

## Master 2391

### Chapter 2391: Path Of Firsts

"Is it right?" The whisper came from Aurora. Onyx had heard it with the mental

communication that he and the other serpents had begun to develop. While he had the skill, many of the serpents had begun to gain it since they did not communicate verbally. It was just part of their race.

Regardless, Onyx had the skill longer and the fact that all the younger serpents were getting it very early in their lives meant that it would be the primary way they would all communicate. Aurora just rarely used the skill since she had been close to Alice and captured some of Alice's tendencies. One being not speaking much.

"I think we made the right choice. Walker understands. I just had to do a lot more to figure it out myself." Onyx knew that Walker was not at all angry. While they all knew that some people would find their leaving to be wrong or hard, but that was fine. They would have to accept that while they took a new path.

"I knew that Alice and a few of the employers or even the others we all worked with might be angry and worried. Everyone accepted that risk through. They had done so because they wanted their entire race to have a history made by them and without the help of others.

Yes, Onyx and all of them had help from many to get where they were now. But they needed a legend or a moment where their race grew and stood alone. Onyx had thought that he needed to become a hero to be important and stand beside his family. Then he had thought he had to become a patriarch to be the leader of his race. Then he had believed that he had to strive for strength.

When in actuality, he had to unite all of them through actions. Take to the world and unite them with cooperation and growth in more than just surface level aspects. He had to grow together with them to make something that would never actually be physical which could be passed down to every serpent of their race forever.

"I am with you." Aurora trusted Onyx very much. Enough to throw herself against a massively dangerous amount of light mana. That risk had paid off with both of them being able to grow, she even began to grasp dark mana properly and spread her strength out. But she had also changed herself at a deeper level too, just as Onyx had.

"Thank you." Onyx focused on the shadows. Being with Mordant who was an expert in traveling through shadows had paid off a lot though. When Midnight had been training with Mordant, onyx had managed to be there here and there. This had given him deeper insight in to how Mordant used the shadows to protect him while moving vast distances through them. While Onyx knew he was far from moving vast distances, he could travel with many of the other serpents. While it was because they were the same affinities and also related by blood in a way as a race, this was still amazing. Right now, with all of their mana, they were already what would take many hours to get for any merchant away from Genesis.

"We are heading toward one of the larger and unexplored areas. I heard that there is one that is passed where we were helping with the ruins. Where there is a lot of light mana and also tall stones making large shadows."

This area was marked by one of the wind dragon elders who was exploring the lands and helping map makers. The area had been named the towering stones passage. The terrain was made of towering stones that had risen from the earth where it appeared an earthquake had once caused the land to crack. The result was a lot fewer trees, if any, and also large shadows or places where the sun hit constantly.

When it came to the balance of light and dark mana, it was ideal. They would all be able to grow a lot more than what they had been able to do in Genesis. Not because of the density of mana, it was actually less here. It was because of the balance between the two being the focus allowing for all of the hundred serpents with Onyx to be able to focus on their natural abilities.

This was a great place to explore for potential ruins and also to train. They could establish themselves a legacy by training here. There were many more serpents that had decided not to come. For one reason or another. None of them were thought of as less, only that they had different priorities. Some had taken binds with the tamers, they had accepted a different path already.

Others had decided on professions and managed to get classes. They did not need to focus on other things because they had their own independent paths. Right now, these hundred young serpents were not able to have classes because they had been undecided and focused on just growing up a little.

When they had heard Onyx speak of their legacy and the future of their race, they had been inspired. They had wished to stroke their own actions in to the history of their species. If even to be remembered for a moment, they wanted to be like Onyx and tread a path of firsts.

Their travel was swift and only a day was needed for them to get to the start of this land where the rocks and dryness had subsided to be more mixed with some greenery. While some would feel this land was still barren to a degree, Onyx felt that it was a perfect place. A land lost to the broken aspects of the world and returned to be able to develop with the world as it grew again.

He could sense that the dark and light mana competed for attention here. The shadows stretched and in those areas, grasses didn't grow as much. Other plants bloomed through. In the areas where no shadow would fall, larger trees or bushes grew, but the darker leafed plants in the shadows didn't even come near. Clear lines with clear reasoning.

He could also sense more. With the fact that he had better united two skills using his two affinities, Onyx's senses for those affinities grew deeper.

The flow of light and dark manas were strict here to change with the sun and the night. It had liens. But in small places the two overlapped allowing for different plants to grow which were not anywhere else.

A small patch of herbs which he had never seen. Right at the base of a broken stone cliffside. The sunlight would hit it partially while the shadows would somewhat overlap. Changing through the day in strength but both never perfectly fading.

These herbs were very enticing. They seemed like they would taste good and also that they could help them all. But before any of that, "everyone, this is the place I want to explore. We can train here. We can eat the herbs. We can find the secrets of this area and make it our

legacy."

The unexplored towering stone passage was massive in size but held a lot for them to discover. Whether the monsters here would be dangerous would come with the fact that they had to face them together. Whether the herbs were valuable to them was what they would test. The manas they accepted would be up to them.

There was nothing here to compete with when it came to other races. Just them and their goals before them. Exactly what Onyx wanted so that they could establish who they were.

"There's a lot here we can explore. I expect everyone to stay close and we will move carefully. First, we should find a place we can rest after we explore the area. I can sense stronger flows of light and dark mana. We can follow that to a better place to rest for a few days."

As much as Onyx wanted to go off alone, he didn't. Instead he took to his full size dwarfing the other young serpents and slowly slithered through the area. Enjoying the feeling of the dual manas perfectly suited to him.

He also caught the slightly stronger flow of light and dark mana coming from further away in the towering stone passage. The slight hint that there was a purer set of manas mixing behind his sight that he and they could use. "Follow me."

No one doubted him and they checked the plants and moved in and out of the shadows. Curiosity and caution being their focus while mental communication spread to explain what they were finding and what they were feeling. All gathering as experience for their growth. Uniting them even more than before.

---

#### Chapter 2392: Towering Rock Passage

"Another patch of herbs?" Onyx was drawn toward the half shadow patch of herbs. The dark green leaves had white stripes on them. They were larger leaves which made them perfect for casting their own shadow here and there.

However, they were also blooming with white and black flowers together. Some helped the flow of dark mana and others held the flow of light mana. This was an interesting herb that Onyx was sure Remy would be very interested in since it was a balanced herb that she would not need to work hard to make balanced.

This would in turn allow for her to make a dual affinity potion. Potentially making one of the affinity potions for the serpents that Onyx had wanted to have for the younger serpents. Especially those who hatched with dual affinities already awakened. Not only the serpents, but everyone in Genesis with the dark and light mana dual affinities.

The herbs themselves though, had been eaten whenever they were found because of the serpents couldn't help themselves. The two manas and the herb's fragrances were ideal for them. This had made Onyx stop everyone and make sure they all got an equal share.

Luckily, he had two young serpents who had managed to learn a basic appraisal skill and one who even learned Walker's all around appraisal skill. While both were not perfect, they came together to work and keep getting answers for what they had found here in the towering stone passage.

'Dual cone lily

Over the years, the white cone and the black cone lilies grew closer and closer due to their environments being stuck together instead of perfectly isolated in the sun and the shadow. Due to them growing closer and closer, they stopped battling each other with their manas and eventually began to intertwine their roots.

Not the root balls and bulbs formed can only survive together and will only grow in partial sunlight and shadow. This is to balance and attract both light and dark manas to grow two different flowers which will attract the flickering bees. The honey bee is a monster known to be of various affinities and live in many different environments. The flickering bee is one that has light affinity drones that go out and collect nectar from various plants.

The dark affinity warrior bees will defend the hive and even use their dark affinity stingers to inject potent dark affinity mana to decay enemies. Often, the hives will be perfect growing places for the dual cone lily since they have so much nutrients from rotting monster bodies...' While they did not get a ton of new and detailed information, the pair of young appraisal serpents had managed to anchor themselves with this. They had found information that helped everyone and stopped anyone from worrying about what herbs they might eat.

They also allowed for everyone to know that they might encounter a hive of flickering honey bees. While Onyx didn't see the full reason they were known as flickering, if they had light and dark mana, it could be because they could make themselves hard to spot and see in general using the light and dark manas they possess.

Just knowing about one monster that could cause them trouble was enough. Especially since there was the risk that they could still harm the youngest of the serpents because of potent dark manas that they would not be able to process or resist right now in their training.

However, the flickering bees were not the only issues that had been found. More plants with risks were living here.

There were plants that had become monsters, or they had always been monsters. Whatever the case, they were there and a problem to deal with since they could easily pierce the scales of every serpent that was not Onyx or Aurora.

'Shadow needle cluster

This monster is a plant type monster known to grow in shadows. It will find places where its roots and leaves can grow and absorb constant dark mana. From there it will grow long vines up stones and trees to patch a flower on to high above it.

Then the flower senses prey below it and near the roots and leaves of its main body, it will shoot out clusters of dark needles that decay the body of the prey hit. From there the prey will die and become nutrients for the main roots that the prey was near.

The leaves can be used to make natural cloaks to defend against dark mana but the needles will be good temporary throwing weapons since they will bleed out their dark mana as they are no longer attached to the shadow needle cluster...'

While this was a good thing, they all knew that it was dangerous. Being more vigilant was perfect training. An ideal way to slow all of the young serpents taking the lead for their race as more vigilant.

However, the danger was always a worry. Aurora had already healed five younger serpents to save them when they had moved too close to a shadow needle cluster. It was terrifying since the dark mana was very potent due to this monster always living in the shadows and absorbing very high amounts of dark mana.

The opposing light needle cluster also existed. Onyx himself had faced this one and broken it off of the opposing stone cliff face he saw the first shadow needle cluster on. Two monsters of the same species but growing in different environments.

Luckily they had not seen a dual affinity one at all. That would have made things a little more changing since they would need to figure out how to heal wounds from it. Also, it would be living right where the dual cone lily grew.

"There it is again. That feeling." Onyx turned his head from the dual cone lily patch some young serpents were eating from. Aurora also noticed it too this time.

The dark and light mana in concentration that Onyx had been following was close enough that Aurora could feel it too now. The density of the dark and light mana was a high enough to be out of the normal for the herbs that Onyx had thought were the source before.

It was also near a few larger stone outcroppings. They towered up casting longer shadows and being hit by more light through out the day. Clearly, this could be the most central place within the towering stone passage.

On the other side would be the continuation of the desert they knew of already existing here. It was odd that this area changes right before but Onyx didn't think of that too much since the world and existence were mysterious no matter what.

The further that he looked and started to travel toward, the lore he caught on. It wasn't herbs or a nest of monsters. It was something else that he had just started to guess about. "Aurora, do you see how those stones towering above every other stone are all organized in a circle? I believe that's a natural rune formation a dark and light naturally occurring rune that is caused by something Brother already dealt with once."

The serpents all stopped and paid close attention. Aurora also looked carefully at Onyx because she somewhat guess what he was thinking.

The density of mana made sense. A natural rune would definitely form in a place with a lot of mana of the same kind existing. Especially if the place had been returned to proper flow with the world recently. And especially if the bridges to the elemental planes had opened and begun to send mana to the world too.

"There's a dungeon in the middle. I have a feeling." Trusting his instincts was normal for Onyx. He had before and been successful. He also knew that Walker and Midnight did the same successfully. They were instincts for a reason. And unseen and unspoken connection to all that

was around you.

"Call for help?" Aurora was sure that Onyx would want to get Walker here. To get anyone over here that he could. If this was really a dungeon it would be something they couldn't handle

alone.

"We can communicate it. But we will journey within. If there are two naturally forming runes around it, they are perfectly balancing the manas that leave it. We are the perfect ones to

handle exploring it."

Everyone knew that there was a line of risk. They could call for help and wait. But they could explore without saying a word. Or they can call for help and begin exploring to establish their

legacy in this dungeon.

"We will explore this and make it the dungeon of our race. We will establish it in our name and make this the first village where we can train and grow. It is a perfect land and perfect home to journey to for the young as they are born."

....

Chapter 2393: Dance Of Light And Dark

"Stay back a little while I check this area." Onyx was the one taking the lead. Not because he was entirely worried about the dangers, but because if there was a danger he wanted to be the one that took on the danger himself. He knew that if one of the younger sperents was harmed that it would break the morale of everyone.

He also was using his high ability to sense the dark and light mana around. He could feel the balance was very unique in comparison to any other place he had been. the flow of light mana was directing pushing back against the dark mana. One side had a pillar of stone that cast a shadow entirely.

The other pillars of stone which stood high would only cast their shadows in a similar direction. Making a naturally occurring circle of shadows depending on the time. But part of those areas was always in shadow which allowed for the accumulation of dark mana.

In contrast, the other side also always had light mana which would be standing out compared to the shadows. This natural formation of rocks and the way that night and day cycled made this entire place perfect for there to be the naturally forming light and dark runes.

However, the large central pillar was one that cast a shadow at all angles depending on the time of day or didn't cast a shadow at all. It was very interesting to Onyx who could feel the changes in the heart and plants around him based on what mana they had absorbed for what could have been years.

Just with the addition of this place back to the world it was sure that many amazing places just like it might be out there. The ways that Onyx had learned about the elemental planes from Walker and the others had been a clear example of how manas collided.

The places called the borders of the elemental planes gave birth to unique areas where many dual or even triple elemental beings could be born. Whether that meant they were herbs, monsters, or intelligent races didn't matter. It was a place where unique everything existed. The world within itself was one of those places so to speak. The way that Onyx saw it, the world was the perfect mix and center of all elemental manas and all manas in general. Therefore, this place was here not only because it was a place where light mana and dark mana naturally came together, but because it gave way to new and unique forms of life itself.

That was on his mind as he saw the familiar herbs he had seen the entire time. Also when he noticed the pure white and almost blinding rune floating in the air. Looking directly opposite of it, he saw a shimmering shadow of deep darkness in a rune form as well.

"The two runes forming light and darkness naturally occurring." His mental whisper was more to himself but he also realized that Aurora had not waited at all and was beside him even though he didn't want

her to slither in with him. There could have been more dangers than he wanted to risk with her being there.

"Look at the mana moving from them." She didn't let Onyx say anything else about how she was sticking to his side in this area they had yet to explore. Instead, she watched the light mana and dark mana moved in a natural circle and mingle. Pushing and pulling. It was like watching the densest mana they had seen in the world perform a perfect dance.

As the mana flowed, it eventually slowed and reached the center where it hit the central rock pillar which was not casting a shadow right now. The mana seemed to absorb and bounce back out seconds later. Providing what felt like a purifying effect.

Right in the center of the large stone where dark and light mana crystals grew from, Onyx and Aurora saw an opening. From what they had heard from others, this was very similar to the dungeon that had been found. However, instead of the dungeon forming in thin air, it was stuck to the pillar, helping to radiate and absorb mana in this naturally balanced place.

Where the dungeon could have broken the balance here, it helped instead. That meant that the will of existence or whatever it was had made this dungeon perfectly balanced in to what naturally happened here.

"I believe that inside that dungeon is a naturally mixed rune of light and dark. The perfect balance for us to study and learn from." Onyx didn't doubt his words or his theory. It just made so much sense right now.

"Then we find it." finding that Aurora was being so serious all the sudden and had even begun to watch the mana flowing around with a lot greater attention, Onyx felt that just being here was a perfect example of where his purple should grow.

"All of you come closer!" Onyx mentally shouted and found that most of the younger serpents had already crept closer in the shadows. He knew they were doing it, but if he were to act so strictly all the time then he knew they would fear the exploration they would begin to undergo.

"We are heading inside. I need those with the appropriate skills to appraise tube dungeon entrance. Others can secure the area. Once we have a camp we will call for assistance before heading inside."

## 'Dance of light and shadow dungeon

This dungeon will only open once a month for twenty four hours. This is due to the pure light and dark mana needed to open the dungeon properly. It comes from two naturally forming light and dark runes perfectly paired. This dungeon can be harvested of any herbs, materials, and even have the eggs of unique monsters taken from it.

While the dungeon is considered weak due to the constant state of opening, it will not entirely reset using mana every time it opens and closes. It will be altered and herbs or monsters can be added to it. This included crafted items able to withstand and absorb the light and dark dual manas.

This dungeon is extremely beneficial for those with dual light and dark affinities because the purer dark and light mana within are balanced allowing for it to be a natural guide to those learning about them...'

While the appraisal that Onyx was given did not share a lot of details, it reinforced his feelings and theories. He also knew that the inside would not be extremely dangerous since it did not have a level requirement. It also had a unique method of opening and closing.

But he already knew that mana was important. Dungeons were somewhat alive in a way. They ended mana. A month long rest meant that the dungeon needed the naturally occurring runes to feed it the mana it needed. Afterwards, it was open for a full day so that they could enter it.

This gave them all a month to prepare so that they would be able to enter the dungeon and explore. Be able to learn for a full day from the ways that the dark and light manas mixed themselves together in a more peaceful way than the methods of some mages who slammed the manas together violently to make more dangerous spells.

"The communication has been sent about us exploring and finding this new dungeon. Those who wish to enter will follow me!" Onyx saw that those with the appropriate skills were making camp and he had done what he needed. He also saw that Aurora was ready to proceed with a few of the heavenly serpents behind her looking anxiously at the flowing manas.

As he made his way inside the dungeon, he felt that the air itself became crisp. Not because it was cold, but because it had the balance of manas that worked with his body best. He also sensed that they did

not have a full twenty four hours to explore this. That they were limited to only eighteen until they were to be thrust out.

Whether this was some magical communication from the dungeon or his instincts because of how the world worked now, Onyx didn't mind. Eighteen hours was enough to explore and have a handle on what he could do. A good way to know what they would need to prepare for the next time they entered.

What they saw though, wasn't a lush green foremost or pillars of stone casting shadows. They found an entire world of black and white. Shrubs that were black leaves and trees completely white. Some mingled together to create unique plants that cast their own shadows which also seemed to be part light as well.

Their senses were full of what they could feel was mana and what they could see was physical. A perfect small world of just light and dark mana mixing to make up all the plants, ground,

and even in the air.

....

#### Chapter 2394: Mixed To Gray

It wasn't that the plants and earth itself were entirely made of dark mana. It was more so that they were so greatly full of it that they had changed appearance to match the dark and light mana. It wasn't even in complete opposition. It came together to make a perfect balance.

"This is perfect." Onyx spoke out to make it clear that just existing here would be beneficial to the dual affinity both he and every young serpent had had.

The fact that the manas were balanced and flowing calmly meant that the idea Onyx had about a naturally occurring dual affinity rune had to be true. His entire being was resonating with this space and that couldn't just be the dungeon. Instead, it had to be what was made within the dungeon.

They all knew that the dungeon needed the pure light and dark manas from the naturally occurring runes. Therefore, those manas had to go somewhere before being sent back in to the world when the dungeon was open to the world.

Just moving around, onyx could feel that the herbs, no, the plants themselves were all useful to him. Even if he were to eat the grass which was a mixture of gray as the light and dark manas within them mixed, he could absorb the manas within them. Allowing for his body to become more acclimated to uniting the light and dark mana.

This was saying a lot since Onyx had literally been through a large process changing his scales and creating a passive skill that was helping him become a better defender of everyone while also defining him as the leader of the race and future that the younger serpents could grow in

to.

Looking at the trees, the dark black bark would give way to the light mana streaks eventually becoming the younger and brighter pure white leaves sprouting out of the thin branches of gray. It was a showcase of how the manas protected and encapsulated one another. The same happened in some magic spells or in crafting.

This was also used by some when they wished to protect a material or others from the decaying effects of dark mana which were seen as very dangerous. Some people would also rely on the dark mana to repress the effects of light mana which could be blinding and even harmful in greater densities. Often causing the over effects on healing skills which would deplete the nutrients of a patient being healed.

Beyond this, the heart itself had dark and light colorations. Onyx could stop what would be considered common soil or rocks outside in the world that, here, were dark and light affinities. It begged the question of whether they were now useful to be used in farming certain dark and light affinity herbs and foods. Or were they ideal for races that made homes for their young to use as materials now? Would that affect their overall life or would that affect their young as they grew?

He could consider that one of his races carrying a child meant that the child and that serpent carrying it would need this purer and calmer mix of manas to develop in to a stronger being at the end of the lifespan. Therefore, would it be hard to say that building a nest out of these things would be a smart idea?

"There is something moving there." Aurora had very few attacking skills, but one was to make small spears of light the same way that Alcie could by singing. However, Aurora just needed to feel it rather

than sing it to make them appear. She did so now causing four dense light spears to appear which were stronger than her normal light spears due to the ambient light mana purity and densities.

"Someone appraise it and tell me immediately-" Onyx didn't need to finish the thought, the young serpent with him who had gotten a monster appraisal class had already started to speak to him. The class was exceptionally useful and had appeared as they met the lash shadow needle cluster plant monster. A perfect class for someone exploring new areas and one that would help Genesis greatly.

'Split rabbit

This monster is a rabbit that has only ever grown up in an environment of balanced light and dark mana. It shed the heart affinity it once had and has been able to adapt to a perfect balance of light and dark. Because of this it has a high light healing ability to heal basic injuries while it has a dangerous dark affinity that allows it to make shadow claws and dark infecting bites. While most people would feel ill after eating its meat, it is a delicacy for those who have dual light and dark affinities. Unless crafted well, its fur will degrade rapidly without the protection needed. Normally this monster is calm, but when facing a predator it will fight with everything it has to preserve its own life due to it knowing it can heal itself to some degree.

Normally few and far between, when in the mating season they can be found in groups of up to fifty...'

The appraisal was focused on the uses of this monster and even mentioned who would and would not be safe eating it. That was a new aspect that Onyx believed came from the fact that the one appraising it was a monster appraisal class user.

The rabbit didn't wait for them and rushed away in the next moment. The fighting aspect that he had just been told about made Onyx question the appraisal. However, he also knew that this was one very small split rabbit and not an adult. Most likely this was a child who had been exploring for good food only to find them. He knew that he would have run away as well.

"We know there are monsters here too now. And since the mana I feel is stronger in the direction that the split rabbit ran, we should move that way as well." The observation of the surroundings was a focus for them, but Omnyx also knew that finding the dual affinity naturally occurring rune had to be a priority.

Ahead of him, some stones broke out of the ground. Clear matches to the ways that the stones outside of the dungeon broke through the softer earth. It proved that this dungeon came from the outside too.

"Be careful of what might be in the shadows." Knowing that this place had kk stars meant that they might be similar to the risks of outside. Specifically, the flickering honeybees they had read about. This would be their ideal environment to live. But also there might be more threats that had lived here in perfect growth for them for many years.

"What do you mean he found a dungeon? They've only been gone for a few days!"

Meanwhile, Walker was shocked to hear the news of another dungeon discovered. He had not expected this sort of occurrence. Realistically, Onyx and the other serpents should have been still traveling. Did he underestimate them?

The new skills Onyx had were using different balanced mana compared to what Walker could remember before Onyx had grown again. But this also meant that he had somewhat

underestimated Onyx.

"If they go inside they might have to deal with monsters we've never seen. They aren't prepared." A fair worry. This was something he had recently faced in the elven forest. They were still preparing plans and proper safety measures for those who would explore that dungeon for the second attempt.

There was so much that could be in a dungeon let alone one that was both dark and light

mana.

"That's not the majority of the report. The serpents under Onyx and Aurora report a naturally occurring dark rune and naturally occurring light rune in perfect balance within the towering

stone passage."

"What is their luck? I know it was reported as an area high in dark and light mana, but so much so..." he was done. Onyx has to have gotten some form or luck skill for this. It was exactly what

Onyx was looking for.

The perfect place.

The goofy smile on Walker's face proved he was very happy regardless of the fear for Onyx and the others when it came to the dungeon. But this somewhat solved a problem for him. "Let Alice know that we are going out to help Onyx and Aurora."

Now he could use this as a way to make her less angry with him. Yes she would be worried and angry still, but at least he was acting to get her and himself there to help the pair. The right

thing to do.

What Walker was too young to realize, was that he was going to be in even more trouble because when he let those two run off alone he hadn't considered this risk. The danger increased and he was at fault for that as well.

----

Chapter 2395: Serpent Camp

"You two have been sitting in silence for a while." Gil snickered a little while he teased Walker. This just earned a glare from Alice towards Gil who was quick to make sure his mouth was shut.

"We have just a little ways to go. If you are worried about getting there, maybe I can leave you on the ground and let you walk?" Walker's magic was the reason that everyone was staying in the air. He had left his tasks and made it clear that he and anyone else who could go to make sure this dungeon wasn't an issue was on the way too.

Midnight was also with them since she had been ready to go the moment that she heard Onyx had discovered something like this. He was her little brother and that was just that. There was no extra anything that came with it. She would go there even if he had discovered something small.

This left Su back in Genesis to keep up with everything still going on. Alma had also stayed behind but that was because she had actually just heard of the next plans for the dungeon expedition in to the elven forest dungeon area. The temporary camp was also being more established so she wanted to overview it before everything was solidified.

"The statements we got from communication crystals were about the area being more focused on light and dark mana than what we had expected. We have some ideas from the map makers and the dragon that explored but no one had gone in there yet." The scouting reports were very small and Gil had also been able to get his hands on them before they left.

This was easily done for Gil since he had a closer relationship with the scouts who were leaving Genesis to make these reports. Mostly because Gil had learned to mix many of the elven and human scouting tactics while managing to pick up some more naturally used scouting tactics from some of the echidna and the dragons.

It was all because he had taken the time to get to know them in his pursuit of gaining his own strength. However, Gil had also been teaching people as he went. Not just arrows but scouting too since there were plenty of people who used the bow and arrows to hunt that needed scouting and had already started to form the basics of those skills.

Besides this, he had been able to request the reports of newly scouted areas. The dragons and map makers who helped take down the terrain information had sensed the light and dark mana around the area. They had not noticed it was so potent that there were two naturally formed runes though.

Even the scouts that had approached the area and noticed the two manas in higher density had not come to that conclusion.

"I think the stone standing so high in the area making it the towering stone passage is why you might not have gotten any information like that. It changes the flow of the light and dark mana so it stays in higher density closer to the central areas of the passage. Then there's the fact that the serpents reporting to us said that the dungeon absorbs the pure natural manas from both the runes. So, we can't sense what is being absorbed and put right back in to the flow of the area directly. It's just not escaping these lands.'

This made a lot more sense. Walker knew he could spread his mana senses thinner and thinner to pick up more. By doing so he might be able to figure out some hints of a naturally forming rune here or there. Would he though? If the manas were being absorbed and then redirected again?

It was all a natural phenomenon.

Approaching the towering stone passage though, even in the air with many following them, Walker could pick out the syringe light and dark mana. He could also spot some of the plants that he had read about when he was told about the area.

"Light and dark mana affinity herbs. Monsters that have dangerous methods of attack using light and dark mana. And then I can sense that there is even some general movement ahead so other monsters that Onyx and Aurora might not have found." He pointed out areas from the sky that he could see.

Gil also began to point things out. The areas where monsters traveled proving that there might be some more monsters they didn't see because they had scared them. But Gil also mentioned these monsters were smaller and most likely not predators.

It was the fact that there were more monsters here that was important though. Mostly because they had been told the serpents did not encounter much other than the potential flickering bees who hid themselves well and the shadow or light needle clusters which were an unmoving plant monster species.

"I think we have underestimated this area. It is full of life compared to what we all thought some of these ancient or expanded areas would have. But I don't think we are going to be finding a large amount of predators and dangerous things that will expand beyond what they should. I feel like this entire area was isolated enough due to all the stone pillars and the ways the manas are that it couldn't develop major predators like the wolves in the fields or the tougher monsters in the lava fields."

This was not just some guess from Gil. It was an informed decision because of what he knew about predators in other areas. He had seen a lot and knew that many had developed to handle the areas they grew. This area though, was harder for the predators he normally saw to grow. The fact that the plant type monsters excelled here meant that they had to survive in certain ways.

"I understand what you are saying. I will also say that some of these monsters you are, well, are not seeing are actually hiding from us. Even the predators hid when they felt us coming. Most likely Onyx felt this too and didn't say anything because they are not a threat to him or anyone that is strong enough. They hunt the weak prey here and only the weak prey."

Walker looked in to the shadows and the stark light that passed over some areas. This discrepancy in light and dark made hiding in shadows or blending in using light mana to be very useful. This area was perfect for weaker predators who relied on ambush hunting smaller prey to be the focus. Not larger predators.

"In the shadows right there is a black scythe mantis, it uses the shadows to hide itself and it hunts rabbits but can't even make a move against us six new e ate too big. Then over there is a white death pigmy hawk, it is small and hunts for smaller monsters called shifting mice which use dark mana in the goth and light mana during the day."

Looking at the areas, Gil was stunned. He rarely missed all this because of how unique the area was? These predators developed to hunt smaller prey and also to hide themselves. While it was a surety they were also prey to something, this was some proof. There was more he needed to learn about unique areas.

If he missed things like this at important times then he would be the reason someone got hurt. "Don't worry too much. They are both perfectly using their abilities to hide. Their fifties and skills perfectly go against a scout. But if you train a little more in sensing outside mana, maybe you will spot them first."

This was also a little challenge to make him want to keep growing. Walker wasn't foolish enough to believe that Gil would let this pass. They were both competitive and wanted to be able to push one another to grow stronger for their and the future of others around them.

"We can worry about catching and documenting some of these monsters later. They won't bother us so that's enough for now. But Onyx and Aurora are exploring that dungeon. I can't sense them ahead but I already sense a few of their group." While Walker expected this, he had made sure that a communication was sent telling Oux to just set up camp. "We are going after them. They are in trouble." The sweetness of Alice's voice was not at all the happy sound Walker normally enjoyed. Instead, he felt she was angry. Very angry. Knowing better than to say anything against it, Walker just focused and pointed himself in the right direction. The earful that Onyx and Aurora would get was just their price for being in danger like this. Even if it was the easiest and safest dungeon ever, they had to listen to Alice.

....

## Chapter 2396: World Of Black And White

The young serpents didn't seem to be afraid as Walker and the others set foot. They also didn't mind the sudden addition of the soldiers coming behind carried by Mordant who had just joined them.

Many of them had been around Mordant at various times since he was able to have a high

control over dark mana. It was one person who had gone out of their way to help both Midnight and Onyx.

Naturally, they trusted that he would be welcoming to them and also to the new chances that they had here. Especially since this area was also very valuable to them as a race. The dark dragons would be able to venture here.

"Rise would have been very interested in this place." Mordant mumble was soft but clear. He knew that she had to remain resting to handle the stress of the last even with a higher amount of light mana. That was why she was still holed up where she could do so.

This hadn't stopped her from making sure that her light dragons were working well. She had been giving orders and gathering information. But Mordant and the others had made sure that she would not leave to come here.

As much as she would be upset with them, the dragons had begun to take one another in to account much more than what they had in the past. Therefore, they cared for the injuries and hardships they went through. Right now they were a united race able to help one another, having the royal dragons lean in to that heavily would just help them all grow.

"I can see why this area is so unique. If you had not allowed me to come here with my dragonkin soldiers, they would lose the chance to grow as well." Mordant had focused again and was now seeing that his dragonkin were able to use a little more of their natural skills.

They were all dark affinity and that was just the connection and reason they followed Mordant. Therefore, this area was very valuable to them. But he had also managed to take quite a few of the light

affinity dragonkin with him as well since they had been doing other tasks that were able to be finished and leave them free without Rise worrying.

"I know that their camp is in a perfect spot and that the dungeon is right there. I can also feel the natural dark and light mana moving around this whole area. A smaller magic tower there would be a perfect way to ensure we can move to this area and also to potentially boost the natural effects without changing anything." Walker knew that this project was still ongoing.

Right this moment, a new magic tower had begun to be built in a small state as he had just mentioned on the Sigil continent. There was also a few leads on new places or places that already showed development.

The starting aspects of their plans had been to plant unique herbs that enhanced the draw of natural manas in areas already dense with them. This was working in a handful of places which was allowing for the chances of naturally forming runes. Some of these areas were the dragon territories since they were already attracting large amounts of these manas with the rune formations made there.

While it was seemingly successful so far, time was still needed for all of this to even be a potential.

"We are going in the dungeon now." Alice didn't even leave the rest of them to begin to check in with the young serpents and their camp. They had cleared the area pretty well and made it a decent place to rest. Most of the soldiers that came could rest here without needing to worry about clearing more plants from around them. But more so, they could see that various monsters had been sneakily taken down by the younger serpents.

Whether it was the two different types of needle cluster plant monsters or even a few of the predators that Walker had pointed out to Gil, they had defeated them. This also saved the issues that Waler had when he had thought that they needed to defeat or capture some of these monsters.

He even spotted an odd form that was clear, it used light mana to hide itself and its body was mostly clear like glass or the wings of a dragonfly. It was a monster that he believed he had read about or potentially seen before but this was a much clearer one that he could tell had a much higher affinity for light mana. Something that drew his attention.

Regardless, he had no choice, Gil gave Walker a nudge to keep moving because he noticed that Walker hadn't started to move. The all-around appraisal habit that Walker had was still there but if Gil held back he knew they would both get yelled at. Alice was already humming a song to buff them as well.

The boost from her songs would let them handle whatever they found within this dungeon. The light and dark manas that they felt the moment they stepped through was shocking. Alice could feel the light mana latch on to her immediately.

As it always did, the light mana moved around her. The simple hum of her words drew it in let alone actually speaking. But here, the light mana was denser and also was calmer. It was more welcoming and moldable to her natural affinity and ability to use it. Therefore, it felt like she was almost working with an elemental spirit or a spirit race rather than using her skills to manipulate it.

When she stopped humming for a moment, Walker knew she was overwhelmed. Not necessarily in a bad way, but trying to handle the mana. Alice had struggled with her own mana take away when she spoke and also sang. That was a rough childhood and a harsh Learning curve.

Now, she had control of it but when the light mana was this close and this attached to her, she needed to sue her utmost care.

It wasn't just that she could be influenced and even potentially harmed by the light mana, but because it was also balanced with dark mana.

Alice didn't have the affinity for dark mana.

If she were were to absorb it by accident, then there would be some issues. She would need to focus on purifying her body and also focus on removing that dark mana. Beyond that, she would have to consider the fact that she couldn't control a large amount of light mana when it surged toward her.

"I can make the mana keep away. It's calm now, it won't be harmful just by coming closer. But I know it's closer than normal and stronger. So I can manipulate it to slow around you." While this would take significant focus for Walker since the manas were so balanced and in their own flow, he could do it.

When Alice grabbed his arm though, he knew she didn't want him to make a move. She wanted to rely on her own strength and walk right up to Onyx and Aurora to make sure they knew how worried she was. To make sure they heard about what they had done wrong and how they can

fix it later.

After a few deep breaths, the humming was switched to a slow song. The manas moved slower. Even with the light mana slowing, the dark mana did as well. A show of their balance and also of how Alice understood the ways that light mana interacted with other manas

around it.

"I can sense them ahead. I would say there's a larger gathering of dark and light mana in perfect balance ahead. We should be wary."

It wasn't Gil or Walker who said this. It was Mordant. For him to feel uncomfortable it was a very big deal. He could sense a threat to him which was very bad.

"Then we will live as carefully as possible." The serious change in all of them was clear. They weren't just worried now, they were ready to fight as hard as they needed to survive.

Even paying more attention, Walker could feel that a naturally forking rune within this dungeon was clear. The perfect balance of light and dark manas feeding the dungeon was perfect for it to form.

However, that instinctual flinch that he had. That was something strong enough to challenge his ability to manipulate manas as a whole. Specifically, he could feel that he would be unable to fully stop the usage of the dark or light mana by whatever was ahead.

Where Onyx and Aurora were, they were witnessing the first naturally formed dual elemental rune. They could feel every bit of awe that came with it. But they couldn't remain focused in it because they knew there was something else watching their arrival.

....

## Chapter 2397: Powerful Predator

Piercing eyes. That was the first thought that Onyx had as he faced a monster that was different from him. While it had the clear affinity for both light and dark manas, it was balanced. Stronger than him and his affinities.

It was a rare case since Onyx had not met anyone with a dual affinity like his that was stronger overall, he was surprised that he was even seeing a monster sitting right in front of the dual elements naturally occurring rune. The light and dark mana were potent there and it would be hard to remain there for long periods of time.

"This is the core of the dungeon. Isn't it?" Onyx responded to Aurora with a soft nod. He didn't take his eyes off the monster in front of him. The younger serpents had melted in to his shadows feeling the pressure around them and knowing that they would be unable to pursue a proper battle. In Onyx's shadow, they could be out of the way.

This didn't stop the one from using the monster appraisal skill though. The young serpent had already seen the monster in front of them and was mentally communicating every detail that he could with Onyx. The very fact that through this the young serpent who had learned appraisal skills had managed to take a step and become a monster appraiser was amazing.

The future for him was almost endless right now. Genesis needed those that would be able to bring this information home. The tamer's guild would be incredibly excited to even get this young serpent to join them for even a few days. This was simply to be able to handle the many appraisal requests from the traveling tamers.

So many had already reported changes in their own monster partners let alone the fact that they were seeing entire herds of monsters change in characteristics. Some would remain the same while others would change slightly. Then there were monsters that would entirely alter their form and become something that they had never seen.

So much information could be learned and shared to help everyone who went in to the wilderness to travel. Even the merchants would be coming from this information sooner than later. They needed to remain safe after all.

But after glancing at the strikingly dark fur on one side and the almost shimmering white on the other, this tall bestial monster was similar to what some would have called a fusion between ape and man. Yet, there were differences.

On the dark side of its fur, there were pure white claws, sharp and coursing with calm, but sharp light mana. On the white fur side, the dark black claws radiated a soft but deadly dark decaying mana. Both could cause immense damage while the added physical buffs coming from the balanced manas were clear.

The light mana was increasing the bodily strength of this monster. The decaying dark mana made the pressure in the area feel threatening. Both were potent enough to do their own aspects clearly but together they did much more.

'Shadow light ape

The dual manas of this monster are the only reason that it is not known to the world. This species of monster is barely able to survive in areas where the light and dark manas are not perfectly balanced. While some believe that it has always been a fantasy creature, it used to be numerous until the collapse of the bridges to the elemental planes. Now it is mostly found in the elemental planes.

With its unique dual affinities and ability to allow ambient dark and light mana to flow through its body, it is considered able to always use mana without needing to rest to replenish it. This is highly dependent on it being in the perfect environment however.

While it can use the light and dark mana in both buffing and debuffing ways to itself and its opponents, it mostly uses them to enhance its claws when fighting. This is because it will always ensure that its territory is protected so that it does not lose the balanced manas it relies on to survive.

When meditating, it can use its ability to sense light and dark mana to be able to see larger areas. This is why it can easily hunt through its territory by using vicious claw slashes of both light and dark mana. However, when it finds that it is against a tongue opponent, it will use light mana to blind its enemy or use dark mana to hide in the shadows. This double effect of blinding and hiding allows for it to act somewhat like an assassin even though it has a tall and larger body with significant physical strength.

While some believed this monster to be intelligent, the unique body that it possesses forces it to remain a monster with no chance to grow to become intelligent. The dark mana and light mana clash when it is born causing damage to its inner organs which halt mental developments.

This is also why some organs are ideal to be used as alchemy materials to create...'

This was incredibly detailed and Onyx had no idea what to do with it. But Aurora was already sure that this was not some speaking to deal with an issue situation. Instead, she began to channel light mana and use it in the ways she had learned from Alice and others in the cathedral.

In just a few moments she had buffed Onyx's large body multiple times. Enhancing his ability to resist both light and dark mana while also allowing for his natural physical defenses to grow. The added buffs that allowed him to use some light mana to heal himself from smaller wounds was just one of the added benefits that came with Aurora being there as his support.

That was also ignoring the multiple light needles and spikes that had appeared in the air since she would be using ranged attacks while Onyx fought face to face. Regardless of this monster being one of the only of its kind, it was territorial and could not be reasoned with. Onyx knew that he would have to fight it now or every young serpent that came here would be at risk to be hunted by it.

The territory that the shadow light ape lived in wasn't the area right next to the dual affinity light and dark rune. It was the entire dungeon.

This place was going to be made in to a home for the young serpents to boost their strength. To find their path of growth without having to worry about understanding their natural affinities through other means. Yes, the runes in Genesis were perfect for them to grow, but here was a more natural environment that would resonate with them to their deepest levels. A second best to follow the path of their ancestors and going to the elemental planes. Without hesitation, the shadow light ape lunged at Onyx causing the air to feel heavier. This was the large physical might that it possessed. A monster of ancient times and that could easily survive within the unique elemental planes. Its body had been damaged when born by the dual manas it had affinities for, however, that allowed it to grow much more over time. The physical might was enough to make Onyx's tail numb from the hit.

He felt that the claw had been curled in to just hit with physical force. It was a predator playing with food. No, Omnyx felt that he was being tested to see if he would actually be a real threat or something that could be ignored.

It made Onyx feel as if he was being insulted even though he knew that this light shadow ape was not even capable of thinking like this. Yet, in nature there was always a creature that showed its dominance over a territory with force. Just like this, if Onyx was a weak monster, then the light shadow ape would let him move about.

That was why Onyx didn't hesitate. He slammed his tail back against the fist that had just hit him. He didn't want to be beaten down. He would not lose this dungeon to the monster residing within it. This was a place for the future generations now.

Whether or not it was won through physical might or through magical might didn't matter. Onyx would be able to show the young serpents with him that with their strength they could all survive and build this future.

The light and dark manas in Onyx's body surged and he used them to enforce his own body as well. Multiplying the effects of the buffs that Aurora had given him. This was all won with time gained as Aurora began to send needles of light and spikes of light toward the light shadow ape, forcing it to retreat and begin using mana as well.

....

#### Chapter 2398: Mixed Battle

The sound of the air splitting as Onyx's tail slammed in to the shadow light ape was enough to make the entire area feel heavier yet again. This is his full physical might using his full size. Many times larger than the small serpent that hatched out of an egg some time ago.

This suddenly heavier attack shocked the shadow light ape. It had believed that it was attacking to defend its territory and assert its dominance, but it had just been attacked and pushed back with physical strength. On top of that, light spikes were being shot from above at it.

Since it was feeling annoyed by the attacks from range, the light shadow ape leaped toward Aurora, but with her ability to slither through the air and keep moving, she was not some easy target to just grab and attack. Instead, she was quick and unburdened.

Just as the light shadow ape lost the chance to catch her with a grab to force her to the ground, Onyx's tail had gathered momentum again. And this time, the shadow light ape had no ground to hold itself from being slammed back.

The cracking of the black and white stones and soil as it came crashing to the ground proved that Onyx could gather more momentum with his tail. His large size was not just there for show. It was there because he had grown and learned to use it during battle.

The follow up light attacks from Aurora were not just light spikes, she condensed the light in to three powerful spears. These light spears had more mana which had been pulled from the air using her strength and sent with full force. Enough to cause the first actual snarl of pain from the shadow light ape to break the silence left after this large attack.

Sensing a threat, Onyx gathered dark mana around him and used his coiled stance to leap in to the air. The dark mana resisted the light mana claw slashes breaking through the air. The dark mana he had used to enhance his body and natural scale armor was not enough though. He felt the scales crack and the dark mana get forced away.

Aurora had been the target of this, but the scarier thing was that Onyx could sense that some of the light mana that Aurora had just used to attack had been taken and used in those claw slashes thrown at them. It meant that the level of control over both dark and light mana was much more than what Onyx and Aurora had suspected based off of first sight.

This didn't stop Onyx from fully calling out his own mana. The cracked scales were a small injury to him. He could use the light mana from Aurora too, and for him, that would heal the small damage. But he could also see that the shoulder of the shadow light ape had already started to heal as well. Naturally, this was what happened when there was someone who could use light mana well enough.

This was all what they had expected though. Being able to use light mana to this degree and have so much ambient light mana. It would always lean toward the purification and healing, that was the role that light mana often played in the world. The same way that dark mana played the decaying and the break down of things. Not that they were bad or good, just moving through their roles in the world.

With a burst of light and dark mana, the furs began to mix on the shadow light ape's body. The claws also became deeper dark and a more vibrant light. It was mixing the light and dark mana and changing its own turn in to a gray.

"It's ready to fight now." Onyx and Aurora sensed it. Onyx had only said this because he had the feeling that the young serpents needed to know that they absolutely could not approach or even think of leaving his shadow now. If they did for any reason, then they could be massively harmed by the calm manas around becoming chaotic in such high amounts.

The mixing of dark and light mana was often seen as chaotic. However, with the manas here and their state, they were balanced and calm. Beyond that, the naturally forming light and dark dual elemental rune was a mystery.

It balanced the manas and calmed them entirely. Because of this, the manas were smoothly mixing together. Onyx and Aurora had felt this and had been benefiting from this the moment that they had entered the dungeon. They had been absorbing these calmer manas and growing as well.

Every herb and plant here was beneficial. The air itself was. Let alone what else might be within this dungeon. But mixing the manas and fusing them perfectly to completely change appearance and the way that the manas showed themselves entirely? This was a level of fusion both Onyx and Aurora had yet to use.

Even Walker would not have been able to. He had not studied the perfect mixing of manas to this high degree. Just natural mana. Even that was still rough in the grand scheme of things.

The speed of the shadow light ape was enough to make Onyx tense. He felt that the threat grew and his body was challenged to maintain its own speed in defense. The double handed fist slam that hit his coiled body made him slide back and his scale crack.

Even worse, it caused his own mana to become more chaotic and the dark and light mana to be pulled away from him. He had never felt this before and it was starting to make him feel uncomfortable.

Aurora immediately stopped using the light spear and light spikes so that she could focus entirely on drawing manas in to buff Onyx. She could feel that she would not have the strength to do much otherwise. She was weaker than Onyx in many ways.

While she was younger, this issue was not about age but physical light mixed with mana. The shadow light ape used a mixture of both to fight and to pursue the natural strength needed to defend itself.

Onyx was capable of this so Aurora knew that she should not get in the middle which would cause potential damage.

Onyx had learned something from this. He had felt the mixed light and dark mana stepping in to its own unique form. He had felt it directly.

Light that also decayed. No, it was purifying darkness. Or was it a mixture of both no longer separate? The gray man's where shadows and light were not perfectly cut form in another. This was the bounty between the shadows where one could see the sun rise and make the shadow fade. That sliver of time before the sun left the horizon and night was welcomed. That single small moment in morning and evening as both light and dark would become one in the world.

The calming effect of the naturally forming light and dark rune, no, the gray naturally occurring rune allowed Onyx's mind to feel this strange state. The pain kept him focused on the battle. The manas though, they were calling to him now.

The surge of mana that pushed against him from the shadow light ape also was like a guiding hand. While painful, it was the perfect catalyst.

Onyx had accepted a lot recently. A massive amount of light mana to feed his growth. A new view on dark and light mana fusing together which led to a key skill becoming a passive and natural skill. A change in his mindset to do more Than just be some patriarch. His entire living race would establish their legend to fuel growth for generations.

A training ground. A story. A base for their future.

All of that was right now. So if accepting some pain to be able to battle a stronger foe and take those paths for all of them? Well, what other choice was there?

The forceful breaking of that wall in Onyx's mind and body was full of furry. Now full of a desire to grow beyond.

The already mixing white and black scales on his body became a perfect gray. More than just

matching, but exceeding the gray that was covering the shadow light ape. This wasn't because the shadow light ape was weaker, but because Onyx had taken a route longer to get to this

perfect mix.

He had taken a path of mentality and physicality. Uniting the manas as he grew with the bonds of those he cared for. Whether the relationship with a dragon or with an origin race member affected this or not didn't matter. Onyx met the dual gray mana slashing claws with his open mouth, fangs radiating potent gray mana ready to assert his own dominance.

....

Chapter 2399: Gray Serpent

'The skill, Gray Serpent lord has awakened, the world welcomes the one with the first title, The Gray Serpent Lord. Existence notices...'

A perfect halt of light and dark mana flowing around the entire area caused Walker to panic. He had not noticed such a massive change in mana and did not think that the monster he had sensed ahead could be something this powerful. Even Alice grew pale when she realized the light mana had stopped moving naturally toward her.

That never happened. The light mana always stuck to her whether she liked it or not. It was a thing that had always made her unhappy or struggled in the past. Yet here she was, wondering just what was going on while she worried about Aurora and Onyx being in greater danger.

"We need to move faster I have no idea what is going on but I don't like it." With Walker pushing them forward, Gil found that he was being kept behind in all this. Mordant also did not say much. Just casually walked behind them.

While he did feel the threats associated with the sudden halt of light and dark mana, he didn't feel threatened by it specifically. He could sense that the mana was targeting another ahead. His instincts told him it was dangerous, but that danger was not turned toward him.

In Walker's mind, he was forgetting that anyone by Alice was right besides him. The others at the camp with the serpents or Mordant and Gil were entirely out of his mind. That was simply his focus on making sure that he got to whatever dangerous battles were ahead.

When he looked through the large standing pillars of stone ahead, he noticed that another figure had taken up. One that he both recognized and didn't.

An oppressive gray mana radiated around, drawing the light and dark mana together to sharpen scales. The slight glimmer of light and dark runes mixing together on those scales struck Walker as something nearly impossible since he had never seen two naturally occurring runes mix together in to one. Let alone form temporarily on the body of something.

The size also shocked Walker. It was surely Onyx in front of them, but his size was easily double that of what he had been before. The mana around him was also exceptionally oppressive. Like he had taken control of it and desired for all others to understand exactly who was in control. That this is his territory and no other had a right to speak against that.

In a single movement, the gray mana flew out in brutal blades of piercing and decaying might. The light was tearing away the defensive manas from the shadow light ape while the decaying mana was breaking down the body. The physical and mana resistance it had was as good as wet paper right now.

Multiple light and dark mana spears appeared all around Onyx. He looked down at the shadow light tape as if he was looking at nothing more than just a wandering monster in his way. The light and dark spears shot down at the shadow light ape mixing together and becoming chaotic gray which screamed through Walker's mind.

The mana was intentionally made chaotic but somehow still maintained balance. Instead of breaking one another apart, the mana was mixing to enhance one another and make it more destructive. Both aspects of piercing light and decaying dark had been heightened this time in these gray mana spears being used to destroy an enemy.

The next hiss of vicious intent from Onyx made the manas shiver in the air before the dark and light manas began to move. This time they moved toward his fangs as Onyx coiled his body and struck out to capture the already broken shadow light ape. In a single bite, deep decaying mana pierced through its body as Onyx's rarely used venom dealt with the prey that had walked in to his race's territory.

Almost immediately, the light and dark mana began to bleed away from Onyx's body while the remains of the shadow light ape decayed leaving nothing behind. Onyx's size reverted to a slightly smaller version, but the mixed white and black scale showed signs of partially remaining in gray. The perfect black scale and hints of white had become more mixed than last time.

"I can see what his stats are. He gained an entirely unique skill and title. He's basically a living legend to his race now." Walker chuckled a little as Alice glared at him since she knew very well that he should be more focused on who was safe right now and if they were hurt.

That was when she noticed Aurora using light magic to heal the small wounds left behind on Onyx's body and how tired he looked. "They are both fine." She sighed and the light mana shimmered around her as it revolved naturally now.

Onyx turned his head feeling that Walker was nearby. He also glanced at them tiredly and gave a slight nod to say that he was glad they were here. Aurora looked up and seemingly hid a little knowing that Alice would be a little unhappy with them, to say the least.

It was the young serpents who were reacting the most. They left Onyx's shadow and swarmed him. Clearly trying to see if he was fine but also constantly exclaiming about how amazing he was. How there was a serpent lord powerful enough to defeat any enemy for their race. A position that cemented them as a race that could not be fought against.

"You know we are angry with you. But, you did something pretty amazing just now." Walker saw that Alice wasn't going to yell or give them a talk about safety just yet. So he focused on what he had learned.

"The title serpent lord comes from the first serpent of a generation to embody all that is the will of their race. They will hold that title until they pass it down to another who undergoes trials testing their will to be the one that shoulders everything of their race."

"They will fight and grow showing that they deserve to stand as a symbol rather than an individual. And as they accept what their race can harness, they will become that example for others to grow."

"Mastery of united light and dark mana which both sides of your race use to fight, grow, and survive come together as one. You gain strength over this mana fusing toward you. Bricking gray mana in your

case. Piercing and decaying. Healing and breaking. I think you might even touch on deeper manas that hold different focuses outside of elemental."

Walker could theorize about that and shook his head. He had to focus. "You gain the title of serpent lord but also the serpent lord transformation skill. You'll be able to fight and demand control of a territory around you controlling the light and dark mana to enhance your race while weakening others. It's amazing."

There were more details about the mana costs and the additional drawbacks. Onyx was tired right now and it was clear his muscles were worn down. He had to heal and relax a bit now. The cost of the serpent lord transformation was high.

It was also clear that instincts had been why Onyx could use it so well. He would need to learn about it and feel the changes in his body which had all come together for this moment.

At the time being, he was better off resting in front of the naturally formed dual elemental rune of light and darkness. "A naturally formed dual elemental rune. A gray rune?" Walker smirked a little while he also felt the differences.

The world was a strange place and this place in particular was stranger still. But he also felt a hand on his shoulder telling him that his amazement had to end. Now he and Alice needed to reprimand the pair who had rushed off.

As soon as Alice took a deep breath all the young serpents tried to retreat in to Onyx's shadow to hide but they found they were locked. Onyx was making sure they stayed around to hear the

same reprimand as he and Aurora got.

They had all been in this together after all.

All things aside, Mordant and Gil felt that they had rushed here without reason. They could have kept working on other things.

Not that there were no other benefits. Gil felt he could make better light and dark or even gray mana arrows now. Mordant just wanted to learn about natural dark mana. Both good things.

Plenty could be gleaned from the final hours in this dungeon before they were forced out. Walker knew that once he finished this talk and saw that everyone was injury free, he could sit with Onyx and meditate. Learn a thing or two.

....

#### Chapter 2400: Letting Develop

It was a few hours when a surge of mana radiated through the entire dungeon. Walker felt that there was a massive amount of control that he did not have over mana or anything. He could also sense that if he even tried to resist that his strength could never do a single thing against this force.

While he knew that the dungeons had a will of their own. He also knew that the will of the world and existence itself had a control over it as well. That meant that this was a much grander force than he could ever muster.

As he and everyone found themselves right in front of the dungeon entrance now closed off and normally absorbing manas, they knew that this would change later when it was full of mana and reset.

For the time being that would be waiting here until that happened, well, most of them. Walker and the others would need to return to Genesis and announce the results of a dungeon ideal for those of both light and dark affinity. Especially those with dual affinities for both of these manas.

Onyx was still resting but he had been somewhat stirred from his sleep. Walker had also been meditating but he had felt everything very clearly when he had noticed them being forced

out.

This dungeon was one that pushed everything that should not be within outside. While some things like monsters, plants, and some materials could be left, sentient races with intelligence could not remain within. The rules were clear in the appraisal but also enlightening since dungeons would all have different rules.

Whether this was just part of how dungeons would all work as they were their own creatures in a way, or if they were meticulously created this way through the will of existence would remain unknown. Regardless of the reasoning, recording the rules and what would happen was important.

If there was ever a dungeon where people would become trapped if they were not outside of it in time, this would be important. Especially if harm could or would come to them if they remained within. The dungeon in the elven territory was home to a lot of poison and powerful monsters. If someone remained there they would certainly perish and the dungeon also reset itself in a way which could completely erase those trapped within.

These thoughts were where Walker knew that returning with information about this dungeon and area would be important.

While they had mostly made it to Onyx and Aurora in the last short time of the dungeon being accessible, Walker had still taken some things that the younger serpents had gathered outside. They would naturally have all access to these herbs, materials, and even some monster parts that they hunted. Only a small amount would be taken for studies unless the young serpents decided otherwise.

On another note, there was a clear change in the young serpent booths who went inside the dungeon and remained outside.

While the young ones who went in and hid within Onyx's shadow showed that they had easily grown significantly because of the balanced manas, they had all awakened their dual affinities to a much stronger level than their companions outside of the dungeon.

This was because the mixed manas within was extremely nourishing for them. They had been able to see how the manas came together and their natural bloodlines were stimulated. This was also because they had all been influenced directly by Onyx as he had taken the serpent lord form in that final battle. The gray manas had awakened them at a much closer level than what the outside young serpents waiting had been able to understand.

While this was the same for both sides, the abyssal and heavenly serpents, they were looking more similar to how Onyx and Aurora looked now physically. Small signs that they would follow that growth later was clear on their scales and even in the way that they slithered around now.

Those on the outside who had waited had clearly also changed a little. They were not necessarily able to see it right now, but Walker could sense it clearly. Mordant had also given them all a strange look since he could see how the manas around them had changed.

Every young serpent was absorbing light and dark mana now. Faster than what they had normally been able to do. All of it was subconscious though. Their bodies seemed to sense the same bloodlines awakened nearby and they were starting to match that through a growth of their own. A little push from those nearby that their subconscious used as ways to move forward more.

Besides these changes, Walker was amazed that the young serpents who had set so much up when it came to a camp had also harvested many herbs. The herbs related to just dark mana which had been in the shadows of the rocks and the herbs related to just light mana which were in areas that never saw shadows amounted to more than he could have expected.

Apparently several had managed to become light or dark herbalists. Some even had the class name, dusk or sunrise herbalist. This meant that they specialized in the herbs which bloomed in times where manas shifted and changed, or where the light and dark manas were more balanced overall. It was a nice addition to the future gain of knowledge for herbalism growth within Genesis.

Now, though, Mordant had focused on the naturally formed dark rune that he was looking at. It was a calm yet mysterious gathering of dark mana that he knew was potent enough to even cause him a little trouble. Not that he was going to try and control it. That would be more harmful than anything.

"Walker, you should consider building two different magic towers here. They will be small and have to blend with the shadows and light that passes through these areas. It can't change a thing. I know there are materials that can do that so we can make sure it happens."

This wasn't just Mordant wanting to protect the area. He wanted to ensure that there was something more when it came to the building of the new magic towers and their conceptions. He wanted them to more deeply mirror the balance of nature as it was in the world to ensure that the manas would flow better as they grew stronger.

"I agree with that. The runes are mysterious to us and tell us how to better understand each mana and the world we are part of. I don't want us to worry about breaking anything again. If anything, these

magic towers should only act as places we can use to travel to and from and to help the world meet us more closely."

"I won't let anything happen here until we have a proper plan though. My dragons will also not be coming here." Mordant knew that some of the elder dragons would make a mess of the area if they saw the herbs and felt the manas here. They could learn a lot, but they might not keep the area safe yet.

A few of the younger serpents popped their heads out of shadows hearing this. They wanted to defend this area and would not even shy away from fighting the dragons. "See? There are already protectors of this wilderness beginning to grow. It's not time for my dragons to roam here yet." Mordant smiled a little more than he should but it appeared the young serpents appreciated the gesture.

"You both should stop worrying about all this heavy stuff. We have a lot more materials here and a lot more to figure out right now. Look at the arrows I can make too." Gil almost giggled as he showed off a small arrow shaft that was actively pulling a little dark mana in to it without any runes being carved on it.

Both Mordant and Walker shook their heads as they pointed out the fact that they were still in the wilderness and should at least help out preparing a more solid camp for the serpents to be able to live in. But that was when Alice noticed they were all getting distracted.

She made it clear that there was an earful for everyone if they did not have a plan to defend against her more dangerous predators here. She knew that when Onyx and Aurora were not here, that those predators would not be as afraid of all the smaller and weaker serpents that would be staying here. Her job right now would be to make sure that they all understood their

danger.

She was the most focused on this since she had already lectured everyone so far, but she would keep on it as much as she needed. She didn't want to have to station a healer group here at all times. Not that she wouldn't do that regardless of the need or not.