

Lightning Is the Only Way

Chapter 17: Beginning

Only a couple of seconds passed between Gravis left and returned. If one didn't pay attention, they wouldn't even have noticed him leaving and returning. The youngsters still sat at the walls, exhausted. Some had noticed that Gravis had left and returned, but they couldn't care about that right now. Orpheus just looked at Gravis with a grin. Gravis didn't look exhausted or injured and walked back to Orpheus.

"Admit it, the fight was different than you thought," he commented with a smirk.

Gravis only nodded.

"A strong will can suppress people and beasts with weaker wills. They will feel more afraid and will fight more defensively. Without an indomitable will to kill, you will be suppressed and can't show your full fighting strength. Some might not even be able to fight at all." Orpheus was speaking with a severe tone. This was important knowledge that Gravis had to learn. "At some point in a cultivator's life, nearly everyone will have a will-aura. Of course, that only counts for cultivators that fight for their own resources."

Orpheus lifted a finger and pointed to the sky. "For example, about 98% of our living siblings don't have a will-aura, even though their strength is completely incomparable to yours. If any of our siblings without a will-aura, fought someone a major realm lower than them, who had one, chances are that they would get mercilessly massacred."

"You can only increase your will-aura by battling others with similar strength to yours. So, someone with a strong will-aura has also fought lots of people with similar strengths. This means that a will-aura also shows their battle experience." Orpheus pointed at Gravis. "In your cultivation realm, will-auras are extremely rare. Very few can find so many similarly strong enemies in such a short time."

Orpheus' eyes narrowed. "But you need to be careful! You might have gotten a start bonus with your fights, but if you don't keep honing your will-aura, you will lose that advantage. Let me give you a piece of honest advice. Your goal is not to become strong, but to become the strongest. If you want to reach your goal, you need pressure, real pressure. If you just raise your cultivation realm, you will start losing battles with enemies in your realm. And if you start losing battles, you will lose fights over resources, you desperately need."

"This is exactly why the cultivation journey is so dangerous. You need battle-strength to get resources that increase your battle-strength. It's a cycle. As soon as your battle-

strength or resources diminish, your journey is likely to end. Either by not getting resources to rise in your realm or by dying. If you ever change your goal in life, you only need to stop looking for strength. Stagnant cultivators are no danger to other cultivators and are not enclosing on their resources, so they don't care."

Gravis listened carefully. He had already known most of the things he heard, but the explanation helped him combine his scattered knowledge into a whole concept of strength. As strange as it sounded, he realized that enemies and cultivation resources were, kind of, the same thing. If you fight your enemies, your battle strength increases, and if you get resources, your cultivation realm increases. Both things would increase his strength, but one was obviously more dangerous than the other.

Gravis bowed lightly to Orpheus to express his sincere gratitude. "Thank you, brother Orpheus. I had already noticed that you had given me lots of resources in the form of enemies." Gravis looked deeply into Orpheus' smiling eyes to show his sincerity. "You have given me the best possible starting point. So, when I am strong enough, I will repay everything ten-fold."

Orpheus laughed and patted Gravis' shoulders heartily. "Don't mention it! We are family, and family needs to stick together. I didn't do this to expect some return from you. I only wanted to help my little brother." Orpheus patted the side of Gravis' shoulder. "Come on! Let's go drinking today. In one week, you will leave for a low-rank world. So, let's relax for a while." He pushed Gravis out the hall and followed him.

The other youngsters didn't know what to do. Forneus wasn't here, and Orpheus hadn't even looked at them.

A week passed, and Gravis didn't train during that time. There was a high chance that this would be the last time he could see his family. He spent his days with his brother, father, and mother. They were all happy for him, even though his mother also showed worry. After all, Gravis was her child, and she wanted nothing more than for him to be happy. Yet, she had also shown him her full support in his journey.

This week did wonders for Gravis' heart. In the last couple of months, he had sunk into a sea of bitterness and isolation. The realization that he would need to journey alone in the future had gnawed at him more than he thought. He had suppressed those feelings with ambition and rage, but that only held for so long. Eventually, the constant suppression would've killed his drive, and only emptiness would've remained. He finally realized that he wasn't alone. His whole family was absent of karmic luck, and they were all the same. His feeling of belonging increased.

Gravis stood lonely in an office, looking at the middle-aged office clerk. It was a small office made out of stone, and nothing else could be said about it. The clerk noticed that someone had arrived, but didn't look up.

"Name?" he asked, obviously bored.

"Gravis."

"Your full name," the clerk commented rudely.

"Uhm..." Gravis didn't know how to answer that. He didn't know his last name. He wasn't sure if he even had a last name. How was he supposed to answer that? "I, kind of... don't know?" He said unsurely.

The clerk furrowed his brows. "What do you mean you don't..." The clerk looked up at Gravis with annoyed eyes. Then, something caught his attention, and he looked at Gravis' ring. Now, he understood. "Oh... Oh! Yeah, that makes sense." The clerk looked back down at his papers and began to write down multiple things.

After a while, he looked back up. "Alright, all done, only one thing left. Which world?" he asked. Then he grinned. "Let me guess. You're going to an elemental world." Gravis only nodded. "Of course, you do. I would do the same thing with all that compatibility with the elements and stuff." He activated a small array formation on his desk, and a transparent screen appeared in the air. He clicked through some things. "Any specific preferences?"

Gravis shook his head. The clerk shrugged. "Alright, then I'll just choose one at random."

When Gravis heard that, a cold shiver ran down his back. "No, wait!" The clerk stopped and looked at him with confusion. "Please, let me see the list."

The clerk shrugged and turned the screen around. Gravis sighed in relief. 'That was close. If I let luck decide, I wouldn't even know how I died.'

Gravis went through the screen. It was already filtered so that it only showed unresearched elemental worlds. The leading theme of cultivation methods classified worlds. Worlds, where beasts reigned supreme, were called naturals worlds. Worlds, where people mainly cultivated with their weapons, were called battle worlds. Of course, there were more categories.

Elemental worlds, as the name implied, were worlds where cultivators mainly relied on cultivating a specific element to increase their strength. Gravis quickly chose one, received a card, and walked to the portal hall.

The hall was massive and grand with a one-hundred-meter-long formation in the middle. A similar clerk was operating the central formation. Gravis handed his card over, and the clerk opened a portal.

Gravis drew his saber, which he had received from Orpheus. It was one of the standard void-stone sabers. It would be useful in the body tempering realm, but it would absorb all of his energy when he reached the energy gathering realm. So, it was only useful until that point. He had to get a new one, later down the line.

With one last deep breath, Gravis stepped through the portal.

Gravis chose an elemental world for two reasons: First, he had high elemental synchronicity. Second, his goal was the most ambitious goal in existence. He wanted to trample upon Heaven!

And the best way was to steal Heaven's strongest weapon and use it for himself: The lightning element!

He had seen how Heaven only used the other elements to obstruct his father, while lightning was its actual weapon. If he could absorb or resist the lightning, Heaven would lose its strongest weapon. If he wanted to trample upon Heaven, then...

Gravis spoke with ambition.

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