

## Paragon 281

Chapter 281 - 281: The Seven-Star Forbidden Diagram

"Ancient Forbidden Relics?" Fruity asked, puzzled. Deep down, he knew he knew something about it, but he just couldn't recall what.

"I'm sorry, Master, but I don't know much. All I know is that this relic is one of the nine Ancient Forbidden Relics from the Primordial Era," Yuying answered. "But even though I don't know much about it, I do know that if you manage to fuse with it, you will obtain the legendary Seven Divine Beasts Art," she added.

"Now, that's something to go on," Fruity smiled. The Seven Divine Beasts Art—he knew about it, or more like his past self knew about it. Conveniently, he also needed to know about it at this very moment.

It was a powerful technique that, once cultivated, allowed one to transform any of their elements into a beast form. If Fruity managed to fuse with the relic, he would obtain the Seven Divine Beasts Art, which would allow his elements to transform into seven Divine Beasts said to have gone extinct after the Primordial Era.

"It's of no use then. The Seven Divine Primordial Beasts are long extinct. I would need at least a part of them to activate their spirits using the Forbidden Diagram," Fruity said. However, immediately when he said that, something seemed to click making him raise an eyebrow.

"I'm sorry, Yuying. You'll have to stand guard—I need to meditate for a while."

Yuying nodded, and Fruity assumed a lotus posture, closing his eyes and entering a meditative state.

He had just remembered something he shouldn't have, which made him wonder what else was hiding beneath the surface, waiting for him. As someone who cultivated two powerful mind techniques, Fruity knew when something was off in his mind. So, he entered meditation and remained seated, eyes closed, for the next two days.

On the third day, he opened his eyes and sighed. "It's of no use. Even with this relic and the technique, I still don't have anything containing the essence of the Seven Divine Primordial Beasts."

He went through his memories but couldn't find anything that could help him. However, he did come across some information on the Seven Star Forbidden Diagram. But it all boiled down to whether he would be able to secure the essence of such primordial beasts.

"Don't worry, Master. I know someone who might be able to help with that. He's some kind of collector of ancient artifacts, so if we can get to the Central Region, we should be able to learn something from him," Yuying said, noticing the defeated look on her Master's face.

"You said you were created during the Primordial Era, right?" Fruity asked. Although he still hadn't accepted the fact that he was the one who created her, he could at least pretend he wasn't affected by it.

"Yes, Master. All nine of us," she replied with a smile.

"Then what can you tell me about the Seven Divine Primordial Beasts?" Fruity asked. "I have some knowledge, but it's foggy."

"It's a long story, and I can't share everything, but it's said that during the Primordial Era, nine separate phenomena occurred. Nine stars fell from the sky, birthing different beings or things. From one of these stars, seven eggs said to be divine in nature birthed seven Divine Beasts: the Diamond Horned Qilin, the Vermillion Flame Phoenix, the Celestial Thunder Serpent, the Abyssal Leviathan, the Jade Wind Tiger, the Golden-Eyed Abyss Dragon, and the Radiant Solar Lion.

These seven Divine Beasts were the guardians of one of Hell's Dark Dreadful Gates. I can't say much more, but when I awakened the next generation, they were gone, along with the Primordial Era. Nobody knew where they had gone or whether or not they were still alive.

However, I think you already know what happened, so there's no need to speak it out," Yuying said.

Fruity sighed. Indeed, the Primordial Era was destroyed. While some things from that time might have survived, many perished. So it was only natural to assume that the Seven Divine Beasts had also perished with them.

"I guess I can't have everything," Fruity said, placing the disc on the floor. "At least with this, I can somehow use my elements more efficiently." He sighed.

"You should probably step back, Yuying," Fruity said, and Yuying moved back several meters.

Taking a dagger from his soul ring, Fruity cut his palm and dripped his blood onto the disc, which immediately absorbed it. After a few more drops, it started to glow red, and with a subtle burst of energy, a huge diagram appeared beneath him.

He then began to rise slowly from the ground along with the disc. After rising to about 20 meters, the disc started to release a wave of energy that forced Yuying to step back even further.

After a while, the disc stopped spinning, but it reduced in size to a very small, thumb-sized die, which then moved and embedded itself in Fruity's forehead.

The moment the die entered his forehead, Fruity felt his entire body fill with a strange energy. His consciousness immediately fell into slumber while still hovering in the air.

This process took a whole week before suddenly, a wave of powerful energy burst from his body, and a magnificent ring with seven stars inside it appeared behind him.

The moment the ring appeared, he underwent some slight evolution that changed some aspects of his appearance. While his monk's attire was still perfectly clad around his body, it seemed to have undergone some modification that added a layer of security and finesse to it.

It looks cooler when instead of it tied with a cloth around his waist, this time, a golden belt with some pattern on it appears to tie the robes well. But it wasn't only his attire that went through the changes.

He became more handsome, even for a monk, but I suppose he wasn't a normal monk. His eyes were silver violet, reminiscent of his hair, which had now extended further behind him. His facial features had also enhanced, making him seriously handsome for a monk.

His muscles became slightly refined, giving him the athletic warrior physique that, under normal circumstances, a 23-year-old shouldn't have. Yet nature had been kind to him. He had become an incredibly eye-catching human.

But appearance aside, Fruity sensed that his energy had become incredibly powerful and thicker.

"It's Star Qi, Master! You have unlocked Star Qi," Yuying said with an excited smile. She retrieved her sword and swung it in a wide arc, sending out a quick sword light that cut a chunk off the mountain.

"Finally, I can use it again!" Yuying was more than happy.

"What happened?" Fruity asked. He was the one who awakened Star Qi, so why was she happier than he was?

"Master has awakened Star Qi. This means the Paragon Star has started to awaken, which also means all the Paragon Guards will start to awaken. And we can now use Star Qi, just like Master," Yuying said with a beaming smile.

"Great, then. But why does it seem like yours is weaker than mine? I can sense it, and it's not as strong as what is flowing through me," Fruity inquired. Besides his enhanced appearance and the unlocking of a new form of energy, he also felt a stronger connection with Yuying.

"That's because we are not the true owners of this energy; we are just tapping into yours, so automatically, we won't have the real deal. But even if it's only 60% of the true Star Qi, it's still many times stronger than the strongest energy in the heavens," Yuying said, her shoulders high.

"Good, then. We will need it for the journey to the North and Central Regions," Fruity said. "First, however, let's head to the domain of the Quick Finger Ratmouse. I have something to claim there."

Fruity, along with his excited servant, guard, and teacher, left as they began their journey to the North, but first, they had to make one important stop.

#### Chapter 282 - 282: Journey Toward The North

When Fruity asked Yuying how long it would take him to travel from the Eastern part of the Tormented World to the Northern region, she said 12 years. However, if she carried him, it would take only 2 years—after all, she wasn't an Ascendent for nothing.

But everything changed when Fruity awakened his Star Qi. He had become stronger and faster, far beyond his expectations. This, of course, affected Yuying too, making her even stronger.

Because of this, Fruity no longer wanted to travel the way they had initially planned. There were hundreds of domains between them and the Northern Region, and while the current Yuying could have made the journey in just 8 months, Fruity preferred the idea of going on a road trip.

Thanks to the second memory he received, he now had a more updated map in his mind. So, instead of the 8-month journey, they embarked on a 1.5-year journey where Fruity planned to strengthen himself and his elements by devouring various things along the way.

The first thing he devoured was a 200,000-year-old tree said to contain the vitality of the deceased Quick Finger Ratmouse. These demon monsters were known for their ruthlessness. When they appeared within a domain, they wouldn't stop until they'd taken everything from it.

Fruity, knowing this, was quick to repay them by stealing something they had cherished for many years. Using his hypnotic ice, the Ratmice didn't even notice until he was long gone. He wanted to avoid causing more chaos for himself, so he decided to avoid conflict as much as possible.

The year and a half they would spend traveling through the horrific Tormented World wasn't for sightseeing. Fruity wanted to gain as much experience and mastery over his elements as possible before returning to the human world.

So far, his strongest element was the Hypnotic Ice, which had broken through from Common Rank to Realm Rank. This made many things easier for Fruity, but he knew relying on just one element to solve all his problems wasn't the answer.

He needed to strengthen his other elements as well. Yuying, who, from what Fruity had observed, had already traveled the entire world, was incredibly helpful in identifying the best places to pass for maximum rewards.

Initially, Fruity wanted to simultaneously strengthen all his elements, but after seeing little to no improvement despite absorbing large amounts of energy, he knew he had to change his approach. That's when he decided to focus on one element at a time.

He knew he couldn't elevate all his elements to Realm Rank within just a year and a half, so his goal was to advance as many elements from Common Rank to Refined Rank as possible. This would allow him to use them more effectively and efficiently.

For his first choice, he selected Devouring Ice. The reason was simple—by strengthening Devouring Ice, he would be able to do more, devour more, and absorb energies more efficiently, which would, in turn, help him raise the strength of the other elements faster.

So, for three months straight, he allocated all the energy he obtained from devouring anything containing qi to the Devouring Ice. Yuying ensured they always found the next thing to devour, and after three months of devouring thousands of monsters and treasures, the Devouring Ice ascended to Refined Rank.

The moment its rank rose, Fruity selected the next element, Annihilation Ice. His choice wasn't based on short-term goals; otherwise, he would have picked Soul Eater Ice. However, Fruity had now become something of a Combat Mage.

This meant he could fight in close combat while also casting spells and magic. Because of this, he needed an ice element capable of dealing maximum damage. Annihilation Ice was perfect for that, so he wasted no time switching his focus to it.

As he strengthened it, he also used it in combat, developing minor techniques to use it efficiently in both combat and spellcasting. It took him four full months to push it to Refined Rank, and by then, they had traveled halfway to their destination.

For the third element, he chose Chaotic Ice, which also took three months to push to the Refined Rank. But when Chaotic Ice rose to Refined Rank, something strange happened.

Fruity received a mind-attack technique called Mind in Chaos. When the technique entered his mind, he was shocked beyond his senses. At first, he thought it was due to his immense mental strength or his past memories, but after reviewing the technique, he discovered it was linked to the Chaotic Ice.

The technique allowed him to imprint chaotic thoughts into the minds of others. While its effectiveness depended on the power of his own mind, the chaotic ice would amplify the attack twofold every time he used it.

The worst part? If the imprint stuck, it would begin to grow, burrowing into the deepest parts of the target's mind. This would make them lose control of their awareness, which—if it didn't kill them—would give Fruity all the openings he needed to finish them off.

After that, Fruity moved on to strengthening the Soul Eater Ice. For this, Yuying advised they should only target monsters with powerful soul strength. Although it would be extremely difficult to navigate, devouring the souls of stronger monsters meant the ice would become much stronger after breaking through.

Three months later, Soul Eater Ice also reached Refined Rank, and Fruity's soul strength grew significantly during this time.

Next was Abyssal Ice, which also took three months to push to Refined Rank, causing Fruity and Yuying to delay their travels by an extra month. But it was worth it. With one ice element at Realm Rank, five at Refined Rank, and the last at Common Rank, Fruity felt stronger than ever.

He considered delaying their journey by another two or three months to strengthen his last element, but Yuying warned him that if they didn't hurry, they might miss their transport to the Northern Region.

When crossing from one region to another, they would encounter a spatial field that could only be traversed using a flying spatial boat. Yuying had already secured enough funds for the trip and even arranged a way for Fruity to blend in.

Essentially, Fruity had to disguise himself as a demon. A human—especially a handsome one—traveling through the world of demons would attract far too much attention. The demons preferred human meat to their fellow demons' meat.

However, Fruity rejected Yuying's method and used the Seven Star Forbidden Diagram to change his appearance. During their journey, he had collected many essence blood from demon monsters, so using one of the Diagram's abilities, he transformed into a Blue Horn Hawk demon.

It was one of the monsters he had practiced his targeting and reflexes on during their travels. From what he observed, Blue Horn Hawks were adept in both aerial combat and flight. The Forbidden Diagram didn't just alter his appearance; it also gave him some of the traits of the monster he turned into.

But since he was originally human, his demi-human form was even more eye-catching than the average Blue Horn Hawk. In short, he remained handsome, no matter what creature he transformed into.

Additionally, the powers of the Forbidden Diagram ensured that no one could sense he was human, so Fruity felt confident in his disguise. Yuying, already a Demon Fox, simply retained her original appearance.

On the 16th month after they had set out, they finally crossed into the Northern Region. Wasting no time, they began traveling to the domain of the Dark Flame Chaos Dragons, one of the overlords of that region. Yuying carefully avoided the domains of other monsters, so it took them an additional two weeks to reach the dragons' territory.

Once there, Fruity immediately put into motion the plan he had been developing for 16 months. Knowing he was out of his league in terms of raw power, he relied on his sharp intellect to get what he wanted.

Chapter 283 - 283: Entering the Dark Flame Chaos Dragon Region

"Yuying, next time you want to convince me not to get into something dangerous and difficult, be sure to use all your weapons," Fruity said, hiding behind a thin tree with Yuying.

When Yuying told him about the tasks he needed to perform in order to qualify to join a witch temple, Fruity never bothered to ask what he needed to do in the domain of the Dark Flame Chaos Dragons.

It was only after they entered the Northern Region that she mentioned he would have to steal a dragon horn from their ancestral burial site. Essentially, in the domain of the Dark Flame Chaos Dragons, when a dragon dies, it sheds its horns.

After they are buried, the horns are placed—more like planted—on the grave as a sign of respect. This, of course, means the site is heavily protected.

"Master, if it's too hard, we can go back and look for other ways to awaken your bloodline," Yuying said. She didn't want to admit it, but she was hoping her master would take up her offer. However, Fruity was unwilling to do that.

Just like when he had forced her to say the word that resulted in heavenly punishment, he could sense that he needed to take this trial. Because of that, no matter the danger, he was determined to navigate it somehow.

"Don't worry, Yuying. Go inside my Soul Space. I will handle this easily," Fruity said, sending Yuying into his soul sea.

"First, I need to blend in. Thankfully, the Forbidden Diagram can handle that. I just need to do a soul search to copy their memories." Since the Diagram can't copy the memories of those Fruity transforms, he has to do that manually.

He doesn't know much about the Diagram, but so far, he has learned that he can either use the blood of monsters to change his appearance or fully transform into them. Because of this, he planned to hunt for blood first before moving forward with his other plans.

With swift movements and zero presence, thanks to his Devouring Ice ability, Fruity entered deep into the territory of the demon dragons.

A few hours later, he came to a stop when he sensed the presence of four Tier 6 Dark Flame Chaos Dragons. He got close, making sure his presence went unnoticed.

"This hunt was a burst. We should head back. Maybe Kaldros and his team will get lucky this time," one of the dragons, in their demi-human form, said with a sigh.

"He would love to rub it in our faces," another said.

Fruity scanned him with his senses and decided that transforming into this one wouldn't be a bad idea at all. Among the group, he was by far the most handsome.

"Alright, let's go. Whatever happens, happens," the one who seemed to be their leader said, prompting the four hunters to begin heading back.

'Although the Forbidden Diagram can change my realm to match the realm of any monster I turn into, having the same realm naturally offers some advantages. It will be easier to simulate their traits,' Fruity thought as he began circling around them.

The four dragons, who were moving, suddenly felt their surroundings grow cold. This immediately put them on high alert, ready for battle. But before they could search for the source, a wave of dizziness hit them, causing them to collapse and fall unconscious.

"Sleep tight, teammates. Even Tier 7 or 8 would struggle to withstand my mental attacks," Fruity muttered as he stood beside the unconscious dragons. After refining the Chaos Ice, his mental strength had risen considerably.

He quickly formed a hand seal, and a miniature pagoda appeared, entering the forehead of the handsome dragon. As soon as it did, the dragon's memories began flowing into Fruity's mind.

He did the same for the other three, and with a gesture, the handsome fellow was devoured, leaving behind only a drop of his blood.

Fruity gestured for the blood to flow to his forehead, where it was immediately devoured by a star-shaped tattoo that appeared on his forehead. A red mist surrounded him briefly. When it cleared, he had fully transformed into the handsome dragon.

He quickly sheathed the weapons he had picked up earlier and made sure everything on him was intact. The Diagram was able to recreate his attire, so he didn't need to remove them before killing his target.

"This will do," Fruity muttered before lying down beside the three unconscious dragons. A while later, someone tapped his hand, waking him up with a tired expression.

"What happened?" he asked, noticing the other three were now standing, weapons in hand but looking exhausted.

"It seems we were attacked, but by what?" the leader said with a frown.

"We're alive, so we should vacate this place quickly," one of them suggested.

"Drakthar is right, we should leave," Fruity, now in his demi-dragon form, said. The others nodded, and without overthinking it, they left and headed back to their sanctuary.

From what Fruity had gathered from their memories, they were hunters from a part of the Dark Flame Chaos Dragon domain.

In the Dark Flame Chaos Dragon Domain, there are various sections, each ruled by a Tyrant. From what Fruity gathered from their memories, there are five sections. The group he encountered was from the Chaos Section, ruled by a Tyrant-rank dragon called Morthrak, who is the third strongest Tyrant in the Chaos Section.

There are two other Tyrants, one of whom is a Divine General currently in seclusion, attempting to break through to become a Deimos (Tier 9).

Fruity, of course, wanted to infiltrate the Ancestral Burial site. He quickly found out that, to gain entry, he would have to become an Ancestral Guardian—guards responsible for protecting the burial site.

Fruity managed to identify three of these guards currently residing in the Chaos Section. All he needed to do was kill one, transform into him, and wait for his rotation to guard the site. When it was his turn, he could steal the horn and escape before the Demon Dragon King caught wind of it.

After all, the strongest dragon in the Dark Flame Chaos Dragon Domain was a Tier 11 dragon, a realm higher than Yuying. If Fruity didn't play his cards right, and the only Dreadnaught in the domain intervened, his bones wouldn't even be left to bury.

"Same time tomorrow, right?" Fruity asked his teammates as they arrived at the large wall protecting the Chaos Section, commonly referred to as Chaos City. They nodded before retiring to their homes

Fruity, who lived with his father, a blacksmith, quickly went home and, like a good son, informed his father about their hunt. As expected, his father scolded him for being weak, something normal for demons who crave strength.

Fruity, unfazed by his fake father's scolding, went to bed. The next day, he followed the same routine for an entire week until the rotation for the Ancestral Guards came around.

He found an excuse to skip the hunt that day, and under the cover of night, he followed the three Tier 7 dragons as they headed toward the Ancestral Burial Site. His plan was simple: use the same tactics he employed against the Tier 6 dragons, but with a slight alteration.

Fruity diligently followed them, transforming back into his Blue Horn Hawk form, which was faster than the dragon form he had taken before.

"Guys, something's not right," one of the three Tier 7 dragons suddenly said, stopping and drawing his weapon.

"Velgorn, what seems to be the problem this time?" one of the others asked, addressing the dragon who had drawn his weapon. There was a frown on his face which meant they had been through this situation and a similar one before

"The air feels strange like we're walking through something," Velgorn said, glancing around cautiously.

"You haven't slept well this time either, huh? I feel fine, and Ghanorth seems fine too, so what's wrong with you? Are you not feeling alright?" asked the second dragon, Vuithan.

"Maybe you're right. I haven't had a good night's sleep these days," Velgorn admitted, though he remained on high alert, his senses heightened.

"Let's go," Vuithan said. After a slight hesitation, they began moving again.

A kilometer away, Fruity sighed. 'I guess I need to get closer for a quicker and maximum effect,' he thought to himself.

Chapter 284 - 284: Stealing a Dragon Horn

Fruity moved closer to the three Tier 7 Dragons, who were considered among the strongest in the entire Chaos Dragon domain.

He was using Hypnotic Ice alongside Chaos Ice to slowly put them to sleep, but he underestimated the awareness and mental strength of the dragon named Velgorn.

He used Hypnotic Ice to create an illusion of their surroundings, making it appear as it had from the start. Then, using Chaos Ice, he subtly began to imprint suggestions on their minds. He applied minimal pressure, ensuring they wouldn't notice his influence.

However, Velgorn managed to sense something, forcing him to move closer. Now, just 400 meters away from them, Fruity amplified the effect of the ice, carefully masking his presence to avoid detection.

After two hours, their minds still hadn't succumbed to unconsciousness, but Fruity could sense their growing dizziness as they approached the ancestral site.

After another 45 more minutes, the imprint finally settled into their minds, allowing Fruity to knock them out. Without holding back, he used Mind in Chaos to hammer their consciousness, knocking them out instantly.

Fruity quickly devoured Velgorn, and two hours later, he sensed them waking up again. The two remaining dragons asked many questions, but seeing nothing unusual except being knocked out unexpectedly, they continued their journey now being on high alert.

A few hours later, they arrived at the Ancestral Burial Site. Fruity subconsciously shuddered, feeling an immediate spiritual pressure emanating from the burial grounds. He knew he had to proceed with caution.

That place contains the residue soul energy of dead dragons and since he wasn't a dragon, the pressure was pressing down on him more than it would with the true Dark Flame Chaos Dragons.

"Vuithan, I will be guarding that damaged grave today. I need to clear my mind, and that place seems quiet and cool enough for me to do so," Fruity, in his disguise, said with a weary expression.

You have to give him credit—this violet-haired monk certainly knew how to act. His expressions and demeanor were so natural that Fruity couldn't help but wonder where that trait came from.

Yes, he inherited some traits from the monsters he transformed into; however, Velgorn wasn't one to show much expression aside from his upright and brilliant nature. This meant those traits were coming from Fruity himself.

After killing the dragon, Fruity felt a sense of loss. He saw his life flash before him and could tell that Velgorn was part of the 1 percent of good demons one could find in the Tormented World.

Although 99 percent of demons are terrible, the 1 percent are decent. However, Fruity didn't know this, and since Velgorn seemed more perceptive, he understood he had to proceed carefully to make things easier for himself. So he took out the variable to be safe.

"Alright, just don't stress yourself too much. We all know you're the hardest worker," Vuithan said, tapping him on the shoulder.

Velgorn went to inform their commander in charge, and just like his friends, the commander gave him the go-ahead to relax. This further confirmed to Fruity that he had killed the wrong demon, but it was already done—no need for him to dwell on it.

After leaving for his chosen destination, Fruity spent the rest of the day resting as he had intended. They would be on duty for a whole week, so all he could do now was play it safe and make his calculations carefully.

During the seven days they would spend there, they would patrol the burial site three times—on the second, fourth, and seventh days before they departed.

Fruity planned meticulously, ensuring that the section he would patrol on the seventh day would be the last place they would survey when the next batch arrived. By then, he would be long gone.

Three days went by, and during that time, Fruity surveyed the area and picked his target. It was a large dark horn, which, upon examination, belonged to a Tier 10 monster dragon. He knew that if he wanted a chance to be selected to join a witch temple, he must surprise them.

A horn belonging to an Argonaut (Tier 10) dragon seemed like the kind of thing that could cause significant chaos.

Five more days passed, and during that time, Fruity diligently set many countermeasures in place. It would take them three days to get back to Chaos City. He knew they would notice the horn was missing, so he was making sure he had a head start.

The disappearance of a Tier 10 dragon's horn would attract considerable attention, so he knew he had to make his plans and back them up with contingencies before stealing the horn.

Eventually, the seventh day came, and Fruity resumed his last shift with a determined look on his face. Gradually, around 3 in the afternoon, they were asked to conduct another sweep of the area before departing.

"Vuithan, that section seemed okay the last time we went through it, but to make sure we didn't miss anything, why don't we divide and conquer so we can finish early and go back?" Fruity, in Velgorn's disguise, suggested.

"Great idea, Velgo! We should do that. Since you're tired from all your hard work, take that section. Ghanorth and I will take the other two sections," Vuithan said with his usual smile.

Over the past few days, Fruity examined the guards' characters and noticed their behavior. One of his plans was to kill every last one of them, including their Tier 8 commander, but seeing how well they treated him, he decided to spare their lives.

However, that didn't mean he wouldn't play mind games with them. Vuithan liked to talk but lacked the self-confidence to make his own decisions. Because of this, Fruity made sure to always suggest ideas that Vuithan readily backed.

As for Ghanorth, he, too, didn't like talking, but he was the kind of person who valued friendship. Whatever Velgorn and Vuithan came up with, he never commented; he just followed along.

The three were like a package deal, so their commander always paired them together. Of course, Fruity knew that once they discovered it was Velgorn who stole the horn, the two would be in trouble. But he didn't feel guilty about that; after all, the two were anything but good people.

Vuithan tended to flirt with people's wives. He even went behind Velgorn's back and slept with his wife, so his death would be justified.

As for Ghanorth, let's just say that after he died, the ladies in Chaos City would finally find some much-needed peace and joy. Extracting their memories was the best thing Fruity could do to avoid making any foolish moves that could jeopardize his mission.

Fruity left to make his rounds. Of course, he wasn't actually making any rounds; he was stealing the horn. After an hour, they regrouped, and later that day, the next rotation came, and the three of them left.

They had three days to get back home, and a month later, they would go for another rotation. Fruity, who had made sure to buy himself some time, urged his friends to hurry back because he needed to see a healer somewhere in the mountains not far from Chaos City.

Because of that, it took them two and a half days to return to Chaos City. This meant that if his illusion hadn't been discovered, he would have another two days to flee from Chaos City.

But luck wasn't on his side. Three days after they left the burial site, the illusion broke, and the missing horn was discovered. They immediately sounded alarms that reached the Dragon King, who issued a lockdown.

Fruity, who had left the city and was now on his way toward the border, found himself blocked by twenty Tier 7 Dragons who had already received orders to stop anyone from crossing the border.

"Stop there! Orders from the Dragon King: nobody is allowed to leave the domain until after the thief who stole the dragon horn is caught," one of the guards said.

Fruity smiled. "Well, gentlemen, I don't suppose any of you anticipated dying today."

#### Chapter 285 - 285: Narrowly Escaping Death

Fruity's plan was simple. Since it would take three days to travel from the Ancestral Burial Site to Chaos City and another two days to cross the border, he aimed to put a half-a-day head start between himself and the Dark Flame Chaos Dragons. He set the illusion to break four days after he left the burial site.

This meant that if his companions hurried, as they did, allowing them to reach the city in two and a half days, Fruity would have crossed the border long before the news of the missing horn reached the border patrol.

However, the illusion he set at the mine lost its power three days after he left, causing the situation to escalate faster than he had anticipated. But this, too, was within his calculations.

He had already dealt with any suspicion that might arise had the blacksmith realized his son was missing, so the only thing left was to make sure his tracks were clean before leaving.

This meant he couldn't leave any witnesses behind, including the border patrol. He could have escaped by flying away in his Blue Horn Hawk demi-hawk form, but he knew it would only prolong the chase as long as there was information about his whereabouts.

There were shamans and seers with divination abilities who could locate him if they caught sight of him. Of course, Fruity knew the chances of that happening were low, as he couldn't be tracked while using the Forbidden Diagram to disguise himself.

But he wasn't willing to take any chances, so he decided to do the only logical thing—murder.

He gazed at the twenty Tier 7 Dragons, all in their demi-dragon forms, an evil smile curling on his lips. Over the months spent traveling to the northern region, Fruity had killed so many monsters that his demeanor had started to change.

He had become more evil than he realized. Yuying had noticed this, and she began trying her best to lighten his burdens, hoping that reducing his kills would help. But it didn't change anything—his bloodlust had grown too chaotic.

Of course, Yuying had already made plans to deal with that before he became a killing machine devoid of emotion.

"Stand back and consent to a search. You can then remain here until the lockdown is lifted," the young man, who seemed to be the leader of the border guards, said, ignoring Fruity's earlier comment.

"And what if I don't consent?" Fruity asked.

"Then we will use force," the leader replied.

"That's more like it. Why don't we get straight to that, then?" Fruity smirked, and without even blinking, his disguise vanished, revealing his human form.

"Sentient... Kill!" It took just a single glance for the leader of the dragon guards to give the order to kill him. The sight of Fruity's true appearance had triggered something primal in them.

What Fruity doesn't know is that the Dark Flame Chaos Dragons have been defending their ancestral burial site for many years against various demon races attempting to steal their horns.

The main reason they were made a target for trials to join a Witch Temple was due to their refusal to submit to the Witch Temples' rule. Unlike most monster races that surrendered, the Dark Flame Chaos Dragons, along with some other demon races, chose to remain independent.

This defiance led the Witch Temple to use them as pawns in their selection process for new members. In the Tormented World, although there are no humans, there is a demon race that resembles humans, known as Sentients.

These Sentients are among the strongest races in the world and the key members of this Witch temples, and for years, they have plagued the Dark Flame Chaos Dragons. To the dragons, Sentients are like a plague that must be eradicated.

When Fruity revealed his human-like form, it triggered an immediate response. The dragons, seeing him as a Sentient, descended on him with weapons and attacks, all aimed to end his life.

"Tsk..." Fruity smirked, and with a thought, a green mist of ice gushed out, covering a 1-kilometer radius. The twenty Tier 7 dragons attacking him were immediately devoured by the hypnotic ice.

"Giant Bone Mountain Descent," Fruity muttered coldly, activating one of the skills he had gained after the hypnotic ice reached the Realm Rank.

At once, a huge mountain of bone and ice descended upon the green mist, crashing down on the defenseless dragons who had fallen under his illusion.

They were only Tier 7 dragons, not very powerful when their mental fortitude was taken into account. Fruity, whose hypnotic ice has become more powerful than ever and whose mind and soul were stronger, easily subdued them.

Of course, this wouldn't have worked on someone like Velgorn, who possessed a powerful mind and soul. But because these Tier 7 dragons were mentally weak, their minds were instantly dragged into an illusion Fruity created.

Inside the illusion, they believed they were ganging up on him and beating him senseless. This, of course, made it easy to take over their minds, as that was exactly what they had been hoping for—to kill him.

They hated Sentients so much that they wouldn't hear reason the moment they saw one. Fruity just picked the right illusion trapping them in it.

Before they could snap out of it, they had already been crushed by a huge boulder that drained a large sum of Fruity's Star Qi. But it worked—they were flattened while lost in dreamland.

One thing about illusions is that once you fall into them, it becomes difficult to break free. In combat, even a second of vulnerability can cost you your life. Fruity had more than enough openings to kill them, and he didn't waste any.

Fruity, who hadn't moved a single finger, simply gazed at the flattened bodies. With a sigh, the devouring flame activated, consuming their remains and extracting the energy into the Immortal Ice—the only element he had yet to upgrade to the next rank.

"It'll take them at least five hours to get here. After all, there are six borders, and no one knows I came through this one," Fruity said before taking to the sky.

Now that he was a sage, his speed had increased several times, even in the air, so he left hastily, leaving no trace behind.

A while later, ten Tier 8 dragons arrived at the border, but to their shock, there were no guards in sight. It was as if the place had been abandoned for a long time. They searched for a while, but after finding nothing, they left.

A day later, they informed the king, who immediately issued an order to hunt down whoever was responsible. Men were deployed across the Tormented World to search for the stolen horn. News quickly spread throughout the Northern Region and soon reached the other regions.

The horn that was stolen wasn't just any ordinary horn—it belonged to the king's brother, who had died in combat while they were fighting the Witch Towers to maintain their independence.

It had been a crazy and chaotic battle. At that time, the current king was a prince, and his brother—whose horn was just stolen by Fruity—was supposed to become the king. But to secure the future of their race, his brother fought bravely and died a hero's death.

So the theft of his horn was a huge insult to the Dark Flame Chaos race. The section of the burial site from which the horn was stolen was reserved for the dragons who fought in that battle.

This enraged the Dark Flame Chaos Dragons. If the horn isn't returned within a few years, they may declare war on the Witch Temple. After all, it had been 670 years since a horn was stolen from their Ancestral Land, and this time, it was the horn of a martyr.

Chapter 286 - 286: Harrows Mountain

"Master, you really did it," Yuying said, now flying beside Fruity as they sped away from the Northern Region. It had already been a week since he left the Domain of the Chaos Dragons, and he hadn't stopped flying since then. He was back in his Demi-Hawk form.

Yuying emerged from his soul sea once they finally left the Northern Region. Now flying beside her master, she couldn't help but marvel. Fruity had just waltzed into the domain of one of the most powerful races of demon dragons, stolen a horn, and left, just like that.

"Never doubt me, Yuying," Fruity said with a smirk.

Truth be told before he acquired the Forbidden Diagram, he hadn't been sure how he would infiltrate such a domain without facing harrowing battles.

However, after discovering the many things he could do with the Seven Star Forbidden Diagram—of which the perfect disguise was one—he knew exactly what had to be done.

The disguise was so flawless that no matter the realm of the person, they wouldn't be able to see through it.

"I never doubted you, Master," Yuying replied with a smile.

She had been worried sick when Fruity finally managed to enter the Ancestral Burial Site. She would be lying if she said she hadn't thought about leaving the soul sea to help him.

However, trusting her master, she waited as Fruity spent seven whole days planning and setting up measures before taking the horn.

Now, Fruity had only one thing left to acquire: the feather of a Harrow. Yuying had already told him this would be the greatest danger he would face. Their next stop was the border of the Central Region to cross over.

A month later, they finally crossed into the Central Region. But before heading to Harrow Mountain, Fruity and Yuying decided to pay a visit to an old friend of Yuying's.

150 years ago, Yuying and a Lion Demon, spent an entire day in a bidding war over a book that no one else recognized its true value. At that time, only Yuying, a strange collector, and the Lion knew that the ancient book was a manual containing one of the most powerful cultivation methods—Aura Cultivation.

In the end, the Lion won the bid taking home the manual.

The Lion knew because he had a unique ability that allowed him to see the true value of things. As for the collector, he was hunting for something similar but one that focused on souls. Yuying, however, sought it because it was a manual written by her master many years ago.

Yes, it was something written by Klaus's second incarnation. When Yuying awakened in the Tormented World with her past memories intact, she did everything she could to search for items connected to her master.

That was the role of the Paragon Guards. They were born many years before their master with one purpose: to prepare a head start for him when he awakened.

As a Paragon, Klaus wouldn't have opportunities handed to him—he had to fight for them. So, in his first life, he did the only logical thing: he cheated reincarnation.

It was safe to say that Klaus, or Fruity's original self, was a genius who saw what needed to be done and did it even better than anyone could have imagined.

A paragon wouldn't get the heaven blessing, neither would they be recognized no matter how peaceful they lead their life. So in order to make sure he was always reincarnated well, he made sure he prepared something that wouldn't necessarily interfere with the heavens, yet directly aid him.

It took them three days to reach the remote dwelling of the Demon Lion. Fruity and Yuying spent another two days observing him, and after confirming he was just a Tier 9 demon, the Master and Servant duo ganged up on him and beat him senseless—something Yuying had been wishing to do for many years.

After retrieving the manual, which had taken all of Fruity's mental strength to put the Lion Demon under an illusion, he placed a spell on him out of anger.

Three days later, the Lion, feeling unusually generous, decided to organize an in-house auction, giving away all his belongings to anyone with as little as ten Dark Stones.

In the Tormented World, the currency used is known as Dark Stones, considered the basic currency. The second tier is Soul Stones, and the highest is Moon Stones. Fruity, of course, knew his servant was wealthy, so he did not attempt to make his own money.

Two weeks later, they arrived in the first city since entering the Central Region. It was a city comprising various races but ruled by Molten Demon Golems. They stayed there for two days before boarding a flying ship to another city known as Ginnix Rat City.

According to the map they had, they would be able to enter Harrow Mountain from there. Fruity would have to pluck a feather from a Harrow, a monster said to come from hell.

Of course, this was an exaggeration. The Harrows were just monsters that lived deep inside underground volcanoes, and Harrow Mountain was one of the places they frequented. So, they had to go.

However, it wasn't an exaggeration when they said the Harrows were twisted demons whose hundreds of demon monsters had died trying to pluck their feathers. They were extremely dangerous.

Fruity had already obtained the horn and the Witch mark, so all that was left was to obtain the feather of a Tier 8 Harrow.

Weaker Harrows didn't like coming to the surface. Only Tier 8 and above came to hunt for food to feed their young below, so Fruity would have to face a Tier 8 Harrow if he wanted a feather. Of course, he could just purchase one, but it was extremely expensive.

Despite Yuying's suggestion to buy one, Fruity chose to reject it. His reason was simple: if he managed to kill an entire Harrow, they would be set for life. Yes, Fruity wanted to kill the whole thing; he wasn't just after a feather.

He knew it would take him a few more years to awaken his bloodline, and during those years, he would need wealth to secure most things. He now had an updated map in his mind and knew where to go to find some items left behind by his past self.

But to do that, he needed resources. Even though Yuying had some wealth, it wouldn't be enough for the two of them. However, even if it were sufficient, he knew that having extra cash would be the best step one could take.

So he planned to kill an entire Harrow. After joining a witch temple, he would do what he did best: grow stronger while he rose through the ranks to become a Witch General. Then, from there, his revenge plot would begin.

Yuying spent the next three days buying supplies that Fruity would need to lure the Harrow. After resting for a while, they set off—more precisely, Fruity entered the mountain while Yuying returned to his soul sea.

Fruity expected the situation to be harrowing, but to his shock, when he summoned the Harrow by spreading certain chemicals Yuying had bought for him, the monster couldn't do anything.

Expecting a tense battle, he summoned the Pentaface bead. To his astonishment, when the bead appeared, the monsters froze and collapsed. All he did was walk closer and drive his spear through its neck.

It was a strange moment for him, but after a while, he realized it was due to the first face on the bead. After all, it had some correlations to Harrows. The Bell of Harrows came from that face, so he chalked it up to that.

Two months later, he stood in front of one of the five witch temples known as the Dark Star Witch Temple. That day, when he presented his items for registration, the entire witch temple was in an uproar.

The horn of the Dark Flame Chaos Dragon said to have been stolen months earlier, had appeared, and Fruity, who had brought it, was immediately accepted as a Witch Captain—just one rank away from qualifying for the Bloodline Trial.

It took him three years to become a Witch General. Then, a year later, the opportunity to enter the Tormented Bloodline Trial came. It was also the day when the entire world of the Tormented experienced the awakening of a paragon: the first Master of the Blood Star.

#### Chapter 287 - 287: Intense Bloodlust

Klaus, who had been meditating for seven days, opened his eyes. The moment he did, a powerful energy filled with bloodlust burst from his body, sending a violent force through his training room and, subsequently, the entire house.

The force was so intense that huge cracks began forming throughout the building. All over the house, both the maids and the security personnel rushed to the living room, fearing that someone might have attacked their Master or, worse, his mother.

However, upon reaching the living room and seeing Klaus's mother, Miriam, and Hanna standing there, equally shocked by what was happening, they became stunned. If it wasn't an attack, what could have caused their home to be in such a dire state?

Their questions were quickly answered when they realized their Master was not in the house. They knew whatever had happened was because of him. Yet, none of them moved. They stood still as if waiting for him to emerge.

Klaus, realizing he had woken up from his memory retrieval, quickly reined in the intense bloodlust surging through him. It was so overwhelming that, for a brief moment, all he wanted was to go on a killing spree.

But he knew that would be a terrible idea, especially when he saw the damage he had done to the house.

Chanting filled the air as he began reciting some of the calming mantras from his past life as Fruity. A few minutes later, his heart calmed, bringing the bloodlust down a notch. After 20 minutes, he returned to normal, suppressing the bloodlust to a level no one could detect, though it still lingered just beneath the surface.

He sighed and retrieved his phone.

"Seven days, huh?" he muttered, looking at the date on the screen. He had decided to delve into the memories left by his past self seven days ago.

He had witnessed years of training and killing—so much killing that just going through the memories provoked such intense bloodlust. Of course, Klaus was similar to Fruity in terms of killing. He had slain his fair share of monsters, Zombies, and humans, so it felt somewhat normal.

However, he hadn't killed enough to provoke such a destructive burst of energy, one that nearly brought down his house. It was safe to assume that the memories had affected him more than he had anticipated.

"I need to go for a walk," Klaus said as he stood up. He wasn't in the right mindset and needed some time to calm down. Getting some fresh air would help.

For the past 20 minutes, the maids, security, Miriam, Klaus's mother, and his sister, Hanna, had been standing near the entrance to Klaus's training room, waiting anxiously. Suddenly, the door opened, and he walked out.

The first thing Klaus noticed were the huge cracks in the ceiling and the shattered glass. He immediately realized he must have frightened a few people.

"Sorry, everyone. My training took a dangerous turn, but everything is fine now," Klaus said with a reassuring smile. He knew the maids and guards were more concerned for his safety than anything else.

And they had every reason to be. Klaus had already helped about 20% of them become Sages, and the rest were either Saints or at the peak of Sainthood.

Even Kofi was nearing the Great Sage realm. In just a few months, his Great Sage core would be formed, and he would face his tribulation.

The maids and guards nodded, smiles on their faces, as they left to begin repairing some of the damage Klaus had caused.

"Are you alright?" his mother asked once they were gone, walking up to him and holding his hand.

"I'm fine, Mom. It was just an unexpected reaction," Klaus replied.

However, what he did not realize was that, just like when his mother had somehow noticed his presence when he accidentally peeked at her months back, she had also sensed the intense bloodlust he had released moments earlier.

Even now, holding his hand, she could feel it. This, of course, triggered her motherly instincts—the kind that knew when something wasn't right with their children.

"Seriously, Mom, I'm fine," Klaus said, poking her cheek playfully. He knew she didn't believe him, but he couldn't just offload everything on her like that.

That would be an awkward conversation. His past couldn't be shared lightly, and he knew that much. Despite knowing some things about her own past, he could only endure and try to come to terms with his own struggles on his own.

The current Klaus is far from being fine. His mind is in turmoil from the flood of memories he has absorbed.

First, it was the painful memory of his mother and Hanna's deaths, followed by the tragic loss of half the monks who had planned to sacrifice their souls to activate a nameless token. This token was supposed to send Fruity to a land brimming with resources.

The monks didn't know exactly where Fruity would end up, but they believed the sacrifice of 10,000 willing souls would send him somewhere valuable.

However, Fruity couldn't bear watching his uncles die for his sake, so at the last moment, his resurfacing memories allowed him to break the chain of fate and redirect them to the Ice World.

In the aftermath, Fruity slaughtered tens of thousands, taking their vengeful souls and using them to open a portal to the Tormented World. From there, his journey was filled with bloodshed, moving from the Eastern Region all the way to the Northern Region.

Fruity's excessive killing even started to worry his servant, Yuying. Upon joining the Witch Temple, he continued his slaughter, driven by the desire to rank up and qualify for the Bloodline Trial.

However, these weren't his only accomplishments. In the three years before entering the Trial, Fruity also retrieved the Manual on Aura Cultivation, setting him on the path to awakening the True Killing Aura, also known as the Asura Aura (Slaughter Aura), as Yuying referred to it.

It took him two and a half years to awaken it, and back then, he had killed so much that he became numb to slaughter. Thankfully, the memories stopped just as he entered the Trial.

Klaus knew the memories that followed would be filled with the slaughter that would soon herald him to the world as the Renegade Monk—one who walked in opposition to the teachings of monks.

That being said, his brain is now f\*cked up from all the slaughter, and now, remembering everything, the past and current bloodlust started to resurface.

"I'll just take a walk outside for a few hours to clear my mind," Fruity said, kissing his mother on the cheek before leaving the house. After he left, the three women in the room sighed.

"He was lying," his mother said.

"I can tell he's in so much pain, but it seems he didn't want to share, not even with me." Her expression grew sad.

"Mom, don't be sad. He'll open up when he's ready. You just have to give him some time," Hanna said, holding her mother's hand. Miriam also stepped closer, taking her other hand.

Like Klaus's mother, the two women could sense the bloodlust in him, especially Miriam, who now shared an intimate connection with him.

"Should I follow him?" Miriam asked, watching as Klaus walked out of the house.

"No, he wants to be alone, so we should give him his privacy," his mother said with a sigh. As a mother, it was only natural to worry. Thankfully, she had two amazing women by her side to comfort her.

Klaus, having just exited his house, decided to walk in a certain direction. He did not have anywhere particular in mind, so he simply began walking. However, after a while, he found himself in the slums, heading toward the house where he and his mother used to live.

When he arrived, he quickly sat on a stone beside the house. He gazed into the sky, and after a while, closed his eyes, clearly lost in deep thought. However, that didn't last long. Suddenly, he opened his eyes and, in a cold, menacing tone, uttered:

"I'm really not in the mood for any cat-and-mouse games. If you want to die today, then come out of the shadows. Otherwise, scram."

As if to emphasize his words, a dense bloodlust burst from his body, blowing everything away, including the makeshift apartment they once lived in.

But it wasn't the only thing blown away. From the shadows, a figure dressed in black emerged, holding his head and rolling on the ground.

## Chapter 288 - 288: The Slaughter Aura

Klaus stood up and began walking closer to the Assassin, who had emerged from the shadows and was now rolling on the ground. As Klaus approached, he radiated an intense killing aura, so powerful that without even drawing his sword, the Assassin felt himself being pulled into the grip of death.

"Klaus, you have to calm down," the Senior's voice echoed from his soul sea, causing Klaus to halt. He was just a few steps away from the Assassin, who knew without a doubt that he wouldn't live past the day.

"Leave," Klaus said in a cold tone, halting his steps. The Assassin, feeling a surge of relief, thanked his lucky stars and quickly ran off, forgetting how he had even arrived.

Klaus sighed and then left the area. A while later, he found himself sitting in a coffee shop somewhere in Ross City.

"Senior, what just happened?" Klaus asked, using their connection to speak directly to the Senior.

"You're awakening an aura known as the Slaughter Aura, or more accurately, the Asura Aura. It's an aura born from slaughter and is also the strongest aura in all of existence," the Senior replied, making Klaus nod in acknowledgment.

He already knew that, so the Senior's confirmation showed that he was even more knowledgeable than Klaus had realized.

Klaus hadn't yet visited his soul sea, so he didn't know what changes had occurred there. But if he had, he would have seen the Seal of Slaughter beginning to leak an aura of bloodlust.

It was the kind of aura that someone like Fruity shouldn't have the willpower to endure. However, thanks to his past memories, the aura had begun to temper his will, turning him into the kind of warrior capable of wielding such power.

"Is this bad?" Klaus asked.

"In a way, yes. The current you can be easily triggered, so for the next few weeks, don't pick up your sword or even think about going on any hunts. Just rest and spend time with people who bring you peace," the Senior advised. "Once this settles, the Slaughter Aura will awaken naturally."

"Okay, Senior." Klaus didn't need to be told what to do—his memories had already shown him the effect the awakening of the Slaughter Aura had on Fruity. Back then, Fruity had to lay down his sword for five whole months to get his affairs in order.

"Brat, you need to know this: awakening this aura means your path forward will be one of slaughter," the Senior suddenly said.

"It's as if you've taken the first step toward walking the path of slaughter and, eventually, comprehending the Law of Slaughter.

"I just hope you understand that walking this path will make you a renegade to the laws. The Law of Slaughter hasn't been practiced since the Asura Race was eradicated, so you must be cautious."

"Renegade, huh," Fruity muttered with a small smile.

"Senior, what can you tell me about the Law of Slaughter, or more importantly, the Asura People?" Klaus asked. The idea of a people born with a singular purpose—slaughter—intrigued him.

"In the universe, there are many laws. You might have already heard of laws like Fire, Space, Time, and others. Those are just names given to the various rules governing the flow of the universe.

"Just like how, after you become a Saint, you can start exerting some resistance to gravity, allowing you to fly and walk in the air.

"The other laws are the same. The Law of Space allows you to traverse space by using it to your advantage. You can travel long distances by opening rifts in space. The Law of Time can allow you to stop or slow time. The Fire Law can help you comprehend the true essence of the flame.

"All of these are just basic concepts of the laws. There are many things you can do when you understand the laws and how they are applied.

"However, when the Law of Slaughter comes into question, all I can say is that it is the oldest law in the universe. And when I say it's the oldest, the Laws of Creation, Life, and Death aren't even close in comparison.

"It is said that during the Primordial Era, the Law of Slaughter was widely practiced, but after that era, it was boycotted for unknown reasons.

"I don't want to jinx it, but someone who practices the Law of Slaughter can be called an Absolute," the Senior said, a slightly amused tone in his voice.

"An Absolute? So the Asura People are this Absolutes" Klaus asked.

"Yes, an Absolute. It's someone who trumps everything else. The Law of Slaughter trumps all other laws. Of course, that will depend on your level of comprehension, but someone practicing the Law of Slaughter is essentially learning all the various ways to kill.

"If the killing requires them to stop time, they can; if it means traveling through space, they can do that too. It's called the Absolute for a reason. However, it's difficult to walk this path, which is why I told you that choosing to walk it is a decision you can't easily reverse," the Senior answered.

"Well, I don't plan on walking down a path I'm not certain of. So difficult or not, I will traverse it to the best of my abilities." Klaus already knew that, somewhere, somehow, he had walked down this path before. Deep down in his bones, he understood that it was the path he needed right now.

For some unknown reason, he felt he was running out of time for something he didn't yet understand. He knew he was weak—very weak—so he had to hurry up and grow.

"For the Asura people, don't look too deeply into it. They were eradicated because of something I can't disclose. So for now, focus on calming yourself down and awakening the Slaughter Aura. If you are meant to walk down the path of slaughter, you will one day uncover all the buried secrets."

"Thank you, Senior," Klaus said before standing up and leaving the coffee shop. He went straight to the bank and requested the purchase of a new house—a much bigger one.

He was very rich now, so he didn't hesitate to go for the most expensive option. With his family growing, he needed a much larger space. Of course, that didn't mean he would go for the biggest house; however, as he had expected, he received a 70% discount on his latest purchase.

The reason this time was that he had won a loyalty point that, after redeeming, was worth 7 billion gold coins. He smirked and added the remaining 3 billion to buy one of the most expensive houses they had.

It had ten rooms (excluding one for the maid and guards), four training rooms, a large enough pool, a small waterfall, a space to park ten cars, and even a landing pad for a jet. Of course, this reminded Klaus that he needed to get a jet.

When he left the bank, he went to visit Madam Fei, who had been very busy selling all the monster bodies Klaus had been bringing her. He spent many hours there before heading back home.

The next day, they moved to their new home. Following the Senior's advice, Klaus decided to relax for a while. This, of course, meant more time to spend with family.

Six days later, he received an invitation to attend the launching of Oracle, which would be held at Stone Valley. Four days later, he, Hanna, his mom, and Miriam left for Stone Valley for the event.

#### Chapter 289 - 289: Back to Stone Valley

Klaus and his mother, along with Miriam and Hanna, arrived at Stone Valley a day before the launch of Oracle. Lucil had arranged for them to come that day, so when they landed, she was there with Joon, Logan, and Ryan.

"Nice to see you again, Klaus, War Goddess, and Auntie," Joon was the first to speak as they alighted from the jet.

His gaze paused on Hanna. The last time they were at they came to recruit Klaus, Hanna was in seclusion cultivating so they never met her.

"This is my sister, Hanna," Klaus said, introducing her. Joon and the others nodded.

"How have you all been?" Klaus's mom asked with a small smile.

"We're well, Auntie," Ryan replied this time. The last time they had visited, they left with nice haircuts. However, from the way Klaus's mom was looking at them, it was clear they'd be getting fresh haircuts before the event.

"Let's go to the headquarters," Joon said, and soon they were in a car heading back to the headquarters building.

"Your friends will arrive within the hour, so when they do, we have people who will bring them to the headquarters," Joon said as they arrived at the large building where Klaus spent a whole month.

Since Klaus was listed as the co-creator of Oracle, his immediate friends were also invited.

In the past few days, he had started modeling something new within Oracle. Since he wouldn't be going on any hunts for the next few weeks, he decided to bring the Tormented World into Oracle. Yes, Klaus began modeling the entire world within Oracle.

Although he hadn't made much progress, he had still incorporated many elements into Oracle. The Monastery was already completed, so when Oracle went public, it would be one of the few locations available for visitors.

For now, it was set atop a mountain somewhere in Oracle, requiring visitors to go there for a sense of peace.

With Lucil's help, he managed to create a calm environment in the Monastery, ensuring that anyone present would feel a sense of tranquility wash over them.

Since the goal was to make Oracle have some impact on the mind in the real world, Klaus made sure the Monastery reflected that.

Long story short, Klaus had created one of the best spaces in Oracle, and he intended to share it with the rest of the world.

A while later, after Klaus and his family had settled down, Lucil came to have a chat, but she didn't come alone; she brought another lady who, from a single glance, one could tell was Klaus's die-hard fan.

"Klaus, this is Olive. She helped me with the projects you gave me," Lucil said with a smile, introducing the petite lady.

"Nice to meet you, Olive," Klaus responded with a polite smile.

"I have to say, I like how you're wearing those jackets." Ever the extrovert, he decided to strike up a conversation.

"I bought it from Nucci Fashion Trend X," Olive said with a shy smile. What Klaus didn't know was that while he was out there fighting physical battles, Lucil and the Knights of House Klaus were fighting his online battles.

Lucil formed that group, making her their commander, and Olive was the second in command. She also worked with Lucil, so when she heard all about the amazing time Lucil had with Klaus the last time they worked together, she also wanted to meet him.

"Well, it looks good on you," Klaus replied.

"Thank you," Olive nodded like an obedient child who had just been awarded candy.

"Let's go so we can show you what we have accomplished," Lucil said, leading Klaus and Olive away. Klaus had given her some ideas and designs to bring to life in Oracle for him.

He needed some arenas and trials built for a project he had in mind, so while he knew he would be busy, he entrusted it to the next able person to help. Of course, Lucil was more than happy to assist.

Klaus spent the next few hours with Lucil and Olive, reviewing and making modifications. A while later, as sunset approached, he left for the roof to watch the sunset as he had with Queenie the last time he was there.

Shortly after, his mother, Miriam, Hanna, and his friends, who had arrived just an hour before, appeared on the roof.

An hour ago when they arrived in Stone Valley, Klaus had been busy with Lucil and Olive, so they didn't want to disturb him.

"You guys have become stronger," Klaus said as soon as they arrived on the roof.

"Compared to you, I think we are lacking," Mark replied with a smile.

"True," Klaus responded with a smile. "That won't be for long though," he added.

"Oh, do you have something in mind?" Anna, who was more than happy to come out of seclusion to spend some time with Klaus, asked.

"I do, in fact, have something in mind, but you'll all have to wait until after the Genius gathering at Senji Valley," Klaus said.

"Why not skip that gathering and get down to business fast?" Daniel, ever eager for action, suggested.

"Trust me, you might want to spend the next two weeks well because the three weeks before the Union Trial will be hell for all of you," Klaus said with a smile.

However, perhaps because of the bloodlust he was trying to suppress, that smile appeared more sinister, sending chills down the spines of his friends.

"Klaus, stop scaring your friends," Klaus's mom said, wrapping her arms around Anna and Lily, who looked visibly shaken. Hanna seemed okay for some reason.

"Sorry about that, but I do mean what I said. Prepare mentally because you're going to need it."

Klaus refrained from any intimate actions with Miriam over the past few days. While the senior had said he shouldn't hold any weapons until his bloodlust calmed down so he could awaken the Asura Aura, he knew that engaging in anything sexual would awaken primal desires he didn't want to put his women through.

They weren't things he could just use to calm down, so despite Miriam's willingness to comfort him every night, Klaus preferred a good night's sleep in each other's arms. He might be struggling now, but that didn't mean he had to put her through anything immoral.

"Miriam, you are included, so you can go with us to the Genius gathering or spend as much time as you can with Mom, because trust me, Sovereign or not, I am going to break you."

Although he couldn't wield weapons, it didn't mean he couldn't train others. With Lucil and Olives help, he had created many training spaces in Oracle that he believed would help him have some entertaining days before the Union Trial.

By then, he knew he would be able to calm down enough to awaken the aura. After all, he had already gone through it before, so he had prior knowledge of the process.

After scaring his friends for a while, he decided to ask how their training had gone. From what they said, it seemed that during their journeys through the Forbidden Zones, they had encountered a few Tier 7 Tyrants, which they were able to take down using teamwork.

Klaus was impressed, but he knew they could do better. Since they were going to be his friends for life, they should meet the standards suitable for walking beside a paragon.

'I guess Yuying was right; I do hate weak people... but I hate weak, arrogant people more,' he thought inwardly.

'Yuying, I hope we meet again soon,' he sighed.

The next day, guests started arriving for the event of the century.

Chapter 290 - 290: Oracle Gone Public

"Everyone, both present here and watching from all over the world, welcome to the launch of Oracle, your first 100% immersive virtual reality," Joon took to the stage to address the crowd and officially launch the much-anticipated VR, said to revolutionize warrior training, business, and entertainment.

Although they had invited people to the launch at Stone Valley, only the top figures in the business world were present. Oracle was set to become the new norm in the worlds of business, warrior training, and entertainment.

They had invited the most influential names in the business world to explore potential business opportunities. Klaus, who had already been briefed on how the event would unfold, had prepared accordingly.

Joon and the other developers had finally fixed the bug that had plagued them for years, thanks to Klaus stepping in to help. Because of this, they decided to introduce him to the world as a co-creator.

"As you all know, Oracle has been in development for a very long time..." Joon paused, clearly happy their youth dream had been realized.

It wasn't just him, Ryan and Logan who were standing beside him all held a look that said they were indeed happy their dream had finally been realized.

"As you all know, Oracle has been in development for a very long time. What started as an ambitious dream is now a reality, thanks to the tireless efforts of a brilliant team. Today, we are not just launching a product—we are opening the door to a new era.

"Oracle is more than a virtual reality platform; it is a fully immersive experience designed to bridge the gap between reality and the digital world.

"In Oracle, you'll find endless possibilities. Whether you're a warrior training to hone your skills, a business leader looking for the next frontier in commerce, or someone seeking cutting-edge entertainment, Oracle will redefine how you engage with the world.

"This platform can simulate intense warrior training, allowing for real-time, high-risk scenarios with zero physical danger. It offers a space for businesses to thrive in new ways—be it virtual offices, product showcases, or even large-scale digital trade fairs.

And as for entertainment, I think you'll be pleased to discover worlds that challenge your imagination.

"Today, we invite you to witness what happens when technology meets purpose, and what happens when innovation is pushed beyond its limits. Oracle is not just for the elite or the warriors; it's for everyone. We've built a world where creativity knows no boundaries, and where every individual can have a place.

"Without further ado, it's my great honor to officially introduce you to the next phase of human experience—Oracle."

The audience applauded as Joon gestured to a giant screen behind him, displaying a breathtaking visual of Oracle's virtual world.

The cinematic display of Oracle began, showcasing the breathtaking visuals Lucil had put together. Klaus, sitting with his parents, held a smirk on his lips.

One of the shots being displayed featured footage of his battle with the Mecha Zombie, a creation he and Lucil had designed as his challenger for the training and testing phase.

Of course, the Zombie couldn't defeat him, but Klaus knew that if its stats had been cranked up a few notches, he might have lost. Nevertheless, as a Tier 3 human, he had been able to battle a perfect combat companion that was four tiers above him, with stats boosted by 20% compared to the average Tier 7.

The footage played for a full five minutes, shocking everyone gathered. What they saw demonstrated all that Oracle could do, and for a moment, some held skeptical looks on their faces.

However, after live footage of Oracle was shown, smiles spread across the room. As businessmen, they instantly recognized that their enterprises were about to expand.

After a while, the footage ended, and Joon took the mic again. "As you all saw, Oracle is what we've all been waiting for. Of course, while we'd like to say it has been an easy road to get here, the truth is that without one particular individual, Oracle might have taken another decade or two before the world had the chance to use it."

Both those present and those watching from home were filled with curiosity—who was this person who had helped bring this digital world to life?

"Ladies and gentlemen, I present Klaus Hanson, the young man who helped bring Oracle to reality," Joon said, and the whole world erupted. Everyone knew that something grand was about to happen whenever Klaus's name was mentioned.

Klaus stood up, smiling, and walked over to the nerds, shaking hands with them. He then stepped up to the mic to speak.

Klaus stepped up to the mic, flashing his trademark smirk.

"Well, Joon's said pretty much everything, and let's be real—I'm no geek to add anything too technical."

The crowd chuckled, "But what I can say is this: Oracle is about to change the way we train, do business, and, most importantly, procrastinate—uh, I mean socialize."

The laughter spread throughout the room as Klaus continued,

"I've seen firsthand the kind of change Oracle can bring to people's lives. Trust me, from today onwards, humanity is going to enter a new age of evolution, thanks to oracle"

"Warriors can train without the inconvenient side effect of, you know, death. Businesses can expand without leaving the comfort of their overpriced office chairs. And friends? Well, they can connect from anywhere in the world, and it'll feel like they're sitting on your couch eating all your snacks."

"Now, I know what some of you are thinking—'Oh, Oracle's just another VR platform.' Well, listen closely, folks. Oracle isn't just any VR world. It's the one you've been waiting for. Seriously, you don't want to be the last one to hop on this bandwagon, trust me. FOMO is real."

Klaus leaned in closer to the mic, his voice dropping conspiratorially.

"Because let's be honest—who wouldn't want to be part of a future where you can get stronger, smarter, richer... without even having to change out of your pajamas?"

The room erupted in laughter again, and Klaus wrapped it up with a playful grin. "So yeah, my advice? Join the Oracle hype train. It's leaving the station, and I promise you don't want to miss it."

With a wink and a wave, Klaus stepped back, leaving the crowd roaring with applause and excitement.

It was safe to say Klaus had a way with people. While many might see him as an arrogant bastard—which he was by the way—he was also someone reliable and unexpectedly friendly. Those who knew him from the start saw it, and many more were beginning to notice it now.

But in the end, did he care what people thought of him? Probably not. All he cared about was getting stronger, protecting his mom, and ensuring her smile never faltered.

Klaus returned to his seat.

"Thank you, Klaus Hanson," Joon said with an appreciative glance in Klaus's direction before turning back to the crowd.

"When you log in to Oracle, be sure to visit the Mountain Forest Monastery. It's one of the masterpieces Klaus has graced us with, and trust me—you don't want to miss it."

Joon's tone grew more formal as he continued,

"With that being said, Oracle Inc., in collaboration with the Overlords and Celestial Mountain Academy, would like to announce that two years from now, there will be a Warrior Tournament. Details of this tournament will be revealed during its official launch two months from today."

He paused, giving the crowd a moment to absorb the news. "Once again, thank you all for attending and watching from all around the world. May you find peace in Oracle."

With that, Joon wrapped up the event, leaving the crowd buzzing with excitement about Oracle and the upcoming Warrior Tournament.