eyes of everyone, he was a Heavenborn, and he was under Heaven's command. Gravis was still 16 years old, and his temperament was not set in stone yet. Would he remain the same person when he reached 40 years of age? What about 100 years? His assurance about not being an Enemy of the Lightning Sect was worthless if he changed in the future.

"We need to talk about this properly," said the second Vice-Guild Master. "He is still young, and his potential is frightening. We have already sent many strong disciples to hunt him down. When he grows complacent in the future, he might decide to avenge old enmities to feel young again. We all know that Heavenborn don't ascend. When he stops cultivating, he would probably be at the peak of Spirit Forming or maybe even..."

The Vice-Guild Master shuddered as he thought about the High Priest of the Heaven Sect. If Gravis also reached his strength, their Lightning Sect would suffer. A Heavenborn in the Spirit Forming Realm was troublesome but not scary. If Heavenborn acted without an official mission, their deed was considered personal, which meant that the victims were allowed to retaliate and even kill the Heavenborn.

Yet, what could the Lightning Sect even do if someone with the strength of the High Priest attacked them? The Lightning Sect didn't have a person in that realm. Gravis growing powerful could very well spell doom for the Lightning Sect. It was not a question of if Gravis grew complacent in the future. It was a question of when.

Heavenborn couldn't ascend and therefore, also couldn't chase the peak. They would forever remain in this world, and their ambition and thirst for power would come to an end. Their dreams would die, and they would search for excitement in other ways. The High Priest had shown it in the past by exterminating the Wood Sect. Ever since that day, the eight Main-Elemental Guilds had become seven.

"The danger is too big," said the first Vice-Guild Master. "We need to kill him. Our Lightning Guild may get destroyed, but it is for the good of the whole Lightning Sect. We also have a good reason for killing him since there is enmity between him and us. Maybe not everyone in the Lightning Guild will die."

The second Vice-Guild Master also nodded. "I agree. The danger is too big. We need to give our lives for the Lightning Sect's well-being."

The two Vice-Guild Masters looked at the Guild Master. The Guild Master's eyes narrowed, and lightning shot through them.

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Chapter 127: A Mistake

After a while, the Guild Master grinned smugly and laid back in his throne. The two Vice-Guild Masters were surprised by his actions since this was not a typical reaction to a decision that would doom their entire guild. What was the Guild Master planning?

"So you guys actually haven't noticed," said the guild master with a smile. "That makes me relieved. If not even you guys managed to notice it, then probably everyone else in the hall also didn't," he continued saying smugly. "Well, except for me, of course."

The two Vice-Guild Masters looked at each other, confused. They were not sure what the Guild Master meant, and even when they continued thinking more about Gravis, they couldn't find the answer. After some seconds, the first Vice-Guild Master looked up. "What did you notice that we didn't?" he asked.

The Guild Master kept a smug smile. "Let me give you a hint," he said. "Imagine you were in his position and a whole hall of people stronger than you aggressively shouted at you to leave. Could you remain as firm as Gravis?" he asked them.

The Vice-Guild Masters thought about this seriously. "I think my will is strong enough to remain stalwart even with such strong opposition. Though it would be tough," the first Vice-Guild Master said, and the second nodded in agreement.

"Yet, a kid no older than 16 managed to persevere without even flinching. What do you think about his will?" asked the Guild Master smugly.

The two Vice-Guild Masters furrowed their brows. "His will is incredibly powerful for his age and strength. Now that you say it, that actually seems terrifyingly powerful," the second Vice-Guild Master sighed in nervousness. "Even though we knew about his unprecedented lightning, we have still underestimated him. We need to get rid of him," he said as the first Vice-Guild Master nodded in agreement.

The Guild Master only continued smiling. "Seems like you still don't get it. Let me give you another hint," he said as a glass of water levitated over to him. "You guys probably don't know since you are rarely involved in the matters of the Heaven Sect, but for me, it's different. As you know, the Heaven Sect always wants the Guild Master to attend to every mundane thing they host. So, I have a lot more experience with Heavenborn than you two."

The two Vice-Guild Masters grew annoyed. The Guild Master obviously loved being in a position where he knew something important while others didn't. They wanted to tell him that he should finally get to the point, but they had to hold themselves back since he was the Guild Master.

The Guild Master took a swig of his drink and released a refreshed breath. "Heavenborn have the weakest will," he continued, and the Vice-Guild Masters' eyes widened. "They use the Heavenly Pressure, granted to them by Heaven, to cultivate, so they don't care about their wills. Every Heavenborn I met started getting stressed by the most mundane things, and they live their lives in avarice. They care a lot about women, money, status, and all that mundane stuff."

The Guild Master lifted one finger to make it more dramatic. "So, how come Gravis has such an incredibly powerful will, even though every other Heavenborn has such a weak will?" he asked them, leaning back on his throne with a smile while waiting for their answers.

The Vice-Guild Masters thought about this issue for some time. They had not met many Heavenborn in their lives. It was always the Guild Master who went to all the events hosted by them. The Lightning Guild was inferior to the Heaven Sect, so they always had to show their greatest respect.

"Is Heaven training the boy differently?" asked the first Vice-Guild Master. "Is Heaven grooming him to become the next High Priest? Is that why Heaven trains the boy's will?"

The second Vice-Guild Master also thought for a bit, but he didn't find a better answer. The Guild Master saw their confused expressions and laughed. Seeing other people fail at figuring out something that he did made him feel smart.

"You still don't get it, do you?" he said through his smug and wide grin. "Let me give you one more hint. When I heard the report about the yearly entrance exams for the Proxy-Elemental Guilds, I read that they had used a newly discovered Heavenborn to test the participants' will. They did that to save some money. Of course, that Heavenborn was Gravis. Maybe now you'll get it."

Instead of understanding, the Vice-Guild Masters looked totally lost now. What did the entrance exam have to do with killing Gravis or not? They could only bitterly smile at the Guild Master.

The Guild Master, instead of growing smugger, felt a little frustrated now. Could they not combine those simple clues into one thing? "Tell me, how would you use a Heavenborn to test the will of the participants?" asked the Guild Master as he looked at the first Vice-Guild Master.

"Well, I would first use my disciples to test the power of his Heavenly Pressure. After that, I would let every person go into his Heavenly Pressure. After everyone is done, I could judge them by comparing them with our disciples," the first Vice-Guild Master explained. The second Vice-Guild Master nodded in agreement.

The Guild Master took another mouthful of his water. "Now imagine you have to test 5,000 participants, and the Heavenly Pressure only stretches to a radius of 30 meters. What do you think? How long would that take?" the Guild Master asked.

The Vice-Guild Master did some calculations. "That would take about 10 hours," he said after a while. "The area is relatively small, and there are too many participants."

The Guild Master looked at him, but he got even more annoyed when he realized that they still didn't get it. "Now, tell me. What was the weakness of Heavenly Pressure again?" he asked them.

The second Vice-Guild Master immediately answered. "Heavenborn have a stronger pressure than a Will-Aura, but it... doesn't... last..." and with that, his eyes widened in shock, and his face whitened. The first Vice-Guild Master also finally understood and mimicked the other's reaction.

The Guild Master laughed loudly. "Now you finally get it, right?" he said smugly. "Gravis never was a Heavenborn. He just had a Will-Aura in the Body Tempering Realm. Imagine this: Some nobody in some backwater city managed to have a Will-Aura in the Body Tempering Realm. Of course, people would confuse him with a Heavenborn."

The Guild Master stood up and walked around the hall. "They confused him with a Heavenborn and wanting to keep his secret, Gravis just went along with it. Along the way, his Guild Master probably

noticed. Have you not thought that it was strange to invest everything you own into someone who will never ascend? Would you do that? Probably not."

The Guild Master walked to a window and looked outside into the sky with a smirk while the Vice-Guild Masters tried to process all the implications. "What would happen if the Heaven Sect found out that Gravis had a Will-Aura in the Body Tempering Realm? They would immediately try to kill him with all their power," he said.

"Having to keep up the façade, Gorn and Gravis decide to tell everyone that he was a Heavenborn. Someone from the Heaven Sect arrives, and they successfully scam him. Now, everyone believes he is a Heavenborn, because how could the Heaven Sect make such a mistake?" his grin grew even smugger.

"But," started the first Vice-Guild Master. "The Heaven Sect would never allow someone like him to join them. Heaven would strike him down!"

The Guild Master put his hand on his chin in thought. "Normally, yes, but for some reason, Heaven does not want to kill Gravis, or maybe," he grinned at Heaven, "it can't kill him. For some reason, it can't directly interfere, so it uses a scheme to send him to his enemies to uncover his frightening potential. His enemies would kill him with all their power, and Heaven would finally be rid of this eyesore." The Guild Master turned around to the other two. "Doesn't that sound familiar?"

The Vice-Guild Masters already realized what he meant. This was what had happened just now. A shiver ran down their spine. They had nearly jumped head-first into a senseless death!

"But," continued the Guild Master, as he turned back to the window. "Heaven didn't expect Gravis to involuntarily tell us all his secrets. He wanted to keep them hidden, but the door had already publicized his lightning. He looked like an unprecedented threat to the Lightning Sect."

"This secret would have sent the Lightning Guild and Gravis into destruction. Yet, by involuntarily telling us his second secret, it saved him and our Lightning Guild. Isn't that ironic that a mistake brought him and us close to death, but another mistake saved everyone?"

The Vice-Guild Masters completely understood the situation by now. Could they trust the words of a young Heavenborn when they said that they would repay them in the future? No, the Heavenborn would fall into complacency since they couldn't ascend, and their personality would change. Any promise was worthless coming from them.

Yet, what about a promising cultivator with a supremely powerful Will-Aura? With a strong will came conviction, and with conviction came steadiness. Cultivators with such a firm will would not betray their own convictions. They would do what they said, and they would not fall into complacency. After all, there was still a higher world out there.

Gravis would keep his promise, and there was virtually no chance that Gravis would become their enemy in the future if he said so. The sacrifice of their Lightning Guild would have been absolutely senseless. It would have been a lose-lose situation.

"So," said the first Vice-Guild Master after a long pause. "What do we do now?" he asked.

The Guild Master turned to him. "Nothing. Everything remains the same. Gravis is officially still a Heavenborn, and he is part of the Heaven Sect. We won't commit to any rash actions. Just continue like today never happened."

"But," he shouted. "Heaven won't take this lying down. At some point in the future, Heaven will manage to either publicize Gravis' Will-Aura or will force him to leave the Heaven Sect. He won't be able to remain in the Heaven Sect for long."

"When that time arrives, we will continue acting as if we have not heard about any of those two secrets. We will set out a bounty for him to uphold justice, but we won't sacrifice our whole guild. As long as we don't throw our lives away, we will get something either way."

The two Vice-Guild Masters looked at each other and nodded in agreement.

"Then let's do it like this."

And with this, Heaven's scheme had been broken due to a mistake from Gravis, and his life had been saved. Gravis would never know that he had been incredibly close to death. Heaven's schemes were profound and hidden. Yet, it still failed in the end.

Heaven was not happy at all right now.

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Chapter 128: Exchange List

Gravis never found out that Heaven nearly got him. Ironically enough, his personal need to come clean with the Lightning Guild had saved his life. So, Gravis simply continued his life in the Heaven Sect.

When he returned to the Heaven Sect, he immediately asked to look at the exchange list. Doing missions granted an exchangeable currency inside the Heaven Sect, the same as every other sect or guild. Did the whole south-eastern branch of the Heaven Sect only have this one saber and the Heaven's Balance Cultivation Technique? Of course not! They had a lot of wealth and offered a plethora of different things for exchange.

The Heaven Sect obviously didn't accept regular currency in exchange for their resources. Their storage was already full of gold and Energy Stones. Why would they need more of that? People needed to exchange Mission Points for treasures. Every single mission granted a specific number of Mission Points, and Gravis had just finished four missions at once.

On top of that, due to the Heaven's Balance Cultivation Technique, Gravis' Energy had increased by a total of 30%. Two of the criminals had been on the same level as Gravis, so they each gave Gravis a total of 10% of his currently required Energy to get to the next level. The other two only gave him 5% each. After adding those 10% to the other 20%, Gravis' Energy requirements to get to the next level of Energy Gathering were reduced by 30%.

If Gravis only cultivated via meditation inside the Heaven Sect, he would need two months to reach the fifth level of Energy Gathering. Yet, because of the 30% of Energy and the week of "relaxation", he would only need to meditate for one month to get to the next level. Of course, he would rather not train in seclusion since that would not increase his battle experience or will.

So, Gravis looked at the exchange table. The Heaven Sect was oozing with treasure, so there had to be something interesting in there. Gravis saw that he could exchange his mission points into Energy Stones. The reward for the execution missions depended on the strength of the target. Executing someone on the second level of Energy Gathering gave the executioner 100 points, and they doubled with each increase in level of the target.

Gravis had a total of 1,200 points right now, and the exchange rate of Mission Points to Energy Stones was 25 to 1. If Gravis used all of his Mission Points to exchange for Energy Stones, he would get 48 Energy Stones. That would equate to 75% of the required Energy to reach level five of Energy Gathering. With those stones, Gravis would have no issue in reaching the fifth level of Energy Gathering in a single day.

Yet, before Gravis decided to get the stones, he looked through the other treasures. Gravis could see a lot of weapons and even armor sets. He had not seen good armor sets yet in this lower world, but they were bound to exist. Armor sets were a logical counter to weapons, after all. Of course, due to the higher requirement for materials, armor sets were more expensive than weapons.

Gravis could only afford a single armor set from the list right now, but this single armor set was already pretty incredible. It had the ability to nullify any element at the fifth rank or lower. Since most people almost always concentrated on one element, their elemental resistance for other elements was basically zero. A fire disciple at the second level could heavily injure Gravis if they hit him with one of their fire-based attacks, even though Gravis was at the fourth level.

Gravis thought about the armor set for a while. In a one-on-one fight, this armor set would be useless because only regular opponents at the seventh level or outstanding opponents at the sixth level were his match. The armor set wouldn't help much in that case.

Yet, it was incredibly useful for group fights. Gravis thought back to the battle on the tree. Resisting the lightning hadn't been an issue for Gravis, but he had to resort to guerilla tactics to fight the Fire Guild. If he had had that armor set in the battle, he could simply charge into the Fire Guild. The fireballs would've been useless on him.

Gravis preferred the armor set over the Energy Stones. In his mind, increasing one's strength was not a problem. He just had to kill more people or beasts. Yet, increasing one's defense was nearly impossible. He could always advance his Realm, but he couldn't always increase his defense.

Gravis resisted his greed for the armor set and continued looking through the exchange list. Gravis also found multiple Formation Arrays, and he also saw a familiar one. The Formation Array that had the ability to contain experts at the peak of Energy Gathering was also exchangeable. When Gravis saw the price, he inhaled deeply.

5,000 Mission Points!

That equated to killing a person at the eighth level of Energy Gathering! No wonder the Lightning Guild had only given one of those to their division in Earth Town. Gravis also saw other Formation Arrays. Most of them were different kinds of attacks of varying strength. One would only need to crush the jade token, and an attack would shoot forward.

Those Formation Arrays cost half of the reward that an execution of someone of the corresponding level would bring. For example: Executing someone at the eighth level of Energy Gathering would grant the executioner 6,400 Mission Points. A Formation Array with a full-power attack of someone at the eighth level would then cost 3,200 Mission Points.

Gravis guessed that he would probably need two such Formation Arrays to kill someone at the eighth level of Energy Gathering. The first attack would be to exhaust the Energy and to weaken the person, while the second attack would end the fight. Like that, the reward would be equal to the cost.

Could someone abuse this to gain Energy with the Heaven's Balance Cultivation Technique? Sadly not. The technique worked by disrupting the balance in the target's Energy center. The technique was infused into the user's attacks, and if someone died to something else, they wouldn't get marked by the technique. Thus, no Energy would be released into the surroundings.

Gravis also found some pills that increased a specific aspect of a body permanently. If Gravis took those pills, he might regain the advantage of his body. As his Realm increased, his body would grow more useless. At the third level, his body alone allowed him to fight someone one Realm higher. At the fourth level, his body only made him incredibly strong on the same level. At the fifth level, the power of his body would be barely noticeable.

As Gravis continued browsing through the exchange list, he saw more and more things that he wanted to buy. After several minutes, Gravis arrived at the technique section. He saw several books describing different uses of different elements and also some Martial Arts created for Energy Gathering experts. Sadly, those techniques were very underdeveloped and didn't make use of the Energy very well.

Yet, when Gravis saw one of the techniques, he stopped and looked at it more closely. The technique was also inside his budget.

Pre-Forming: 1,000 Mission Points.

Gravis read the description and understood what the technique was about and why it had this weird name. The technique allowed someone to push their Energy into their mind.

Normally, people could only form their Spirit at the ninth level of Energy Gathering, at the earliest. In order to influence the Spirit, the Energy had to reach a sufficient density. Before it reached that density, the Spirit wouldn't react to the Energy.

This technique used the will of the person to condense the Energy in their mind. Sadly, the Energy condensation properties only worked inside the mind of the user. As soon as the condensed Energy left the user's mind, it would go back to its usual density. It was impossible to exploit the technique to create an attack stronger than the Realm of the user.

With the ability to condense Energy, people could attack the Spirit Forming Realm earlier than usual. The prerequisite was that the will had to be strong enough to support such density. This was no issue for Gravis.

Why was this technique so cheap? It was because there was no sense in having this technique. If someone condensed their Spirit, their Energy Vortex would grow stable, and their Energy wouldn't be

able to further condense anymore. Their foundation would become unstable, and they would be the weakest Spirit Forming expert that had ever existed. What was the point of that?

Yet, when Gravis had seen the technique, a reckless but brilliant plan formed in his mind.

'This could save my life in the future,' he thought.

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Chapter 129: The Power of Pre-Forming

Gravis received his Pre-Forming technique under the confused eyes of Aion. Aion couldn't understand why Gravis would want such a useless technique, but Gravis used his own points, so there was nothing that Aion could say about it.

Gravis read through the technique and learned it in under a day since it was not that complicated to perform. He quickly started using the technique to form his Spirit. Gravis moved his Energy according to the way that the book described and noticed a small spot of Energy appearing on his forehead.

The Energy in that one spot continued growing denser as Gravis put in more Energy. After nearly one hour, the dot reached a sufficient density of Energy, and no more Energy could be put into it. Gravis had to use up his whole Energy storage just to create this single dot.

When the dot had been fully created, his mind started resonating with the Energy, and the Energy dot got slowly absorbed by his mind. When the Energy dot was fully absorbed, Gravis felt a slight headache. It felt like something was pressing into the side of his skull from the inside.

Gravis knew that compressing the Energy took a certain amount of will, and he also knew that breaking into the Spirit Forming Realm took even more will. Yet, why was such a firm will necessary?

For the condensing of the Energy, one needed a strong will in order to build enough pressure to force the compression. Yet, why did the Spirit Forming Realm need an even stronger will, even though people at the peak of Energy Gathering Realm had already compressed their Energy to the maximum?

Gravis hadn't known why that was necessary until now. Gravis had only put one point of compressed Energy into his head, and he already had a headache. Was this enough to form his Spirit? Definitely not! It needed a lot more Energy. So, when more Energy got shoved into the Spirit, more pressure would be created, and therefore, a stronger headache would occur.

Gravis looked at the size of the Energy dot inside of his head and also calculated how much Energy it would take to fill his head completely. Gravis guessed that one would probably need a Will-Aura to resist the pain at that point.

He also felt that he could move his Energy away from his mind again. The Energy would leave his mind and regain its former density. If he wanted to put more Energy into his mind, he would first need to re-compress it.

"So that's why Heaven had planned for me to reach the Spirit Forming Realm smoothly," Gravis muttered to himself. If everyone needed a Will-Aura to form their Spirit, Gravis' Will-Aura wouldn't be anything special anymore. He guessed that the strength of his Will-Aura, when he had been in the Proxy-Lightning Guild, would only have been above average for a Spirit Forming expert.

Gravis had created his Will-Aura in his homeworld. At that time, he had a will that was strong enough to support a breakthrough into the Spirit Forming Realm. It had been a newly created Will-Aura at that time and had still been in its infancy.

Gravis' will grew stronger by fighting the demonic beasts in the Hunting Guild, and it grew stronger again in the bloodbath of the Basin of Nature. If he were to compare his Will-Aura at that time, to newly advanced people in the Spirit Forming Realm, it would probably be considered above average.

Yet, what about the people who remained longer in that Realm? What about the people who were a level higher in that Realm? Gravis guessed that his Will-Aura probably would've only been average. With an average Will-Aura, he would lose one of his two most prominent advantages. Together with his lack of karmic luck, Gravis would probably not have any chances of rising again.

If Heaven's plan had succeeded, Gravis would be forced into stagnation. He also would have never gotten his Destruction Lightning. Ironically enough, Gravis' second-worst experience in this lower world had increased his Will-Aura tremendously and also allowed him to get his Destruction Lightning. His worst experience was, of course, his killing of Gorn.

With the subsequent fights with the Lightning Guild and Fire Guild, Gravis' Will-Aura had increased again. He guessed that it could be considered powerful even in the middle of Spirit Forming. But was Spirit Forming his goal? Of course not! Gravis' will could never grow strong enough! There was still the middle world and the higher world before he could cultivate in his homeworld.

Was his will already strong enough to reach this elusive stage that he heard his father shout in the past? The Realm called Star God was beyond Gravis' comprehension right now. Was his will already strong enough to become a Star God? Definitely not!

So, what about the headache that this technique forced on Gravis? Gravis was actually happy about this headache! Pain was also a form of tempering for one's will. On top of that, Gravis had also found another use of the technique.

Gravis' Energy storage was still empty after pushing the Energy into his head, and with a thought, the Energy inside his head moved back into his body.

WHOOSH!

The condensed Energy expanded and filled his body. Gravis quickly used his Energy vortex to absorb the Energy, and his empty storage was nearly completely filled again.

Gravis smirked. "I might not be able to use the compressed Energy as an attack, but I can use it to refill my empty storage. It was just as I had thought," Gravis said to himself in excitement. With this technique, Gravis could basically externally store his Energy and retrieve it whenever he wanted. He only had to resist a headache as payment, which also tempered his will.

"The only downside is that I need to be careful not to break into the Spirit Forming Realm by accident," he concluded. "Why did no one else think about this? It seems so logical."

It did seem surprising that this use was not explained in the introduction of the technique, but who would ever even think about using this technique? No one wanted to break into the Spirit Forming Realm before reaching the peak of Energy Gathering. The technique had only been a thought

experiment of some Heavenborn a couple of hundred years ago. He hadn't thought much about it and just created it when he was bored.

What about other Heavenborn? They were too busy thinking about their Realm and material wealth to waste their thoughts on something like that. Their way to Heaven was already set in stone, and they needed no help in reaching that. Who would care about such a useless technique? No Heavenborn was so obsessed with strength and fighting techniques as Gravis.

If the outside world heard about this technique's benefits, the whole world would probably be turned upside down. This would revolutionize the way people in the Energy Gathering Realm fought with each other!

Gravis decided that he would spend the next couple of days, or maybe even weeks, compressing his Energy and storing it in his mind. The headache would increase his will, and Gravis would theoretically have a nearly infinite storage of Energy. With this cheap and seemingly useless technique, he gained another decisive advantage over others.

[Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

Chapter 130: Person From the Past

It had been two weeks since Gravis started using the Pre-Forming technique, and every day, he concentrated on pushing more Energy into his mind. The headache continually increased, and Gravis now felt a constant, intense throbbing in his head. His mind was only half-filled with Energy, but that was still way faster than he had initially believed.

Gravis thought that breaking through into the Spirit Forming Realm would take, at least, as long as getting to the tenth level of Energy Gathering. Apparently, he had been mistaken. Gravis guessed that if he were on the tenth level of Energy Gathering, he could rise into the Spirit Forming Realm in less than a day. It seemed like the bottleneck for Spirit Forming was more about the will and less about increasing the cultivator's Energy or power.

On this day, Gravis walked around the Heaven Sect, trying to distract himself from his headache. It was so strong that he involuntarily always focused on the pain, which made focusing on other things difficult.

What Gravis didn't know, was that people who attempted to break into the Spirit Forming Realm would do that in one sitting, and if they failed, they would disperse the Energy in their mind. No one wanted to run around with a constant headache. What was the point of that?

In the time when Gravis' Energy was regenerating, he concentrated on condensing his Will-Aura further, outside of the guild, of course. He didn't want Aion to notice that he didn't use Heavenly Pressure since Gravis guessed that it was probably impossible to condense the Heavenly Pressure.

After a lot of training, he finally managed to condense it on a single living being. In the past, when he condensed his Will-Aura, it always included a radius around the target. Now, his Will-Aura finally managed to completely concentrate on a single target, and it should be impossible to condense it any further.

Why was Gravis walking around the Heaven Sect today, instead of continuing to condense his Spirit? That was because Aion had called for him. Gravis guessed that it was probably another mission. After he

had done the previous ones, he hadn't gotten a new one yet. Apparently, there weren't many criminals worthy of prosecution.

Gravis was going to knock on the door to Aion's office, but he stopped himself when he remembered how Aion acted the last time. Instead, he simply opened the door and walked inside. Just like he had expected, Aion was still lying on the balcony while drinking from some beverage. When Gravis saw that, he got reminded of Forneus, his old teacher from his homeworld.

"You wanted to see me?" asked Gravis as he walked closer.

Aion drank from his beverage, and a dossier floated over to Gravis, who caught it. "I got a new mission for you," Aion said as he turned to Gravis. "And this one is a doozy!"

'A doozy?' Gravis hadn't heard this word before, but he could guess what it meant. He read through the dossier, and slowly his brows furrowed. He felt a mix of shock, confusion, a little bit of rage, and some nostalgia.

The target was the former Guild Master of the third Proxy-Wind Guild. Her full name was Wendy Demer. She was one of the Guild Masters back when Gravis participated in the entrance exams for the Elemental Guilds. He still remembered how she threw over 4,000 failed participants into the horizon. "In what way is this mission a doozy?" asked Gravis.

For once, Aion didn't seem as casual and walked into his office. "This mission is special because she has killed a Heavenborn once," he explained.

Gravis completely forgot about his droning headache and entirely focused on Aion now. "Did she simply kill one, or did she survive an execution mission?" he asked.

Aion walked over to his desk and leaned on it. "She was once the target of an execution mission," he explained as he crossed his arms. "Do you remember how she killed over 4,000 people in the entrance exams for the Elemental Guilds? You should have been there when it happened."

Gravis remembered that she threw around 4,250 people into the horizon, but he felt shocked when he realized that over 4,000 of them had been killed due to that. He hadn't thought that she had been so ruthless. Gravis nodded at Aion.

Aion nodded back. "Heaven is not a fan of massacring thousands of promising youngsters. Some people die, it happens, but slaughtering them in those numbers is not okay. Because of that, we sent over an executioner. She was on the seventh level of Energy Gathering while the executioner was on the sixth."

"Surprisingly, she was the first person to survive an execution mission in over ten years," Aion remarked with a bit of praise. "You know how powerful our Heavenly Pressure is, so you should also know how impressive it is for her to actually kill the executioner."

Gravis could only nod in confirmation. The Heavenly Pressure of a Heavenborn on the sixth level should be about as intense as Gravis' Will-Aura if he didn't compress it. That was an impressive advantage since an enemy only one level higher than the user could only release about 50% of their strength under it.

Aion walked away from his desk again and looked outside the window, with his arms behind his back. "According to the rules, we pardoned her crime since she had survived the mission. There had to be a

reason for her to survive, and Heaven wanted her to remain alive. She wouldn't have survived otherwise."

Aion turned around and smirked at Gravis. "And now I know why she had been spared. Heaven kept her alive just for you! Everything became clear to me when I saw what she was doing in recent weeks. You should also know the reason since you have read the dossier." Aion pointed at the paper in Gravis' hand.

Gravis furrowed his brows and nodded. How couldn't he understand? Yet, he was still incredibly confused about Wendy's actions. In Gravis' mind, those actions made no sense. What reason could she possibly have to do this?

The dossier reported that starting about three weeks ago, Wendy started running around all the towns, cities, and Elemental Guilds. That in itself was no problem, but wherever she went, she would loudly denounce Gravis. She would call him a coward, a filthy traitor, a weakling, a teacher-killer, and many similar things.

Talking bad about a member of the Heaven Sect wouldn't be persecuted, but it was different when it was done in this grand style. Her voice would echo throughout the entire towns and cities, and she would even pay people from other guilds to shout such statements in their respective guilds.

'Is it because of Gorn? Did they have some kind of special relationship? But I haven't heard anything about that!' Gravis thought. 'She also didn't seem stupid, and I could also feel that she was different from all the other Proxy-Guild Masters. She felt like she was actually leading them. She should know that I would be sent on a mission to...'

Gravis' eyes widened. 'So that's her plan! For some reason, she wants to kill me! That's also why she only denounced me and said nothing about the other Heavenborn. She explicitly wanted to kill me.' Gravis' eyes narrowed. 'Now, that's interesting!'

"Catch!" Gravis heard a shout from Aion and saw a sack flying towards him, which he quickly caught. Gravis looked inside and saw a lot of Energy Stones. "She is still in the seventh level of Energy Gathering, but it's possible that she already made a breakthrough into the eighth," Aion explained.

"The rules must be followed!" he said with a severe tone that didn't allow for counterarguments. "You should be close to the fifth level of Magic Gathering now. Use some stones and make a breakthrough into the fifth level. Also," Aion said as he threw over a jade token.

Gravis looked at the jade token and realized that this token would activate the same Formation Array that the Lightning Guild tried to use against him on the tree. This Formation Array was worth 5,000 Mission Points!

"After you make the breakthrough, you will go to the Wind Guild and fulfill your mission. If you realize that she has reached the eighth level, you will use this Formation Array to fall back. Then, you will use the remaining stones to make another breakthrough. After that, you will kill her, but you are not allowed to use the Formation Array to help you win!" Aion explained.

"You are also not allowed to use the stones nor the Formation Array if she has not broken through yet! We will check what really happened, and I expect those things back from you in the case that she didn't break through!" Aion said in seriousness.

Gravis looked at the Jade Token and the Formation Array and nodded at Aion. After that, he left Aion's office and went back to his room to reach the fifth level of Energy Gathering.

While cultivating, Gravis narrowed his eyes and thought about Wendy.

"I wonder what this is all about."