

Paragon 1551

Chapter 1551 - 1551: What happened

Efad took some time to catch his breath and rearrange his thoughts. He never expected he would last this long in the world where the second Void Gate was meant to have opened back during the Primordial Era.

However, he survived there for over 200,000 years.

The last time Klaus was there, he only saw up to the point where the five Celestial leaders concluded on a course of action. They planned to send some people out to seek help while also creating a gate to prevent the Void Gate from opening.

Their thoughts were simple: since they could not leave their world, they might as well use their lives to hold back the Void Gate from opening.

Inside the memories, they managed to send out 25 Demigods to go look for help, while the rest managed to create the Void Gate and lock the void as intended.

However, ten years after the void was sealed, the people began forming Void Cores, their nature turning into that of Void Beings.

Nobody understood what was happening until it was already too late. It turned out that something or someone behind the Void Gate was trying to create a deadly legion of Void Sentinels.

Their plan was never to invade this universe using the Void Gate, but rather to pollute these people and use them. They planned to open a much larger gate that would finally bring all of the void creatures into this universe.

However, they failed, and the backlash affected everyone.

The gate closed, but the planet was also sealed for good.

However, when the Void Gate closed, all five rulers received a revelation, one that, if they managed to get it out to the rest of the universe, the Void Race would be done for.

It was a revelation about something unique and very powerful: a treasure called the Void Mirror Stone. It is a triangular-shaped item said to hold the Dao of the Void.

Those in possession of it would have absolute control over the void and could also bestow Perfect Harmony Void affinity upon anyone.

The most chilling use, however, is the ability to take the void affinity of others. If the one in possession of this item wished, they could open the Void Gate, and with enough resistance, they could take the power of the void from the Void Beings and bestow it upon their own legion.

The Void Beings were after that item, and by sealing the Void gate, the treasure was locked out of their reach. However, the five races that came together to lock the void away could not possess it either.

However, they also couldn't sit idly by and let such a treasure go unnoticed. So they made one last desperate move. They sealed the Void Mirror Stone inside the Son of one of the kings and sent him out by virtually burning their own Void Cores.

They succeeded in sending him out, but they discovered that the first 25 they had sent hadn't reached him. Instead, they had become conduits that kept channeling void essence into the voids surrounding Planet Yggmak.

This discovery was all they needed to know they had been doomed for good. No help was coming, and there was absolutely no way they could endure the passing years, especially as their people grew ever stronger and more polluted by the day.

If their growth continued, they would become monsters that would one day become the sharpest void weapons the Void Beings would use against this universe.

So, to make sure they didn't become the savages they were meant to be, the wisest among them proposed a risky move.

King Velarion, the king of the Nihorathians, proposed that they send out the fate of their world and let the fate key find a worthy leader.

With someone worthy to wield their fate, they could become his deadliest warriors.

So they did, and since then, they have become fateless.

Efad saw them continue to grow, but without fate, they remained a race of useless beings. Until the day someone found their fate and unlocked it, they would just remain a race of millions of Celestials, Supremes, and gods with no purpose.

The quest Klaus received was from them. His mission was to clear all 12 Void Vortexes, which would help him push his void affinity to the Perfect Harmony stage.

Also, by clearing all 12 Void Vortexes, he would obtain the fate key, since each Void Vortex awarded him with a Void Key.

That key would lead him to the Void Mirror Stone, which, the moment he made it his own, would grant him the power to command the entirety of Planet Yggmak.

"My mission, luckily for me, involves only Demigod-level Void Beings. However, I must be careful since Void Qi is one tricky energy to navigate." Efad smiled, feeling his void affinity now brimming with power.

He was asleep when Atomic awakened, so this was his first time experiencing the changes it had brought him.

"If I can get the Key of Fate and become the master of Yggmak, then with Queenie almost ready to free the Asura, defeating the foreign races and even the Void Beings that would soon return won't be an issue.

"My problem now is what the Heavens Court is planning. Those bastards clearly are up to something." Efad smirked and stood up.

"In the face of absolute strength, all schemes are useless," he laughed and resolved himself on his next course of action.

"Since I would naturally become the owner of the Void Mirror Stone, then the two Void Vortexes I have already cleared are of no use to anyone."

He willed it, and Atomic and Icon appeared beside him.

"Master, how was your sleep?" Icon asked, scanning Efad's body for any flaws she could fix.

"Never better, Icon. I now know what I came here for. That said, I called you two here to make use of the Void Essence here." Efad laughed and turned to Atomic. "With the energy from the two vortexes, how many of my wives can you help?"

Atomic studied the content of the Void Essence in the air for a few seconds and smiled.

"I can help 20 of them become Supremes. But sensing the potency of the remaining 10 vortexes, adding more to it wouldn't be impossible as long as you can clear the remaining Void Vortexes within the next few months.

"If you can handle it, then I can make everyone Supreme and even produce a few more Celestials."

"Very well, I will do my best to handle everything in less than five months. By then, I will also be ready to become a Demigod."

With the cultivation technique in his possession, Klaus could become a god in ten different ways. He planned to first let the Paragon's body become a god. This was because he had no intention of wasting time when three universe-ending catastrophes were on the way.

Becoming a god was of utmost importance to him.

So he would allow his incarnations to become gods, each forming different laws and domains. Most importantly, he would finally be able to awaken all nine Paragon Stars.

Then, when all of them managed to successfully reach godhood, his main body would also ascend, finally awakening the Primal Bloodline that would unleash his true power as a paragon.

'I hope by then, I will know why I was brought to this universe,' Klaus sighed.

A few hours after his awakening, his other incarnation had finally reached the Devil's Maw. It was finally time for that incarnation to also make a name for himself.

Chapter 1552 - 1552: Devil's Maw

The Devil's Maw is one of the most dangerous places in the human universe. Many said it was an ancient realm; some said it had once been a functioning society, while others said it was the tomb of a very powerful Flame Elemental cultivator.

Many things had been said about it, but one thing was certain: the Devil's Maw was dangerous and only allowed those up to the Universal God stage to enter.

Supremes and Celestials aren't allowed there. Those who tried to force their way in died gruesome deaths. So, most of the people who entered were gods and Demigods.

It was even said that aside from the name Devil's Maw, many also called it God's Grave. After all, thousands of gods had fallen there, and so no immortal, unless accompanied by gods and Demigods, dared go there.

When Klaus's incarnation, named Rhazor, arrived at the space station where every warrior crazy enough to enter the Devil's Maw first docked to buy resources, many eyes turned toward him.

A few immediately recognized him from the Blood Tournament.

However, those who had no idea who this redhead was started to sneer, some even showing envy toward the SS-Class spaceship he arrived in.

"Children these days. Just because they were fortunate enough to become a little stronger, they think they can play in the same pool as us gods," a god sneered, his expression showing disdain.

"True. I wonder how long he will last in there."

"If the three tribes don't kill him, then the gods in there surely will. The Devil's Maw is known for its danger, not because of only the monsters there, but because the monsters among humans are also part of it."

"At the end of the day, he has only himself to blame for going in alone."

Rhazor ignored the comments and insults being hurled at him and walked into a store.

"Welcome to my humble shop, young man. How can I be of help?" a man in his late fifties greeted the moment Rhazor entered his shop.

Rhazor nodded but remained calm despite the man being a Universal God. He hid his aura well, suppressing it to the peak of the Demigod stage, but Rhazor saw through him with a single glance.

Seeing that the man was probably hiding on this moon, he said nothing and focused instead on what he had come for.

"Hello, sir, I want to purchase a map and information about the Devil's Maw. I don't know if you can help me," Rhazor said, knowing full well that marching into such a dangerous place unprepared was a bad idea.

The old seller nodded, walked to a shelf, picked up a small device, and returned to the counter. "It is good that you came here first before venturing into such a dreadful place. Many came arrogantly and left, never to return again."

He set the device on the table and raised three fingers. "This map costs 3 million Universe Coins, and it covers all of the Devil's Maw, at least in terms of the three zones."

Rhazor furrowed his brow. "Three zones?"

"Yes, there are three zones, each ruled by a tribe of very dangerous monsters. The first zone is ruled by the Naga Tribe, led by a very powerful Universal God-level Naga King. He has killed many gods from the human universe, and so a bounty has been placed on his head."

"How much?" Rhazor asked, knowing full well he was pushing the limits of his level here.

While he had become an Immortal Monarch, going as far as fighting Universal Gods surrounded by many gods and Demigods was clearly overstepping his boundaries.

But Rhazor didn't care. He wanted to know and perhaps see if he could get the bounty.

The old seller just smiled and answered him, "Killing him is worth 100 billion God Coins, and any other god-level Naga is worth 50 billion God Coins, with the Demigods worth 10 billion God Coins each."

"Wow, that is a lot of money." Rhazor smiled, a bit stunned at how much was being paid to kill just the Naga King.

One hundred billion God Coins were equal to 10 trillion Universe Coins. That amount of money, Rhazor knew, could buy him many things.

"Forget it, kid, the Naga Tribe isn't the worst in there. The second zone is occupied by the Devouring Ant Tribe, and it is ruled by the Planet Devouring Ant Queen. The bounty on her head is 250 billion God Coins.

"And the third zone is ruled by the Grim Wolf Tribe. The last time I checked, the Grim Wolf Alpha was worth 400 billion God Coins dead and a whopping 700 billion God Coins alive.

"It would do you no good to directly go after them, not when there are other deadly monsters in there, and even your fellow humans can be just as lethal."

Rhazor nodded, but the seed of adventure had already been planted in his heart.

"Is there something else I should know? I am willing to pay for additional information."

"That depends on how deep your pockets are, kid. There is low, medium, high, and very high information. Low would cost you 1 million Universe Coins, with each level above that costing ten times more. As for very high, you have to pay billions for it."

Rhazor stood there for a few seconds before making his choice. "Sell me the Very High Information. I want to stay safe in there, so the more I know, the better."

The old seller nodded with a broad smile on his face. He waved his hand, and three digital red envelopes appeared.

"Take your pick, and the money will be deducted. Afterward, the contents will be sent to your communicator."

Rhazor nodded and pressed his watch against the device on the table. At once, 1.1 billion Universe Coins were deducted from his account, and the information was transferred.

"Your payment covered the map and additional information I secretly added for you. Trust me, you will want to know the contents of that information."

Rhazor nodded, picked up his map, and stored it away. "Thank you, sir."

"You are welcome, and good luck, kid."

After Rhazor left the shop, the man smiled and nodded to himself. 'Brave kid, I hope you survive where you are going, and I hope you succeed in claiming a bounty.'

Outside, Rhazor first went to a restaurant and booked a private room before opening the information packet he bought.

Inside the packet, he found many interesting things. Aside from the locations of some treasures and places he shouldn't go, most of the information focused on some dangerous humans who had entered the Devil's Maw, some of whom also had bounties on their heads.

'Bone Flayer God, Skeleton Shaman, Gold Bone King... What kind of terrible names are these?'

Rhazor smirked as he read the names of the people he should avoid at all costs.

'Even though I have no plans to fight gods, if it comes to that, escaping won't be a problem,' he smirked and continued reading.

After an hour, he finished reading the 20,000-page packet and opened the second information packet that the old seller had added to his items.

Inside, Rhazor saw the name of an item that made him jump to his feet.

'Flame Dao Crystal.'

Yes, the secret information contained the location of a powerful crystal called Flame Dao Crystal.

Whoever came into possession of this crystal and absorbed it would have their Flame Law pushed to the Absolute stage, and with enough luck, they could even enter the Extreme stage.

'I must get my hands on this crystal.' He left the restaurant and made his way toward the Devil's Maw Portal.

Chapter 1553 - 1553: Vine Forest

When Rhazor arrived at the teleportation gate, he saw there was a line, so he silently joined it. In front of him, dozens of groups entered the portal, most of them made up of at least two gods and over a dozen demigods.

He was the only person to join the line as a single individual, making him stand out from everyone else. But Rhazor didn't care, not when his mission objective was now to get his hands on the Flame Dao Crystal, no matter what.

If he could get his hands on that crystal, then his flame element would skyrocket. If that were to happen, confronting the three tribes would become simple.

Of course, Rhazor had no plans to directly go for the crystal. He first wanted to see who else had become aware of the Flame Dao Crystals' location.

If he identified his competitors, he could develop a plan to snatch the crystal under their noses. And if someone had already gotten it, he would snatch it from their hands.

If he couldn't handle it alone, calling for reinforcements wouldn't hurt. However, for now, Rhazor wanted to prove to the entire universe that he was not someone to look down on.

Renegade Hunter and the Paragon had cemented their status, so he also wanted to make a name for himself.

'It would be a wild run for sure.'

Klaus had designated only two affinities for this incarnation: flame and void. Of course, with his Void Affinity now at the Perfect Stage, he could use it more efficiently.

His Flame Law was also at the Perfect Harmony Stage. Of course, with the four flame spirits now 15 years old, he could consider his flame affinity to be at the 80% Absolute Stage.

He also wielded three weapons.

He wielded the sword, hence his criminal identity, Blood Sword. While Klaus had no plans to wield blood with that incarnation, using the sword and flame element would surely make him deadly.

He also wielded the [Flame Eater Bow]. With such a weapon, range attacks wouldn't be a problem.

He was also a Spirit Master with control over 10 deadly spears. With his mind, he could control them to cause immense damage.

Klaus knew for sure that this incarnation of his was going to a very dangerous place, so he made sure to push most of the energy that Atomic had released into him, making him an Immortal Monarch.

Now, it would be a matter of whether or not his current strength could carry him inside the Devil's Maw, or if he would have to call for help from his other incarnations and beast legion.

A few minutes later, his turn came, and he paid 100,000 Universe Coins. He was then handed a return token.

"It takes five seconds to activate, so be sure to be out of a hostile environment before you use it."

Rhazor nodded and walked through the portal.

The next second, he found himself in a green forest, surrounded on all sides by thick trees tangled in vines.

Rhazor instantly sensed danger, so he summoned his sword, and a red-bladed longsword appeared in his hand. He summoned the map and saw he had to head east to get closer to the flame dao crystal, so he started moving in that direction.

A few seconds later, he sensed terrifying pressure coming from the vines. Instantly, he knew he had to run, so he did.

Rhazor activated a flame movement technique, igniting his boots and boosting his speed. Judging by the vastness of the forest he saw on the map, Rhazor knew it would take him hours to cross it.

He also knew he could not outrun the vines, but he also wasn't about to stand and fight them head-on.

"Damn it. Out of all the places I could spawn, I had to appear in the Endless Twisting Vine Forest," Rhazor cursed as he sped through the forest, dodging one vine after another.

'Icon, map out the forest and find me routes I can easily navigate.'

Rhazor had to call on Icon, who had now become more powerful.

[Okay, Master.]

Rhazor jumped over a large boulder and landed on soft ground. Just when he was about to move again, a vine latched onto his right leg, and spikes pierced his flesh.

<You have been poisoned>

<Neutralizing the venom. Neutralization successful>

Rhazor slashed backward with his sword, severing the vine. The moment he was free, he continued to run.

Rhazor tore through the forest like a blazing comet, flames trailing behind his boots as twisted vines smashed through trees in pursuit of him.

From his calculations, these vines were comparable to Immortal Lords. However, considering he had landed in their domain, he knew he could not mess around.

Just as he would have some advantages inside his Flame Domain, the vines had all the advantages inside the Endless Twisting Vine Forest.

He could attempt to burn the forest to the ground. However, Rhazor knew it was impossible, not when he had no plans to call demigods and god vines into pursuit of him.

BOOM!

A massive vine thicker than a dragon's body erupted from the ground ahead of him, covered in black spikes dripping with venom.

Rhazor's eyes narrowed.

'A Demigod Vine at least...' his expression turned cold as he regarded the thick vine.

The black vine wasted no time and attacked, unleashing a powerful sweeping strike that caused the air around it to bend and twist.

Sonic booms followed.

Rhazor instantly bent backward, narrowly avoiding the vine as it swept over his head with terrifying force. The shockwave alone shredded several nearby trees into splinters.

The moment he regained his balance, dozens more vines burst from underground.

"Damn parasites."

Rhazor stomped the ground, and flames exploded beneath him, propelling his body upward.

At the same moment, ten crimson spears materialized behind him.

"Go."

The spears shot downward like meteors. Running alone wouldn't help, so he started counterattacking with his spirit weapons.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The ground exploded apart as several vines were pierced and pinned to the ground. With Hivemind powering his Spirit Master class, Rhazor knew he had nothing to worry about. He would never be mentally exhausted, not when there were hundreds of minds at his disposal.

So his precision was on point, allowing all 10 spears to find their marks as intended.

However, Rhazor's expression changed immediately.

The severed vines began regenerating at a speed even he had no idea was possible.

Not only that, but the broken sections started growing smaller secondary vines that rapidly spread through the area like living serpents.

"So they can split too?"

Rhazor clicked his tongue in annoyance. Clearly, he had never accounted for the vines being this versatile. But he wasn't a static warrior himself. He could also adapt.

But before he could think further, the forest suddenly darkened.

A massive shadow loomed above him, the pressure of a demigod descending upon him. Even without looking, Rhazor knew he was now at the mercy of a powerful demigod and something even more dangerous.

He looked up just in time to see an enormous carnivorous flower descending toward him with its petals wide open.

Rows of rotating teeth filled the flower's mouth as it snapped open menacingly.

"Oh hell no, not these flower monsters." Almost as though his mind had traveled back to the Primordial Era, he recalled an encounter he once had with flower monsters similar to these.

They were both carnivorous and highly corrosive. One bite and the venom injected into the body would be enough to kill a God.

Rhazor's seriousness exploded, so he immediately swung his sword.

"Flame Sword Art: Burning Crescent!"

A massive arc of crimson flame shot upward, distorting the space around it with a deadly force.

BOOOOM!

Chapter 1554 - 1554: Battle Through The Endless Twisting Vine Forest

The flame arc landed on the flower, splitting it apart instantly and showering the forest with burning remains. It felt too easy, and Rhazor knew it was indeed too easy, so his suspicion rose.

The next second, the burning remains suddenly exploded into clouds of green spores.

Rhazor's instincts screamed in warning. He recalled all too well that the main danger of these monster flowers is truly unleashed when their bodies explode.

Most of the time, they themselves explode their own bodies to spread their spores. However, this time, the sword arc had done all the work, unleashing the green spores upon him.

He instantly held his breath and covered himself with void energy.

However, despite his layered void shield, the moment the spores made contact with the void barrier, they began corroding it instantly.

"What the hell?"

Rhazor kicked off a nearby tree and shot backward at full speed, using the momentum to try to escape.

However, the moment he moved, the tree he had touched suddenly came alive.

Its bark split open, revealing dozens of crimson eyes hidden beneath the wood. The eyes looked eerie and somewhat bone-chilling. However, what followed was what made Rhazor narrow his eyes.

ROOOOAR!!!

The tree unleashed a horrifying sonic roar. At that exact moment, another flower monster, this one much bigger and uglier, loomed overhead, adding to the already eerie-eyed tree.

The roar was heard, but Rhazor knew a shockwave was building, and it would soon slam into him like a sonic attack.

'Icon, where are we on the route mapping?'

[Working on it, Master.]

'You might want to hurry, sweetheart. I am getting surrounded here, and it is not looking pretty.'

Rhazor gritted his teeth as the sonic roar slammed into him like a physical wave. The force behind it was powerful enough to put an Immortal Lord down for good.

BOOOOM!

The surrounding trees exploded apart as the soundwave spread through the forest. Rhazor crossed his arms in front of his face while coating his body with void energy, but even then, he was blasted backward through several trees.

CRASH! CRASH! CRASH!

He finally slammed into a massive trunk before forcing himself to stop. His bones squeaked and rattled from the deadly impact.

Blood trickled from the corner of his mouth.

"Damn, I am getting my ass whooped," Rhazor smirked.

His ears rang violently, and for a brief second, his vision blurred. He wasn't at the point where he was hopeless yet. However, he also knew this forest could kill him, so he kept his focus on the vines and trees around him.

In here, everything was a danger to his life.

'It doesn't matter how strong you are, there are some things that cannot be navigated easily,' he said to himself and winced, his body still throbbing from the pain of the impact.

Before he could recover, the ground beneath him suddenly trembled.

His eyes widened.

Without hesitation, he vanished from his position using Void Shift.

BOOOOOOM!!!

A gigantic vine erupted from the ground exactly where he had been standing moments earlier. The impact alone created a crater hundreds of meters wide.

If he hadn't moved, he would have already found himself severely injured.

But with the Void Shift, Rhazor reappeared high above the forest canopy, breathing heavily as his crimson eyes scanned the endless sea of greenery beneath him.

For a moment, his crimson hair billowed in the air, making him look like a vampire prince. But he had no time to focus on any of that.

Unfortunately, the moment he rose into the air, countless crimson eyes opened throughout the forest, taking away the serene view he would have admired.

One after another, several eerie eyes snap open.

Soon, thousands of them snapped open.

"...You've got to be kidding me. Is this forest a single entity or countless individuals?"

The unison felt eerie. There was no way separate individuals could have such cohesion. The only explanation, however, pointed to a single entity: the entire forest.

The forest was one dangerous monster, so no amount of vines he cut could save him from more coming from virtually every direction. The forest could spawn more vines.

This also meant that, if he had to, he would only need to kill one entity to secure his freedom if killing the forest was the endgame.

This, however, didn't make Rhazor happy. While killing one is much better than killing thousands, he knew things were far from simple.

If the entire forest were a single entity, then it meant that no matter how many vines and flower monsters he killed, unless he could identify the main core of the forest and kill it, he would never be free.

'I am too young to be fighting a forest,' Rhazor made up his mind. He had to run no matter what.

ROOOOAR!!!

The forest itself came alive.

Massive trees began twisting unnaturally as bark split apart, revealing mouths, eyes, and writhing vines hidden beneath the trunks. Every hideous nightmare he had ever had was coming alive as the forest revealed its deadly nature.

Flower monsters rose from every direction.

Some were as large as mountains.

Others floated in the air like giant jellyfish, releasing clouds of poisonous spores that corrupted even the surrounding space.

The pressure in the area skyrocketed instantly.

Rhazor's expression finally turned serious.

"This forest is alive, and it wants to eat me."

The moment those words left his mouth, danger screamed in his mind once more.

SHIIIIING!

A black vine suddenly pierced through space itself and appeared directly in front of his face.

Rhazor instinctively tilted his head.

The vine brushed past his cheek, leaving behind a burning cut.

<Corrosive poison detected>

<Neutralizing...>

<Neutralization slowed>

Rhazor's pupils contracted.

The next second, his body exploded into flames as dragon wings fashioned from fire burst out from his back.

'Nirvana, allow me to borrow your wings.'

The dragon tattoo on his left arm glowed, and a female voice entered his head.

'Okay, Daddy.'

Rhazor decided to activate the power of his Chaotic Nirvana Flame Spirit. With the wings now activated, his speed tripled. He wasted no time and immediately started flying, dodging one deadly stab after another.

A few minutes into his flight, Rhazor realized that flying over the forest was a bad idea, so he dove downward and started maneuvering through the thick forest, now filled with the pressure of demigod vines.

Suddenly, the sky darkened completely, as if night had arrived and no moon filled the heavens.

Rhazor slowly looked upward.

Above him hovered an enormous flower creature so massive that it blocked out the sky itself. Its petals stretched for kilometers, while countless rotating crimson eyes covered its body.

At the center of the flower was a gigantic mouth filled with spiraling teeth.

Drool mixed with venom poured from its jaws like waterfalls. The poison from the flower monster sizzled as it dripped down, burning and melting the very ground.

And standing atop the flower...

...was a humanoid figure made entirely of vines.

The figure slowly opened its glowing green eyes and stared directly at Rhazor.

"An Early God." Rhazor sensed danger unlike anything he had expected. The appearance of the humanoid didn't lighten the mood at all.

'Is it just me, or does this forest seem more overpowered than normal gods?' Rhazor's eyes narrowed further.

He expected Gods to be powerful, but he never expected one to possess this much presence. He felt that this vine-humanoid Early God was at least three times stronger than a normal One.

"Human, since you have come, then why don't you stay?" Suddenly, the humanoid spoke.

'Oh, it can speak.' Rhazor grinned and replied,

"Excuse me, vine person, you wouldn't happen to know the way out of this forest, would you?"

Chapter 1555 - 1555: A Deadly Battle

The humanoid vine figure stared at Rhazor in silence for a few seconds. Clearly, it was offended by Rhazor's question. Of course, it had to be, considering it had come to kill him.

But as it stared at him eerily, Rhazor sensed the danger growing even more chilling. It was like the vine god was thinking of all the ways it would kill him.

Suddenly, the entire forest trembled.

BOOOOOOM!!!

Thousands of vines erupted from every direction like dragons breaking free from the earth itself. The sheer pressure distorted the atmosphere as the gigantic flower beneath the humanoid opened its horrifying mouth even wider.

Rhazor's grin disappeared instantly. Then, like a madman, he smiled.

"Oh, so talking failed."

He smirked. "The one who said communication solves all problems should be sent to the gulag and whipped a million times."

SHIIIIING! SHIIIIING! SHIIIIING!

The vines pierced through space itself, attacking from impossible angles. Their speeds were several times faster than before.

Rhazor knew simple evasion wouldn't work, so he instantly vanished.

He used Void Shift, allowing his body to travel through the void.

His body flickered between dimensions as dozens of vines tore through his afterimages. The moment he reappeared, he swung his sword violently, channeling an overwhelming power.

"Flame Sword Art: Infernal Wheel!"

A gigantic flaming wheel exploded outward from his blade, expanding wide as searing heat filled the forest.

BOOOOOOOOM!!!

Hundreds of vines were instantly incinerated as the attack ripped through the forest like a storm of destruction.

The destruction was significant.

But the next second...

The burning vines regenerated almost as if he hadn't just destroyed hundreds of them.

They not only regenerated, but also split apart into even more vines.

"Seriously?" Rhazor muttered, sensing a shift in the air. His focus snapped toward the Vine God.

The humanoid Vine God finally moved.

Its hand slowly rose, and in that instant, waves of divine essence poured into the forest. Rhazor knew this bastard wasn't the original version of the forest, but merely an incarnation. But even so, he couldn't deny the overwhelming presence oozing from the Vine God.

The entire forest responded to its action.

RUMBLE!!!

Massive roots erupted from beneath the earth like world serpents. Trees twisted violently as flower monsters screamed across the skies.

As the screams grew louder, Rhazor felt it.

Space itself was being sealed by an invisible force, a discovery that made his brain tingle.

A chill instantly ran down his spine.

His eyes narrowed sharply.

"The forest can affect void movement, too?"

He wasn't even done cursing his bad luck when the Vine God suddenly disappeared, almost as though it had also tapped into the void.

Rhazor's instincts exploded instantly, his body reacting as if it were automated.

He crossed his sword over his chest immediately.

BOOOOOOM!!!

A fist made entirely of compressed vines slammed into him with catastrophic force, launching his body flying back.

The surrounding space shattered, and a terrible pressure descended upon him.

Rhazor coughed blood as his body shot backward like a cannonball, smashing through mountain-sized flowers before crashing into the earth below.

BOOOOOOM!!!

A crater thousands of meters wide exploded apart, and his body slid across the ground for several hundred meters before finally coming to a stop. By then, he could already feel that some of his bones had broken.

'Fighting against a godlike forest is no joke.'

Rhazor lay at the center, blood flowing from his forehead.

"Damn..." he coughed violently. "That hit was disgusting."

Before he could recover or get back up from the ground...

SHIIIIING!!!

Several black vines pierced through his shoulders, legs, and abdomen, pinning him to the ground.

"GUH!"

The corrosive venom instantly entered his body, spreading deep into his organs and core.

<Corrosive poison detected>

<Neutralizing...>

<Neutralization slowed>

<Warning: Unknown divine toxin detected>

Rhazor's expression finally changed. Even with his poison immunity, this corrosive venom wasn't being fully neutralized. Even Icon couldn't hold it back.

Of course, Rhazor knew Atomic could devour it. However, he wanted to train his poison immunity so that the venom would no longer corrode his body, and he knew death would not come from being poisoned.

In the future, if atomic isn't able to handle it and his immunity isn't powerful enough, he may find himself at a disadvantage. So he wanted to fix that early.

He wanted to develop a corrosive trait for his poison affinity, so he was intentionally limiting himself. Of course, it was easier said than done. Even so, he remained strong, making sure that no matter what, he wouldn't die.

But the forest had no plans to keep him alive.

It had killed thousands of humans. Rhazor was next on its menu.

The flower monsters above suddenly released massive clouds of green spores that descended like a poisonous sea. More corrosive energy filled the air.

At the same time, the humanoid Vine God raised both hands.

The forest answered.

BOOOOOOOM!!!

Gigantic trees uprooted themselves entirely and began walking toward Rhazor like ancient giants. Every stomp was powerful enough to cause the entire forest to tremble.

Every direction became a death zone.

Rhazor gritted his teeth and released flames from his body.

BOOOOOOOM!!!

The vines pinning him exploded apart.

Even now, he was still holding himself back. He knew he could not kill the forest, but he also could not reveal his trump cards just yet.

If he managed to gain his freedom and become strong enough, he would return and attempt to kill it. For now, his training continued. Though at this rate, calling him a masochist would only be accurate.

The moment he was free, he flapped his dragon wings violently and shot upward.

However—

A gigantic flower mouth suddenly appeared above him like a ghost.

Its spiraling teeth rotated at a terrifying speed.

CHOMP!!!

The flower bit downward like a glutton.

Rhazor barely managed to dodge in time, but the rotating teeth still tore through part of his left side.

Blood exploded into the air.

"ARGH!" Rhazor screamed as pain surged through his body.

His flesh was shredded instantly.

The poison entered the wound immediately. However, his healing abilities kicked in, and he began regenerating. Even so, he didn't get hurt and poisoned for nothing.

<Your understanding of Poison has improved greatly>

Rhazor's breathing became heavier as blood dripped from his body.

The humanoid Vine God looked down at him coldly.

"You cannot escape this forest."

Rhazor wiped the blood from his mouth and smirked despite his injuries.

"You know..." flames slowly ignited around his sword, "...this is the first time in a while I've been beaten this badly."

The Vine God said nothing and pointed downward instead.

The entire forest roared.

Then everything attacked at once.

Thousands of vines.

Hundreds of flower monsters.

Walking trees.

Poisonous spores.

All of it converged upon Rhazor simultaneously.

The sky itself disappeared beneath the attack. The forest was finally making a desperate move to end the bug that just wouldn't die.

Rhazor's eyes sharpened, and then he unleashed a trump card.

"Void Flame Domain!"

BOOOOOOOOM!!!

A black-and-crimson explosion erupted from his body.

Void and flame fused together as an enormous domain expanded outward, instantly incinerating countless vines while warping the nearby space.

This technique was something he had personally developed while on his way to the Devil's Maw. He was bored since Maud left to travel with the Paragon incarnation. For him to be bored said a lot about his character, considering he was part of a five-person team.

Klaus was basically the same person living five lives. The five lives were synchronized. Even though he was bored, Klaus and Kaden were having fun. That should have cheered him up.

But that was just another mystery only Klaus could explain.

The Void Flame Domain expanded widely.

But even then...

Cracks started appearing throughout the domain.

The sheer number of attacks slamming into it was overwhelming.

Rhazor's expression finally became ugly.

'At this rate... I might actually die here if I don't go all out.'

The gigantic flower above him suddenly opened its mouth again.

This time, a beam of corrosive green light began gathering inside it.

The pressure alone made Rhazor's skin crawl.

'I guess I should take Gods in here seriously.'

The humanoid Vine God spoke coldly.

"Become nourishment for the forest."

The beam fired.

At the same time, the entire forest attacked again.

Death closed in from every direction, and Rhazor, who knew what death felt like thanks to his understanding of the Law of Death, sensed his life truly in danger now.

Then suddenly, a message appeared before his vision, followed by a sweet voice.

[Route mapping complete.]

Icon's voice echoed calmly inside his head.

Rhazor's eyes widened.

[Emergency survival route found.]

[Probability of escape: 7%.]

[Probability of survival if you remain here: 0.3%.]

A glowing blue pathway instantly appeared within Rhazor's vision, weaving through the forest like a thread of life hidden amidst certain death.

Rhazor grinned wildly.

"Hah... seven percent?"

The beam of destruction was already inches away from him.

Rhazor raised his burning sword.

"That's more than enough."

Chapter 1556 - 1556: Vine Race

The beam of corrosive light fired by the flower monster descended like divine judgment, its force pressing heavily down on Rhazor.

At the same moment, countless vines, flower monsters, and walking trees closed in from every direction, bringing with them even more corrosion and danger.

Rhazor's eyes burned fiercely. He had found a path to freedom, though with only a 7% chance of success. Naturally, that measly percentage told him this was no longer a training session.

It had now become a battle to the death, and he had to win.

While dying would not be permanent for him, considering Klaus could simply create another incarnation, the energy required to recreate him would be enormous, and his cultivation would fall to the True Immortal Realm, the same level as his original body. Not to mention the disgrace and stain it would leave on his reputation.

All of this, coupled with the fact that dying would prevent him from obtaining the [Flame Dao Crystal], made him grit his teeth as he moved.

BOOOOOOM!!!

His Void Flame Domain exploded violently as he slashed his sword downward.

"Void Flame Art: Abyssal Flash!"

A black-and-crimson slash tore through space itself, vanishing and reappearing like a void blink.

The corrosive beam collided head-on with the slash, causing space itself to tremble violently.

For a single second, everything froze. Not even a vine could be heard rattling throughout the dense, venomous, and corrosive forest.

Then...

BOOOOOOOOOOM!!!

The sky exploded.

A catastrophic shockwave blasted across the forest as void flames devoured the corrosive beam. The collision warped space so badly that even nearby vines were shredded apart by spatial fractures.

Rhazor didn't even wait for the explosion to settle.

The moment the pathway appeared within his vision, he vanished using Void Shift. His speed was already on another level of madness, so he moved at a terrifying pace.

His body flickered through space, reappearing several kilometers away directly along the glowing blue route Icon had mapped out.

The second he appeared...

SHIIIIING!!!

Several black vines pierced through the location he had just left behind. A second later, and he would have become a sieve.

Rhazor inhaled sharply.

'Too close.'

[Warning: The forest is adapting to your void fluctuations.]

"Of course it is."

Rhazor gritted his teeth and accelerated, moving even faster now. He knew the forest was a single entity, and to be frank, he had no idea how he was supposed to defeat it. As he moved, he tapped into his connection with his four flame spirits.

'Guys, do any of you have a way for me to defeat this forest? I haven't fought a forest before, so I don't even know where to start.'

'How about you use me to burn them to cinders?' Nirvana, the Flame Spirit of the Chaotic Nirvana Forbidden Flame, suggested, but Rhazor merely laughed.

'Not everything can be solved through Chaos, Nirvana.' Rhazor smirk

'Daddy can try burning them with the Soul Fury Flame. Since the forest is a single entity, I am sure its soul would be burned.' Fury also suggested, and to be frank, Rhazor knew it could work.

However, he wouldn't get the chance to try it since the forest was chasing him. Or rather, at this stage, he was running through the forest, doing his best to avoid every rattle of a vine, every puff released by a monster flower, and even deadly collisions with the walking trees.

BOOOOM!!!

Flames exploded from his dragon wings as he shot through the forest at terrifying speed.

The glowing route before his vision twisted unpredictably.

Left.

Down.

Right.

Up again.

The route wasn't taking him through safe zones.

It was taking him through the only survivable zones, and those zones made up just 7% of the hundreds-of-thousands-of-miles-wide forest.

Behind and around him, the forest roared furiously.

The gigantic Vine God narrowed its glowing eyes.

For the first time, its expression shifted slightly as it watched Rhazor weave his way through one obstacle after another.

It was as though the forest was surprised by his resourcefulness.

"Interesting," it muttered, its glowing eyes narrowing further.

The gigantic flower beneath it suddenly released a deafening screech.

SKREEEEEEEEEE!!!

The sound spread instantly throughout the forest, sending deadly signals to everything around Rhazor.

Every vine.

Every flower.

Every tree.

All of them went berserk.

Rhazor's face twitched.

"Oh, come on."

BOOOOOOM!!!

The forest exploded into motion as chaos spread everywhere.

Vines shattered mountains apart as they pursued him relentlessly. Flower monsters descended from the skies, while poisonous spores flooded the surrounding area like a tsunami.

Even space itself began distorting more violently around him.

The forest was trying to completely lock him down, yet Rhazor refused to give in, not when he hadn't even managed to make a name for himself yet.

Rhazor's expression became ugly.

'Oh, I will kill this forest before leaving this godforsaken place.'

His body flickered as he moved even faster.

Feeling how his techniques were being neutralized the moment he used them a second time, he suddenly understood something terrifying.

"This thing..." his pupils trembled slightly, "...it's very intelligent."

Not just intelligent.

It was learning, and at a terrifying speed.

Every second he used Void Shift, the forest adapted further.

Every flame attack he unleashed became less effective.

Even the poison was evolving. It felt as though he had found himself in a situation where he constantly had to adapt, or else he would be placed at a disadvantage.

[Warning: Unknown toxin mutation detected.]

"...You have got to be kidding me."

Rhazor's scalp tingled.

'This isn't just a normal living forest. This is a living superorganism capable of rapid evolution and adaptation.'

Suddenly...

BOOOOOOM!!!

A colossal root erupted directly in front of Rhazor, completely blocking his sight.

Rhazor instantly twisted his body sideways, narrowly avoiding it.

But before he could recover from that deadly maneuver...

SHIIIIING!!!

A black vine pierced through his right shoulder.

Blood exploded outward.

"GUH!"

The impact spun his body violently through the air.

Three more vines followed immediately.

Rhazor's eyes sharpened.

"Not happening."

Ten crimson spears instantly appeared around him, spinning at deadly speed.

"Rip them apart."

The spears exploded outward like divine lightning, closing in on the vines like vipers.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The attacking vines were shredded apart instantly.

Rhazor used the opening to stabilize himself.

But the next second...

His eyes widened.

The severed vine pieces wriggled violently.

Then each fragment transformed into entirely new vines.

"No way."

[Analysis complete.]

[The forest possesses infinite regenerative propagation.]

[Destroying fragments multiplies total biomass.]

Rhazor's eyes narrowed as waves of killing intent exploded from them.

"So cutting them makes things worse?"

[Correct.]

Rhazor nearly cursed out loud.

"What kind of bullshit enemy is this?!" His voice was drowned out by the deadly screeches and roars of the forest.

Suddenly, the glowing route in his vision changed.

Rhazor's eyes narrowed sharply.

Ahead of him, the forest abruptly stopped.

There were no vines, no flower monsters, and no moving trees.

Only silence.

A massive circular area stretched before him, spanning several thousand kilometers wide.

At the center stood a gigantic black tree so enormous that its top vanished beyond the clouds.

Unlike the rest of the forest, this tree radiated absolute death.

Even the surrounding vines refused to approach it, almost as though they were afraid of it.

Rhazor slowly stopped moving.

His instincts screamed louder than ever before. He knew he had to run. However, he had nowhere else to go.

[Warning.]

[Extreme danger detected.]

[Probability of survival beyond this point: Unknown.]

Rhazor stared silently at the black tree.

Then his lips slowly curled upward.

"Icon, sweetheart, why do I feel like the route you found is somehow even more dangerous than the forest behind me?"

Chapter 1557 - 1557: Death Sovereign Tree (1)

Rhazor stood still, his gaze locked on the towering black tree.

He could tell at a glance that this tree wasn't the core of the forest. However, it was still a True God-level living tree that reeked of death.

'If I didn't know better, I would say this tree is dying. However, considering it is a True God, then it means this tree wields the Law of Death, and judging by the concentration of death qi around it, it has already reached perfect mastery.'

Icon quickly verified his observation, but it also told him something that made Rhazor beam with happiness.

There was hope for him after all, provided he could defeat this tree.

[Analysis complete.]

[Target identified: Death Sovereign Tree.]

[Threat Level: Extreme.]

[Estimated Cultivation: Peak True God.]

[Primary Affinity: Death.]

[Kill the Death Sovereign Tree, and you can escape through its soul portal.]

'Soul portal,' Rhazor thought inwardly, looking at the black tree as it slowly released more death aura into the air.

It probably thought Rhazor didn't know anything about the Law of Death, so it was using the opportunity to gain an advantage for itself.

However, Rhazor not only had an affinity for the Law of Death, but all five incarnations could use it as well. Klaus had only made the universe aware of Rhazor's Void and Flame affinities as a destruction from his true trump cards.

In here, he could use any law he had an affinity for since nobody was watching.

But he refrained from speaking and let the tree continue releasing more death energy into the air. After five minutes, Rhazor cleared his throat and spoke.

"Are we going to play the waiting game or actually fight, so I can kill you and finally leave this godforsaken place?"

His words resonated with the tree immediately, and before they could even die down, thick vines with a metallic sheen burst out from the ground. Thousands of them pierced the air and stabbed toward Rhazor.

They arrived before him, and like hungry snakes, they launched stabbing attacks, most aimed at his head.

Rhazor tapped into his Void affinity, and this time, instead of Void Shift, he used Void Blink.

His body flickered, and he vanished. The next second, he appeared elsewhere, and with a powerful swing of his sword, a thick vine was severed in half. Then he flickered again, and another vine was cut apart.

Rhazor was an Immortal Monarch, several realms below the rank of a True God. So, he was basically locked in a battle against someone far deadlier and stronger than he was.

He knew that, and so he wasn't holding anything back this time.

Icon had brought him to the place where he would have the highest chance of success, though his survival remained uncertain.

There was simply no way an Immortal Monarch should be pitted against a deadly True God, especially one that was also a tree monster and likely had the backing of a Universal God if Rhazor's estimation of the entire forest was correct.

Rhazor summoned ten spears and, using his mind, hurled them forward, controlling them as they attacked. He knew he had to put all his cards on the table, so he summoned all four Flame Spirits.

Nirvana, the Chaos Nirvana Forbidden Flame, appeared and immediately transformed into her orange flame dragon form.

Furthermore, Soul Fury, the Soul Fury Forbidden Flame, also appeared and quickly assumed his white dragon form before soaring into the air.

The Void Incineration Forbidden Flame, Void, also took on her phoenix form, and red flames accompanied by piercing screeches filled the air.

Lastly, Qilin, the Primordial Desolation Forbidden Flame, took on his dark-red qilin form and disappeared into the battle, unleashing the fury of his flames upon the poor tree, which was about to find out that it had messed with the wrong immortal.

Rhazor evaded a stabbing attack and countered with a flying spear, driving it straight through one of the vines. Then he vanished into the void, reappearing 200 meters away from the dark tree.

'What the hell was that?'

Rhazor thought inwardly, his expression hardening.

Just now, he had attempted to get closer to the tree, but something had blocked him the moment he came within 200 meters of it.

'Does this have something to do with its domain?'

The thought lingered in his mind, but he had no time to dwell on it.

Thousands of vines continued to pierce toward him, tearing through the air like metallic spears.

Rhazor's figure flickered repeatedly as he weaved through the endless barrage, using the power of the void to his advantage.

Before reaching the Immortal Stage, the use of powerful skills and techniques was necessary. However, the moment one reaches the Immortal and God Stages, paying more attention to the laws is, without a doubt, the most important next step a warrior is supposed to take.

God's fight is based on three things...

First, they fight based on domain mastery. Domains are mastered through the comprehension of one's Law of Self and True Law Mastery. The Law of Self has to do with one's understanding of their class, elements, and everything that makes them a warrior, as well as what they aspire to be.

The main law improves upon that and enables the warrior to keep improving as they master their laws.

The second is their affinity and mastery of a law or laws. Having an affinity for a law but possessing low mastery renders it useless, and as such, no matter the combat power you possess, defeating someone with higher law mastery becomes a problem.

Last, of course, are skills and techniques. A good technique goes a long way, especially if one's domain is powerful and their mastery of the law is also strong.

Rhazor possesses two out of the three. His domain is only partial, and it consumes a lot of time and energy, so until he fully understands it or reaches the stage to fully wield it, using it would undoubtedly be a disaster for him.

So he was making good use of his law mastery and skills to stay ahead of the game.

But the tree isn't making things easy for him either.

The vines came from every direction, twisting and turning in the air as though they possessed minds of their own. Some attacked directly, while others curved around to strike from his blind spots.

Boom!

A vine slammed into the ground where he had been standing a split second earlier, creating a crater hundreds of meters wide.

The sheer force behind the attack made Rhazor narrow his eyes in shock.

This wasn't just a difference in cultivation, as one would believe.

The Death Sovereign Tree's physical strength was absurd. Many True Gods at its level wouldn't be able to cause that much damage from a single attack that wasn't even its full-power strike.

Another dozen vines shot toward him. Rhazor waved his hand, and the ten flying spears instantly changed direction and collided with the incoming attacks.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Metallic sounds echoed throughout the forest.

The vines weren't soft plant matter like the ones he had destroyed inside the forest.

These ones were much harder, like divine metals.

Several spears bounced away, while others managed to leave shallow wounds. Though at this stage, the injuries were insignificant.

Before Rhazor's eyes, black death energy flowed through the damaged sections, instantly repairing them.

"Tch."

Rhazor clicked his tongue.

"Regeneration. Of course, it has regeneration. What kind of annoying monster would be complete without it?"

Above him, Nirvana released a sea of orange flames.

Chapter 1558 - 1558: Death Sovereign Tree (2)

The Chaos Nirvana Forbidden Flame descended like heavenly punishment, engulfing hundreds of vines like a deadly fog.

The surrounding temperature instantly skyrocketed, causing the very ground to burn and melt.

The vines shriveled under the flames before exploding into ash. Although the four Forbidden Flames had not yet reached the Absolute Stage, they were still able to cause severe damage to the tree.

This showed just how deadly Forbidden Flames were.

However, despite thousands of vines turning to ash, the Death Sovereign Tree remained unmoved.

The countless branches above its trunk suddenly trembled.

Then more vines emerged.

Thousands.

No.

Tens of thousands.

The number was even greater than before.

'I understand now. So its mastery of Death Energy is being used to remain undead, meaning no amount of damage can kill it, not when it can regenerate faster and produce more vines.'

This discovery made Rhazor frown slightly. His understanding of the Death Law was profound, and so he saw through the tree's plan.

However, while he had a solution for that, there were two obstacles in his way...

'First, how am I going to get through all these vines and get close to the barrier?' Rhazor's eyes narrowed. However, a smile formed on his face as a plan began to take shape.

He tapped into the Law of Death and activated an eye technique.

"Death's Gaze."

His eyes flickered from red to black. Instantly, his vision sharpened, and he could see traces of death qi in the air.

Through that death qi, he saw a transparent barrier, now faintly black.

'Second, how do I break this damn shield?' His eyes flickered back to their normal hue just as a vine came for his neck. He dodged and severed it.

'Usually, when someone raises a powerful defense, it means they don't have a strong enough body, and so killing them is rather simple. I just need to get close and attack with everything I've got.'

Rhazor weaved through the attacks, his mind spinning as he searched for a solution. It took only a few moments for one to form.

He then sensed a command from Fury, and he obeyed.

Fury swooped down from the sky in dragon form, a trail of white flames left in his wake as he descended with great fury.

His massive jaws opened, unleashing a torrent of white fire that erupted forward, sweeping across the battlefield and reducing entire sections of vines to nothingness.

At that exact moment, Void screeched from above with deadly speed and pressure.

The phoenix spread her wings wide, and crimson and black flames, in the form of feathers, rained down from the heavens.

Qilin appeared beneath the tree and unleashed a devastating charge.

Dark-red flames exploded outward as his horns slammed into the invisible barrier surrounding the Death Sovereign Tree.

Boom!

The entire forest shook.

The shockwave flattened countless trees.

Rhazor smiled, and then he made his move.

He tapped into the void and activated his [Void Step] movement technique. Suddenly, he vanished, and the next moment, he was flying toward the barrier.

"Cleaving the Heavens, Severing the Earth."

His sword flashed through the air, unleashing a deadly sword arc formed from flame qi.

The attack landed on the barrier, and it trembled. However, not even a crack appeared on it. Even worse, vines arrived before him, forcing Rhazor to retreat.

"You are done for, buddy."

Just when he had retreated far enough, the sword in Rhazor's hand vanished, and a large reddish metallic bow appeared in its place.

He waved his hand, and a golden arrow, forged using the God-Killing Arrow Technique, appeared in his grasp.

BOOOM!

Flames exploded from the arrow, and the hundred runes on it activated, causing a deadly killing intent to gush from it.

He nocked it onto his bow, and before the tree could send more vines at him, he had already pulled back the string.

"Void Devouring Night Arrow."

The arrow left the bow, and before the tree could block it, it had already landed on the shield.

Crack!

A fracture appeared.

However, Qilin, who had already tried to destroy it once but failed, was already on the move, fully aware that this was the chance he had been waiting for.

His horns glowed red, and with deadly force, he collided with the shield.

This time, the crack widened, and before it could heal, another arrow landed on it.

Boom!

The shield shattered.

"Here is my chance."

His body blurred and vanished through the opening, before the shield began to regenerate.

As he expected, the tree reacted, with thick vines bursting from its tall, dark bark.

However, Rhazor already had a deadly move in mind, and he certainly wasn't about to allow the tree to take away his advantage.

The Flame Eater Bow vanished, and a dark-red, clawed gauntlet resembling a dragon's claw appeared and latched itself onto the back of Rhazor's right hand. The claws elongated, giving him five deadly talons that looked capable of cutting metal in half.

"Beast God Claw Art: Domain Cutter."

He slashed down hard, and four deadly red arcs flashed outward, cutting through the thousands of vines surging toward him.

They were shredded, and before more could replace them, the four arcs landed on the back of the tree.

The giant tree that had halted the pursuing forest and kept bombarding Rhazor with deadly attacks was instantly severed, the colossal trunk that pierced the clouds tilting to one side.

"ROOOAARRRRR!"

Suddenly, a thunderous roar erupted from the tree.

But Rhazor was already on the move.

His hand moved like a blur, unleashing thousands of Domain Cutters, each attack consuming a large portion of his energy.

By the time he stopped, he alone had shredded over four hundred meters of the tree's trunk, and it had already begun to fall.

Looking up, Rhazor saw the cloud-piercing giant, the once-prideful tree now dead and falling with a terrible pressure.

In fact, it had died after the first surprise attack, one it had never expected.

The remaining attacks were merely to ensure everything was done properly.

Icon had already announced his kill, which came as a pleasant surprise, considering that he viewed the entire forest as a single entity.

For a kill to be announced meant this tree was not part of the main forest.

But that was over now, since he had killed it.

Turning away from the collapsing giant, his gaze narrowed when he noticed the forest coming after him once more. With the tree dead, they had nothing to fear anymore.

Thousands of flower monsters, vines, and walking trees were charging toward him.

Most importantly, the Vine God was among the deadly forest creatures advancing on him, and that alone pissed him off.

Just then, a dark portal appeared three hundred meters away.

"Qilin," Rhazor called.

Qilin sped toward him.

The moment he arrived, Rhazor jumped onto his back, and they moved.

Before the first flower monster could reach him, Qilin disappeared through the portal, and they were gone.

Nirvana, Fury, and Void remained in the air, allowing the forest to reach them.

When it did, all three detonated their bodies, drowning tens of thousands of kilometers in scorching flames and causing thousands of forest monsters to die.

This time, the entire forest felt the damage.

The three flame spirits made sure their explosions were synchronized, multiplying the devastation several times over.

Three minutes later, the Death Sovereign Tree finally slammed into the ground, shaking the entire forest and a vast portion of the Devil's Maw.

The commotion reached many.

Many wondered what the hell was going on in the Endless Twisting Vine Forest.

The person responsible, however, had finally managed to escape the godforsaken forest for good.

Chapter 1559 - 1559: Poison Evolution

While Rhazor had no idea since he was in a hurry to escape, the explosion that Nirvana, Fury, and Void ignited by combining their powers had severely injured the forest.

The power of the three explosions was so immense that the vines, flower monsters, and walking trees failed to regenerate after they were reduced to ash. This left the vast area empty, with only ash remaining.

Rhazor may not have realized it, but he had done more damage to the living forest than anyone before him.

Ten minutes after he left, five Universe Gods with green skin and humanoid features appeared on the scene, their expressions hollow as they scanned the area.

Suddenly, a command entered their minds.

"Hunt the human down and bring me his head."

The five green-skinned gods nodded, and they vanished, chasing after Rhazor.

Somewhere deep within the forest, a four-meter-tall humanoid tree stood amidst towering flower monsters, walking trees, tree spiders, and countless other creatures, all looking toward a lone figure seated upon a throne.

This person was a Supreme, and judging by her pale-green skin, she was a tree person, a powerful one at that.

However, she looked and felt different compared to the others.

She was the main forest, or more accurately, she was the forest.

A very long time ago, a seed drifted from one of the Dao Trees currently growing within the Calamity Forest and germinated here.

Ever since then, this seed had continued to expand, starting as a small forest before eventually becoming a vast and boundless domain filled with all kinds of dangers.

Throughout her countless years, many had wandered into the dark embrace of her vastness, never to leave again.

Many demigods and gods were devoured, while some were transformed into her warriors, sent out to hunt and bring her food.

Never once had anyone escaped her control.

That was until today, when Rhazor accidentally arrived here and became the first person to do so.

But he didn't just leave.

He left with a bang, leaving her furious and highly motivated to kill him.

"Deploy all warriors. I want the head of that human," she commanded in a strange language, and the entire forest obeyed her.

Rhazor, who was riding on Qilin's back when they entered the Soul Portal as Icon had instructed, appeared in front of a river, Qilin coming to a sudden halt.

Turning back, Rhazor saw the forest roughly twenty kilometers away.

"We are not safe yet. Qilin, keep running until we can no longer see the forest."

Qilin nodded and took to the air, galloping at a deadly speed as he widened the distance between them and the forest.

Rhazor knew the forest would come after him, so he had to get as far away as possible before the pursuit began.

After running for three hours, Qilin finally stopped atop a barren cliff.

The moment he did, Rhazor jumped down and patted his head.

"Good job, Qilin. You can go back and rest."

"Okay, Daddy."

Qilin transformed into dark flames and merged with the tattoo on Rhazor's arm.

Rhazor let out a sigh of relief, his expression brightening.

"That was close," he muttered, looking at the hand he had used to kill the Death Sovereign Tree.

Back in the Jade Nest, after Kent found the Immortal Claw Art, he tasked all of his incarnations with learning it.

And so they did.

They learned the first technique of the Immortal Claw Art, the Beast God Claw Art.

The Immortal Claw Art actually contained seven different techniques, with the first being the Beast God Claw Art, which itself possessed three forms.

The one Rhazor used was the [Domain Cutter], the first form.

He had mastered the first form to sixty percent, yet he had used it to kill a True God.

Naturally, that got him wondering what would happen once he mastered all three forms of the Beast God Claw Art and unlocked the second technique of the Immortal Claw Art.

"I need to improve this Domain Cutter, master it to one hundred percent, and unlock the second form. If I can kill a True God with just the first form, what will become of me when I master the second and third forms, and even unlock the second technique?"

"I must work on that now."

Rhazor sat down and closed his eyes, appearing within his Soul Sea, where Kaden was also practicing some scythe-wielding techniques.

"Hey, dude," Rhazor said, nodding toward Kaden.

"Hey, dude," Kaden replied, narrowing his eyes at Rhazor. "Having fun already?"

Rhazor smiled and nodded.

"I just fought a forest and lived to tell the tale."

Of course, he knew Kaden was already aware of the battle. After all, they were both the same person.

Still, it felt nice to talk about it.

"Good for you. In any case, I will be visiting Earth today to check up on everyone. I might pass by that restaurant we used to visit."

Kaden waved at him and exited the Soul Sea, allowing Rhazor to focus on what he had come there to do.

He activated the Beast God Claw Art and started practicing.

Five days later, he opened his eyes in the outside world...

<Your understanding of the Beast God Claw Art has improved tremendously>

<Congratulations, you have fully mastered Domain Cutter>

<Congratulations, you have unlocked Domain Rend>

[Domain Rend (30% Mastery)]

[Description: Unleash a single claw swing and release thousands of claw arcs in an all-directional assault, covering a massive area and unleashing devastation upon everything in its path.]

"Damn, I feel like if I face that forest again, it would be ten times easier to escape," Rhazor muttered, a smile spreading across his face.

He activated the [Beast God Claw Art] again, and a gauntlet of five deadly talons covered his left hand.

He raised his right hand and summoned another gauntlet.

"Let me test it out."

He turned toward a mountain standing one kilometer away and, using his left hand, unleashed a [Domain Cutter], sending out four deadly claw arcs.

They slammed into the mountain, carved a path through it, and continued onward.

"Wow. I only used fifty percent mastery, and it is already this strong." Rhazor grinned. "As expected of the Beast God. He wasn't a simple existence."

"Now, the [Domain Rend]."

He kept the same direction and tapped into the 30% mastery he had of the [Domain Rend], the second form of the [Beast God Claw Art].

Then he unleashed a claw slash.

More than three hundred claw arcs burst forth toward the mountain.

When they passed, the rays of the sun, which had initially been blocked by the mountain, illuminated his face. The mountain was nowhere to be seen...

"Well, looks like I have nothing to worry about now, do I?"

Rhazor grinned and deactivated the claws before taking a deep breath and patting himself on the back.

He summoned the map, and thanks to Icon, he quickly spotted his current location.

"I'll have to go around the forest, which means passing through the Naga King's domain. I just hope the Flame Dao Crystal is still there by the time I reach the Crimson Haunted Valley."

Rhazor sighed and was about to summon Nirvana's wings when a series of messages appeared before him.

<You have absorbed a large quantity of Corrosive Poison.>

<Your understanding of Poison has improved greatly.>

<Evolution requirement met. Your Poison is ready to evolve.>

<Yes/No>

"Yes, of course."

Kent felt a wave of corrosive energy surge through his body.

<Your Poison has undergone its first evolution.>

<Congratulations, your Poison has evolved into Blood Corrosive Poison.>

<You have attained Poison Harmony in both Comprehension and Resistance.>

<Congratulations, you have awakened a new innate ability: Poison Aura.>

[Poison Aura]

[Rank: Innate]

[Description: Coat your weapons with poison to increase their damage output by 10,000%. The higher your comprehension of poison, the stronger the effect.]

Chapter 1560 - 1560: Assessment

"Another power-up," Rhazor muttered, and then he proceeded to channel Poison Aura.

He lifted his right index finger and channeled a swirling mist of red energy.

The moment the red mist appeared, he sensed an overwhelming killing intent and death qi emanating from it. Instantly, he felt his power grow stronger.

"This power... I can feel my entire body filled with it."

Rhazor wasn't the only one who felt it.

His other incarnations did as well, and as someone who aspired to become the strongest in the entire universe and beyond, Klaus instantly realized something.

'I had always thought the Dao was the peak of all energy. However, it appears I was wrong. The Dao is only one part of a greater whole. This means that Aura, Intent, Concept, Law, and, finally, Dao are supposed to be cultivated separately yet together.

So far, I have been cultivating Laws and Intent—well, for some energies. However, if I take the time to cultivate all five, then just how strong would I become?'

Seated in a cafeteria within the Academy, Klaus smiled and made a mental note to create two more bodies.

Since he had awakened the bloodlines of the Asura God and Knox, the Divine Archer, he could create two additional incarnations.

He planned to use Knox's incarnation to comprehend the Auras and Intents of every energy under his command.

That meant Gravity, Void, Blood, Space, and several others would all need to be comprehended, with their Auras and Intents fully awakened.

Then, using his incarnation as Asura, he would focus on comprehending Concepts.

As for Laws, he would leave them to Pickle Berry, whose understanding deepened as she grew older.

The Dao could wait until he became a god.

While comprehending the Dao typically began at the Supreme Stage, Klaus had no issue starting early.

He had the bodies to do so.

Rhazor deactivated the [Poison Aura] and turned west.

'It will take me at least a week, even at full speed, to reach the edge of the Naga King's domain. I'd better be prepared for a grim welcome.'

Rhazor smirked and summoned Nirvana's wings.

Then, tapping into the void, he moved, traveling several hundred thousand kilometers in a matter of seconds.

[The Academy]

The day Klaus had been waiting for finally arrived.

Today, he would take the assessment that would determine the Tier, or Class, of Engineer he would become.

He had already been briefed by Eiko, so he knew the kind of test he would be taking.

Since engineering required proficiency in both formations and arrays, he would be tested on both.

Of course, knowledge of blacksmithing and artisanship was also required, but that wasn't a problem for Klaus. More importantly, there are powerful machines that can 3D print anything these days.

During the Primordial Era, his first incarnation mastered various crafts, laying the foundation for his future incarnations.

As such, he only needed to prove his knowledge of arrays and formations.

Throughout the days leading up to today, he had sensed the gazes of more than ten Celestials.

It seemed Paragon had dealt them a significant blow, so, as someone whose name was constantly mentioned alongside his, Klaus knew they wanted to see whether he was truly related to Paragon.

However, aside from chatting with Eiko and reading notes on Arrays and Formations in the library, he was basically doing nothing.

During that time, he sensed three familiar gazes.

It turned out that Supreme warrior Sayuri had reunited with her two sisters, Xania and Xenia, in person. They came to the academy.

They had come to check whether Klaus was indeed the Paragon. However, noticing the Celestials keeping an eye on him, they refrained from doing anything and merely observed him.

Today, Klaus knew he was going to meet more than just the Headmistress of the Engineering College.

He knew the Celestials would be there, and so would the other two heads.

"Are you ready to go?" Eiko asked the moment Klaus opened his door.

"Eiko, isn't it too early for you to be here?"

Eiko smiled shyly and responded, "I'm just excited to see if you can outclass me."

Klaus laughed.

"Honestly speaking, I can even outclass the so-called top-ranking engineers here. However, I wouldn't want to become the center of attention just yet."

Eiko smirked and started walking away, a clear sign that Klaus should follow.

"The top five are all Class H Engineers, meaning they are Saint Engineers capable of creating SSS-Class weapons.

The last time I checked, the third ranker had created a bow and arrow capable of killing even a Supreme. He also created a domain-type weapon capable of killing a group of gods.

So I wouldn't be so sure about outclassing them. Maybe you should aim for Class G, which would make you a Supreme Engineer."

Klaus shook his head.

"What is with this ranking? Why does a Supreme Engineer rank below a Saint Engineer?"

"I don't know. I came to meet it this way, too, so I never questioned it. Of course, you can ask the elders when you meet them."

They soon left the Class Dome area and made their way toward a sleek building made entirely of gold.

As they drew closer, Klaus could sense the presence of a Celestial and a Supreme inside the building.

'I guess they're all here.'

A few minutes later, they stood in the room.

Eiko looked at him and smiled.

"Just know that your assessment will be streamed to all engineers, so give it your all and you might gain the recognition of a powerful master."

"Aren't you coming?" Klaus asked, looking at the petite lady who had been keeping him company for the past couple of days.

"Only the disciple being assessed can enter. I will wait for you under that pavilion."

Klaus nodded and watched Eiko walk away.

He sighed and entered the hall.

The hall was vast and filled with a wide range of engineering tools.

Klaus scanned a few of them before focusing on the people gathered inside.

He counted ten Celestials, each possessing a powerful presence.

Although they dressed regally, Klaus knew they were warriors, true warriors worthy of his respect.

Aside from them, Supreme Warrior Sayuri was also present and seated, and on both her left and right sat two ladies Klaus immediately recognized.

Away from them, Supreme Engineer Winnie sat together with Supreme Healer Gideon of the Healer/Mage College and Supreme Queen Mirabel from the Universe Bank.

A few others with various badges sat alongside them.

Klaus recognized them from Eiko's comprehensive description of the Engineering College's hierarchy.

They were the Elder Engineers, beings with great knowledge of weapon crafting.

They were seated on an elevated platform, and at the center stood a slightly raised circular platform.

Atop it sat a rune knife and three formation core discs.

Klaus walked calmly and climbed onto the circular platform.

"Welcome to your assessment, Disciple Klaus, or do you prefer Renegade Hunter?" Supreme Engineer Winnie asked.

"Klaus is fine."

"Very well. Before we proceed, allow me to introduce the guests we have with us today."

Supreme Engineer Winnie introduced everyone.

When she was done, she returned her attention to Klaus.

"Before you can officially join the Engineering College, it is assumed that you already possess some knowledge of arrays and formations.

Since that is the case, you will be presented with three trials.

Based on your performance in each one, your final class as an engineer will be determined at the end of the assessment.

You will have twelve hours to complete all three trials, and you are free to choose which trial you wish to attempt first."

"Now, you may ask any questions before we begin."