

## Paragon 311

Chapter 311 - 311: Maw of the Abyss

The waves swayed, raising the water high into the air. Klaus halted his advance and waited for the abomination hiding within the depths to make its appearance.

He could sense it—very strong, very large—and from the waves alone, he knew he was about to have a good fight.

He was excited.

The waters splashed, sending a shockwave that blasted the ice coating the water. Klaus was pushed back, but fortunately, he remained within the confines of the Ice Lotus.

He stood his ground—well, more like he stood on his ice—as he watched the colossal abomination emerge from beneath the surface.

The first thing he noticed was the rows of jagged, razor-sharp teeth lining the colossal maw of the crocodile's head. There were countless teeth, intimidating to behold.

Klaus observed the crocodile's head and frowned.

'It's rising,' he thought inwardly.

The crocodile's head began to rise above the raging surface of the water. Its colossal green neck followed, matching the head in size.

Then a muscular frame appeared. The front legs that were supposed to allow it to crawl had transformed into hands, now ending in razor-sharp claws. It rose to waist level, and its roar sent torrents of waves crashing from its maw.

"Maw of the Abyss," Klaus muttered, frowning. His mind was instantly reinforced by the [Sage Mind] and [Unbreakable Min] techniques.

He had fought this monster before, back in the Tormented World. He and Yuying had one time gone to kill a Nine-Tailed Demon Fox so Yuying could steal her bloodline.

One of its guards had been a Maw of the Abyss. It was a demon back then, very powerful. However, he was also a Saint at that time, so the battle had been a quick and decisive one. Now, he is a mere Master stage expert

If the monster before him was anything like the one he had fought before, he knew he was in trouble. That time, he had Yuying by his side.

"Damn it..." Klaus cursed, putting away his sword as a spear appeared in his hand.

"No Annihilation Ice this time; gotta do it the old-fashioned way," he thought, his grip tightening on the two-meter spear.

The monster rose higher, its massive waist now visible above the surface. At 2.5 meters tall, it was enormous, imposing, and undeniably threatening. Klaus knew that well.

When he fought it with Yuying, she had warned him that mind attacks were off-limits. The creature possessed a formidable mind and a berserker ability that activated if its mind was attacked. Using his Eye of Malevolence would be too risky, as even a mere gaze could provoke its mind.

'I don't the lightning element just yet' Klaus muttered.

He recalled Yuying had told him that lightning was one of its weaknesses. Klaus would have to rely on the two elements he currently wielded: ice and fire.

'I could just summon the dragon and finish this in a few strikes,' he pondered, but then he noticed something that made him smile.

"I will kill it with a single strike," Klaus declared.

His voice carried, cutting through the sea's roar and the monster's deafening roars, which served as a mental attack or to many, mental torture.

According to Yuying, its tongue contained an amplifier that intensified its roars, making it nearly impossible to hear anything else. One could get mad from hearing those roars and howls.

Klaus's statement echoed across the battlefield. Thousands of young warriors and instructors watching heard him. Even Ella, Ethan, and Max, who had woken from Oracle with beaten expressions, caught his words.

"I feel like we're missing out on something... maybe we should log out," Omari said. The two women beside him on the shore, still shaken by Klaus's display just a few minutes ago, nodded. They haven't exited the trial yet.

A second later, they exited Oracle and began watching the large screen, showing Klaus facing the colossal monster. They remembered hearing its roar from 40 kilometers away while in Oracle.

Klaus made his move—a classic one.

The monster had incredibly tough skin—tough enough for the Void Piercing Needle to pierce, but it would require a strong mental push, which Klaus preferred to avoid. So, he turned to his only move, knowing he didn't yet have the lightning element.

He spun the spear, coating it in ice, and hurled it into the air. The monster roared, opening its massive maw and unleashing torrents of shockwaves. But Klaus was right on cue.

Riding the shockwave, he leaped high into the air, cracking the ice beneath him. Then, with a powerful kick, he struck the blunt end of the spear, sending it flying with its pointed tip aimed directly at the monster.

Its mouth was wide open, and in an instant, the spear pierced through. Just like that, Klaus had killed the monster with a single attack. It fell backward, splashing into the sea and raising waves everywhere.

He had put a lot into that kick, so by the time the monster registered the attack, it was already too late.

"It actually worked," Klaus sighed, gazing at the 5-meter body of the slain beast. It was considerably taller from the waist up than below.

Moving past it, Klaus approached the Sage Eye and placed his hand on it. The moment his hand touched it, Cephas spoke.

"Congratulations, Disciple Klaus, you have emerged as the winner of this year's Genius Gathering competition."

Klaus nodded, and then his vision darkened. The next second, he was back in the gaming chair, everyone staring at him.

Awe, shock, anger—and most of all, hatred—filled their eyes, though there were a few concerned looks from Hanna, Anna, and Lily.

Klaus sighed. "I'm okay," he said, not wanting to get into things yet.

He'd already sensed the gaze of three people watching him from the other room. Only a glass wall separated them, but he could feel their killing intent aimed squarely at him.

Clearly, Ella, Ethan, and Max hadn't learned their lessons yet; they wanted more. Klaus was fine with that. Killing them now would solve a lot of future problems.

"Everyone, gather around!" Cephas's voice suddenly cut through the crowd, granting the three Legacies another day to live. They could die tomorrow if they want.

Klaus's mind wasn't in the best place right now; he needed to meditate.

If not for the Mad Berserker Red Tiger Core, he wouldn't have bothered competing in this trial.

Of course, he could have gone hunting for it himself, but that would've been a waste, so he decided to kill two birds with one stone.

Cephas addressed the group, and five minutes later, a case containing the core was handed to Klaus under the jealous gaze of many. As for the other rewards, everyone would receive them the next day, which was also the final day.

The trial had ended faster than most expected. Klaus left with his friends, and soon he was back in his room, where he immediately entered a meditative state. For the next few hours, no one disturbed him.

When night came, however, Anna and Lily entered his room. Klaus was still meditating, so they didn't interrupt. Three hours later, he opened his eyes.

It was time for some apologies and damage control.

#### Chapter 312 - 312: Having The Talk

As Klaus woke up from his meditation, he was greeted by the concerned faces of Anna and Lily. They gazed at him with sadness, a sight that made him curse his bloodthirsty side for going too far.

He had indeed crossed a line in his battle with the three Legacies. He could have killed them quickly and been done with it, but Klaus wanted to show them—and everyone watching—that he wasn't someone to be messed with. The message had been sent, loud and clear.

Yet, in doing so, he had caused his friends and lovers to become wary of him. Well, everyone except Hanna, who, for some reason, seemed pleased with how he'd handled those brats.

He'd find out why later.

For now, his focus was on the two ladies in front of him. They looked sad, on edge, and strangely afraid of him, even though they were trying to hide it.

"Come here," Klaus said, motioning for them to come closer.

They hesitated for a moment, then moved closer and fell into his arms—a familiar gesture, though filled with an unusual concern. When it came to comforting him, they seemed to offer no resistance.

Klaus glanced at Anna on his right and Lily on his left and sighed.

"You ladies shouldn't worry too much. I'm still the Klaus you know," he said.

"We know that," Lily replied first. "It's just...we've never seen you like that before. It was scary, you know—seeing you so emotionless and cruel." Her cheeks flushed a little as she spoke.

"Cruel... that's a first," Klaus murmured with a sigh. Perhaps learning more about his past had its downsides, especially in how it affected others. But he knew it was necessary—for the person he has to become.

As a Paragon, he must face the cruelty of the heavens. If he doesn't become one himself, there's no way he will make it to the top.

Just as he has ensured his growth in every reincarnation would go smoothly, the heavens have also been working in the background to guarantee his progress doesn't go unimpeded. Even if he wanted to be a goody-two-shoes for the rest of his life, the heavens wouldn't allow it.

Cruelty is the path, and he has just begun to manifest that Paragon aura—the kind that shows he is different from others.

"I don't know about cruelty, Lily, but I do know that if I did nothing, those three idiots would never stop getting in my way. I know I went too far, but do I regret it? Hell, no.

I am a different person; I am not like everyone else. So if you two want to be with me as much as I want to be with you, then you'll have to accept me as I am."

Klaus said without a shred of mercy in his words. He considered using softer words to calm them down but knew this issue would come up again soon enough. Better to make them accept reality now and move on.

As expected, the two ladies turned pale, but Klaus didn't care. They were still too naïve for the world they lived in.

'I should change that soon, or they'll become a burden to humanity,' he sighed.

He let them have a moment. They needed time to process that the conversation they came for was far more intense than they'd anticipated. After a while, he felt a soft touch on his chest. He looked down and saw Anna gazing back at him.

"Klaus, we don't hate you. I hope you know that, right?" she asked.

"I know, yes."

"Then you should know we wouldn't leave you, no matter what you are or who you turn out to be. We love you very much, and the idea of walking away just because we can't accept all of you is something we would never consider," she added, her mood lightening a bit.

Klaus nodded, thinking it would take them a while to fully come to terms with him. But he was wrong—Anna's next words made his eyes widen.

"We want you to turn us into you. We want to become as ruthless as you."

"Wait, what?" Klaus was stunned. He had expected them to say something like, "We accept you for who you are and don't want to be apart from you." Instead, they wanted to become more like him.

That was the last thing he expected. But did he hate the idea? Definitely not. This was something he'd actually wanted. If the people around him were too soft, it would only bring him unnecessary trouble.

Klaus studied Anna's face, looking for any hint of hesitation, but there was none. Her resolve was clear, and he felt an unexpected surge of admiration. Lily, sitting on his left, nodded firmly, echoing Anna's determination.

"So, you're both serious about this?" Klaus asked.

Anna met his gaze without flinching. Klaus could see the determination in those eyes and for some reason, a certain Ice Princess flashed through his thoughts.

"Yes, Klaus. We don't want to be left behind or become weaknesses you have to protect. We want to stand beside you, not just as bystanders but as equals who understand your world."

Lily added, "We've seen enough to know what we're asking for. But if it means we can be a true part of your life—no matter how dark or dangerous—then it's a price we're willing to pay."

Klaus took a deep breath, feeling a sense of satisfaction he hadn't anticipated. There was something freeing about knowing they wanted to share in his burdens, to face what he faced.

Yet, he knew the transformation they sought wouldn't be easy. It would demand everything from them—their innocence, their beliefs, maybe even their own identities.

They were raised to believe that a warrior is meant to fight monsters, but they didn't realize that some of these monsters are their fellow humans. In fact, many of them are even viler than real monsters.

"Alright," he finally said. "But just so you both know, I won't go easy on you just because you're my lover, so be prepared."

The two nodded, cheeks flushed pink. Klaus leaned in and kissed both of them, deepening their blushes. He watched them with an amused expression.

A while later, Klaus felt two hands brushing across his chest. The two beauties now wore flustered expressions instead of the concerned looks they'd arrived with. Klaus, of course, knew what they wanted, so being a good guy, he gave them what they sought.

After all, they were his women, and though they hadn't crossed the next line yet, that didn't mean they couldn't do some other things.

It was only a few minutes, but Klaus made sure they both enjoyed it very much. In the end, the three of them fell asleep half-dressed, stirring only a few hours later. When he woke up, Lily and Anna were gone. He washed up and went to meet them and his other friends—it was their last day before heading back, after all.

### Chapter 313 - 313: Last Day at Sinji Valley

After heading out, Klaus met up with his friends, who had decided to go out and have some fun. The Valley had many great spots for entertainment.

Strangely, Klaus noticed that his male friends didn't seem shaken at all; they appeared fine, which made him suspect that Lily and Anna had done some damage control while he was asleep.

The next few hours were spent enjoying all kinds of activities. Later, they decided to visit a particular restaurant for dinner before heading back.

While they were eating, Miguel and Omari arrived along with the Zhou twins, and Scarlet and Ruby. Klaus was, of course, very happy to see them, his best friend Miguel was there after all. Of course, he chose not to tease him today.

He was quite surprised when Miguel and Omari chose to side with him during Lawrence's scheme to split their team. As for the Zhou twins, he held no grudge against them, so their presence was normal, similar to Ruby and Scarlet.

But Omari and Miguel were a different story. He and them don't see eye to eye, so Klaus was surprised when they choose to support him. For some reason, he felt happy about their decision, so he decided to give them something.

"Miguel, my friend," Klaus said with a grin.

"Don't start, Klaus. I didn't come here to fight," Miguel cut in before Klaus could throw in a few teases. Klaus smiled and asked,

"Then what brings you here?"

"I was wondering if you could give me—us—access to the Endless Trial for the next three weeks. You can take it back after the Union Trial," Miguel said.

It seemed he and the others had come to an agreement and wanted to ask for something. After all, they had sided with him, and the least he could do was give them something in return.

"Done." Klaus didn't even bat an eye. Miguel and the others raised their eyebrows at how casually he accepted their proposal.

"Do you want to join us?" Klaus asked.

"I feel like you all should be with us." Before they could protest, Klaus and his friends made way for them to sit. Although some of them were his rivals, Klaus didn't care; he had bigger fish to fry.

They spent the next few minutes eating and chatting about random topics, most of which revolved around the legacies. Klaus was surprised by some of the things he heard about the three legacies, but in the end, he didn't care. If they didn't want peace, then Klaus would ensure they never had it.

After dinner, they each went their separate ways. Kilian, however, decided to stay behind and have a few more "talks" with Scarlet, who had never taken her eyes off the flame swordsman throughout their meal.

The next day, they left and headed back to Stone Valley, where each would be departing for their various homes. On the way, Klaus addressed his friends.

"The Union Trial is just a few weeks away. Initially, I wanted us to go to a Tier 4 forbidden zone so you could all have a much steeper training regimen, but something came up, so I have to make some changes."

He wanted them to train alongside Miriam, but that was when he was trying to calm down before due to his bloodlust. Now that he has the core, he doesn't need to wait a few more weeks to attempt awakening the Slaughter Aura.

This also meant he would have to go into seclusion for the next few weeks.

"But don't worry, I've made some arrangements in Oracle. Each of you will have a training region where you'll spend the next three weeks training. Miriam will oversee your progress.

"So, the moment you go, make sure to get your affairs in order and enter Oracle for your training. After the Union Trial, which I know you all will pass, we'll go for some real-world training. Also, take this and make sure to put them to good use."

Klaus handed each of them a scroll containing a single skill. He intended to use these techniques as a way to evaluate their progress, after which he could provide them with the Martial techniques and cultivation techniques he had in mind for them.

After going through the second memory of his past as Fruity, Klaus now had hundreds of techniques he could use and even share with those he wanted.

The first set of skills he obtained from the Soul Temple was meant for saints and above, so he hadn't given any of them to his friends. Only a few could be used by them, but they weren't suited to their skill sets, so he refrained from wasting their time.

Now, however, thanks to Yuying, he had a plethora of techniques and spells he could offer his friends—techniques that could turn them into powerhouses.

But first, he wanted to see how they performed with some of the basic skills and techniques he had. Once he evaluated their performance, he would provide each of them with cultivation techniques and a super-powerful martial technique.

After all, he possessed some of the most powerful techniques in existence, and he planned to master them gradually. Giving away a few wouldn't hurt him in any way.

His friends looked at the content of the techniques with widened eyes.

'As expected, even the basic ones are several times more powerful in their eyes,' Klaus smiled.

"Great, this is amazing! I can finally use my hammer well," Daniel said with a grin. Klaus had given him a skill that allowed him to triple the size of his hammer and make it ten times heavier.

Of course, the hammer would feel the same weight in Daniel's hands, but the one on the receiving end would feel the increased heft much more.

Danny also received a similar technique, but with a slight modification: his axe would gain an extra sharpness when used.

Kilian received a sword skill called [Cloning Sword Strike]. Whenever he used this technique, he would create two copies of himself—two clones alongside the real him—allowing him to shift between them.

This would enable him to land a blow from three different angles. However, it required nimbleness, so his next few weeks would be focused on training his agility and flexibility.

Lily received a similar skill, but hers would only create copies of her wind arcs. Just like Kilian's technique, each arc could be the right one—a very dangerous skill if used correctly.

Kay received an arrow-molding skill called [Lion's Roar Piercer]. When used, the arrow fired would transform into a lion's head with a meter-long pointed horn that could bypass 30% of the target's defense.

As for his friend Mark, who wielded a spear, he received a summoning-type skill. When activated, his spear would vanish and then reappear, granting him a 20% enhancement in speed and a new spear—an upgraded version that could bypass 40% of the target's defense.

He could use this skill for as long as he had stamina and Qi. But it drained a lot of stamina, so he would need to focus on that before the Union Trial.

Hanna received an arrow-making skill called [Exploding Bolt Piercer]. When activated, the arrowhead would be coated with lightning. Upon impact, it would pierce the target and then explode, creating a field of electricity around those nearby.

This of course would render them dizzy for a few seconds, and any good archer could make great use of those brief moments. Additionally, the arrow would gain a 20% enhancement in speed, making it even more deadly.

Klaus noticed the look on Anna's face when Ella summoned the Water Lion, so he decided to give her a summoning spell for her ice element along with a control skill for the water element.

An ice rhino would surely create chaos on the battlefield.

A day later, they all returned to their respective homes, ready to get down to business.

Meanwhile, Klaus had a surprise of his own—his uncles had finally returned.

#### Chapter 314 - 314: Five Mad Uncles

A week after the assassination attempt on Klaus, his uncles went rogue and, for two solid weeks, they caused mayhem among those speaking ill of Klaus.

It was known that had it not been for Klaus showing up when he did during the Arcadian Mine Invasion, the city would have suffered much greater losses.

Many lives would have been lost—there was no doubt about it.

So frustrated by their failure to save him in time and their inability to locate the dark order, his five uncles directed their anger toward his critics.

Back then, many people panicked at the sheer brutality they unleashed. An entire mercenary team was wiped out simply because one of them said Klaus got what he deserved.

Panic escalated when they killed a sage—or, more precisely when Uncle Ziggy killed a sage who wasn't even on the battlefield but was spouting all kinds of nonsense after the battle was over.

That incident caused widespread chaos. This led the Great Family, to which the sage belonged, to send twenty-four more Saints and two sages to hunt them down.

None returned.

It was a great loss on their part but also a wake-up call to many, showing that Klaus's uncles, like Klaus himself, were no ordinary warriors. If a sage could be killed with a single lightning bullet, what did that tell them?

They called on the War Goddess to intervene, but she was grieving back then so she paid no heed to their cries—not that she cared in the first place.

If it were up to her, every human would simply die so she could have peace of mind. Her hatred for humanity ran deep.

However, two weeks before Klaus woke up, the five uncles vanished and were never seen again. After Klaus regained consciousness, he searched for them for a few days, but finding no trace, he decided to stop.

He knew his uncles were abnormally strong; no one except perhaps sovereigns or Transcendents could pose a threat to them.

However, after Klaus and his sister returned from the genius gathering, he received news that his uncles were back. Without even changing his clothes, he rushed over to the tattoo parlor to meet them.

"Kiddo, glad to see you're doing well," Uncle Xian said, patting him heavily on the shoulder. "Last time we saw you, you were dead," he added with a cheerful grin.

"The last time I saw you all, you were Saints. When did you become Sages?" Klaus responded, his expression shocked.

He was stunned upon arriving at the tattoo shop and finding that his uncles were now Sages. The last time he'd seen them, they were Saints.

Scratch that—even the first time he met them, they were Grandmasters. Then, just a few months later, they became Saints, and now they were Sages. All this in less than a year. That wasn't how cultivation typically worked, even for prodigies.

"Brat, what are you trying to say? Don't you think we've got the talent to become Sages?" Uncle Ziggy asked, a playful smile on his lips. The other uncles wore the same grin.

"No, no, I didn't mean it that way. It's just shocking to see you all became Sages in less than a year after attaining Sainthood."

To rise to the Sage stage, one must first saturate their Star Core. This can be achieved through manual cultivation, using a cultivation technique to absorb the qi in the air. It's a rather slow process, so most people skip it.

The next method is by absorbing resources rich in Spiritual qi; Mountain Dew is a typical example. This is common among the wealthy, but then again, a good warrior is usually wealthy. Selling monster bodies and cores is certainly a way to generate considerable income.

If neither of these methods is applied, then there's the old-fashioned way: hunting and killing. The more you kill, the more experience points you earn. Absorbing monster cores is also a fast way to level up, so most people hunt to speed up their progress.

However, advancing from the Saint stage to the Sage stage typically takes at least six months for the hardworking and a full year for those who take it slow.

Then there's the tribulation they must prepare for. It's no exaggeration to say even prodigies need time for that.

For his uncles to move from Saint to Sage in under four months was just too wild. Klaus simply couldn't believe it.

"We worked hard, kiddo," Uncle Xian said. "By the way, what have you been up to lately?" he asked.

Klaus sighed, noting their change of topic. He decided to let it go; after all, he was a similar case. If it weren't for the academy trials holding him back, he would have long attained Sainthood. His experience-point farming was hundreds of times faster than most.

"Just hunting the bastards who tried to kill me," Klaus shrugged. "Actually, I've killed quite a few already and am now planning to kidnap a Sovereign Assassin, so you know, the usual."

This time, it was his uncles who were shocked. They had spent a great deal of time hunting the Dark Order but had come up empty, while Klaus, a mere master stage expert, had already killed a few.

Some might have called his bluff, but they knew he wasn't bluffing. So, how did he do it?

"How did you do it?" Uncle Jojo asked.

Klaus smiled and replied, "One of them came after me after I woke up, and, well, I got to him first and managed to break him. From there, I just followed the trail."

"Don't tell me you're responsible for the disappearances of assassins in this region," Uncle Jojo asked, looking both skeptical and curious.

"Let's forget about those losers," Klaus said with a smile. "The more important question is, where have you all been for the past few months? I've heard some things about your rampage."

The five uncles just looked at him and smiled back. Clearly, their little brat had more revenge in him than they did—something that brought them great joy.

They seemed to relish it when Klaus killed his enemies.

Anyway, Klaus spent the next few hours learning more about what they'd been up to over the last few months.

It turned out that after their rampage across the eastern region and failing to locate the Dark Order, they had left for a Tier 6 Forbidden Zone somewhere in the Equatorial Union, previously known as Africa.

They had spent the last few weeks there, hunting and absorbing the cores of the monsters they killed. From the way they described it, they caused quite a bit of chaos in that zone.

After breaking through, they headed somewhere else they didn't mention, but from the look on their faces, Klaus could tell it was a dangerous place they didn't want him going anytime soon. He didn't press them.

When he asked how they managed to remain unnoticed even though many were looking for them.

Uncle Mark activated a tattoo on his arm that transformed him into a completely different person. Klaus immediately thought of his own tattoo, but since he didn't fully understand how it worked, he held back from asking further questions.

They gave him a few Devil cores, and, after making him promise to invite them when he went after the Sovereign, he left. The next day, he entered seclusion.

It was time for him to awaken the Slaughter Aura.

Chapter 315 - 315: Aura Of Slaughter

After nearly destroying his house, Klaus decided to buy a much bigger one. This time, he made sure some of the training rooms were far sturdier than the previous one. He didn't want it crumbling the next time he unleashed a powerful energy.

Today was one of those days. After returning from his five uncles, Klaus decided to enter seclusion to awaken his slaughter Aura.

As he entered the training room, he sealed the door and made sure his family knew not to disturb him until he came out.

He retrieved the Mad Berserker Red Tiger Core, and immediately, a bloodthirsty aura filled the room, making Klaus's blood boil.

"This is one dangerous core. I wonder how powerful the monster this came from was," Klaus muttered.

"Don't even think about it. With your current strength, it would crush you with just its aura," the senior said, his tone slightly amused, as if he'd just heard the joke of the century.

"Have some confidence in me, Senior. I'm much more powerful now, you know," Klaus replied with a smile.

"Go ahead and absorb it. The longer it's exposed, the more energy is wasted. I won't continue to comment once you begin, as this is a significant moment for you, and my remarks would only bring you more harm than good. So do your best not to get overwhelmed." The senior paused and then continued

"That would be bad."

Klaus sighed and began absorbing the core. As soon as the first strand of bloodthirsty energy entered his body, the Seal of Slaughter within his soul sea trembled, releasing a dense bloodthirsty energy that immediately filled one portion of his soul sea.

On the other side, the Pentaface bead also started spinning, and the golden Star energy beneath it began to circulate.

Klaus immediately felt his body becoming overwhelmed with the urge for slaughter. He could sense it in every fiber of his being, each inch screaming for bloodshed. Slowly, he began to be overtaken by the influence.

'This is a bit different from when I awakened it in the Tormented World,' Klaus thought to himself.

'But exciting, isn't it?' Klaus said, then he froze, his eyes widening. The tone he'd spoken in was cold, sinister—unsettling just to hear.

'I didn't say that,' he thought, a sudden fear gripping him. He didn't know why, but hearing that voice—an exact copy of his own—terrified him with its icy undertone.

"Chill, bro, I come in peace." Klaus's eyes widened again, and then he blinked.

The moment blinked, his gaze met the person who spoke. There he was—a carbon copy of himself sitting right across from him.

Silver-red hair, a perfectly chiseled face, an athletic build, neatly dressed, and with a familiar but unnervingly dark set of red eyes.

'Why is it always the eyes?' Klaus thought, though still on edge.

"The joke's on you," the other him said with a smirk. "I fancy the ladies already swooning over those golden eyes."

"Not my fault you have ugly ones," Klaus sighed. Yet again, he was visited by someone—well, by himself, his past self, uninvited. And he could read his thoughts, which wasn't his first rodeo.

The two stared into each other's eyes for a full minute—a rather awkward moment. Two people, the same person, looking at himself. A very awkward moment indeed.

Klaus sighed.

"Who might you be? It would be helpful if you told me your name." Klaus wasn't happy about the whole situation, but he knew he needed it. He didn't need a genius to tell him that the one responsible for subduing the Eye of Malevolence was the same person sitting in front of him.

It was himself from one of his past incarnations—the third, to be precise, since Fruity was the fourth.

'Why am I scared of him?' Klaus thought. 'He is me, and I am him, so why am I scared?'

"Chill, bruh. For now, you can just call me Number Three. As for why I'm here—you needed me, dummy. Without me, you would've exploded by now."

Klaus's heartbeat slowed for a moment when he heard that.

"What do you mean? I was just absorbing the core to awaken the Aura of Slaughter. I've done it before," Klaus said.

"Was the Seal of Slaughter and the Demon Bead present back then?" Number Three asked in a sarcastic tone. Klaus, in a moment of clarity, widened his eyes, his golden gaze gleaming.

"Fuck, those eyes are immaculate," Number Three said, peering closely at Klaus's eyes.

"Dude, that's weird," Klaus said with a frown moving his face away from Number Three.

"What do I have to do?" he asked.

"Wouldn't you like to know?" he said, forming a small orb in his hands. The moment Klaus saw it, his frown deepened—he knew exactly what the orb was for.

When he first met Fruity, it had been a cup of tea; now, it was an orb—a sinister-looking red orb, the kind that held nothing good. He knew himself well enough to sense that nothing good would come from the face staring back at him.

"Chill, bruh. The current you is just too weak to know anything about me. You haven't even opened the Demon Bead yet. Do you really think you're ready to know anything about me?"

Klaus sighed, a small smile playing on his lips. He had dodged a bullet. The memories he already had were more than he could handle, so he truly wasn't ready for any new ones. However, his relief soon vanished when something else echoed in his mind. Something Number Three just said.

"What do you mean by not being able to open the Demon Bead?" Klaus asked. "And more importantly, why are you calling the Pentaface Bead a Demon Bead?"

Number Three sighed, then, without saying anything, pressed the orb against Klaus's forehead, their faces just inches apart.

"You are still too soft, careful, and weak." Number Three didn't say anything else; he simply flicked Klaus's forehead gently, sending him out of the realm he had just entered.

Immediately, he was back, he found himself drawn into a thick red and golden mist. The entire training room reeks of bloodlust.

He sighed then as if knowing what to do, he formed a series of hand seals. The orb Number Three pressed against his forehead contained what he needed to safely awaken the Slaughter Aura.

A purple runic diagram appeared on the floor. At once, the golden and red mist began to swirl around him. In just a few moments, it formed an egg-shaped cocoon around him. Just like that, Klaus was encased in a golden-red cocoon.

A day passed, yet he remained in the cocoon, unchanged. The purple diagram was still active absorbing the natural energy in the air and feeding it to the cocoon.

Inside his soul sea though, the golden energy beneath the Pentaface bead was still circulating, releasing waves of potent energy that seemed to affect the first door.

The energy seems to be affecting it. It began to open, though it was almost inconceivable due to how slow it was opening.

Two days passed, and Klaus was still inside the cocoon. However, within his soul sea, the door had opened slightly, revealing only a couple of inches of space inside. Looking closely, one could see a large red star in the distance.

The third, fourth, and fifth days passed, but nothing changed aside from the door slowly opening and the red star becoming more pronounced. The golden energy remained the same as before; it hadn't receded by even an inch.

On the sixth day, strange markings began to appear on the cocoon. By the seventh day, the cocoon started exuding a chaotic mix of bloodthirsty and sharp auras.

By the eighth day, more markings appeared on the cocoon, and the aura emitting from it became more potent. The entire training room was filled with this powerful energy.

A few more days passed until the fifteenth day when something strange happened in Klaus's soul sea.

#### Chapter 316 - 316: Soul Weapon Awakening

Inside Klaus's soul sea, the golden energy beneath the Pentaface Bead started to surge, a stark contrast to the gentle circulation from a few days ago.

Klaus remained immobile inside the cocoon, with no sign of awakening. Days went by, and the situation in his soul sea continued to change.

On the fifteenth day, however, something remarkable happened. Suddenly, out of nowhere, Klaus's sword—the one left behind by his father—appeared in his soul sea. The moment it manifested, the door that was halfway opened suddenly widened.

Then, from within the door, the red star flashed, and a wave of powerful energy surged through the door, pouring into the soul sea. The sword vibrated for a brief moment before shooting through the door, heading straight for the star.

The moment it passed through the door, it shut behind it, bringing a sudden calm to the soul sea. The Seal of Slaughter settled, ceasing to release the red energy, and the golden energy also calmed.

But this tranquility lasted only a few days.

On the twenty-first day, the door swung open again, unleashing a sudden wave of terrifying energy that instantly enveloped the entire soul sea.

Roar!

A terrifying roar suddenly erupted from the Pentaface Bead. Afterward, it began to glow with a dark gold hue. At once, the energy pouring from the door started to be absorbed by the bead. This continued for a full twelve hours before it finally calmed down.

By the end of the 14 hours, the bead completely drained the energy that came from the door. The only thing left was the sword—the same sword that had entered Klaus's soul sea. It now features a dark red blade adorned with intricate markings.

It looked sharp, its edge capable of cutting through the toughest defenses. The hilt remained comfortable, but at the tang—the joint where the blade connects with the hilt—there was now a golden gemstone shaped like a star embedded in.

Then the star glowed, and the golden energy beneath the Pentaface Bead surged toward it. For twelve hours, the star absorbed a great deal of energy before it suddenly vanished from the soul sea. When it next appeared, it hovered before the golden-red cocoon on the outside.

Crack.

A few minutes after the sword appeared, a crack suddenly appeared in the cocoon. The moment it did, a potent energy seeped out and began entering the star gem embedded in the sword.

Another crack appeared, releasing even more potent energy. Soon, many cracks formed, and then the first layer fell away, revealing pure white hair flowing behind an incredibly handsome young man, his eyes closed.

The sword hummed, and the layer of the cocoon that fell vaporized, absorbing into it. The other layers soon followed suit.

Klaus was left seated with all layers of the cocoon now absorbed by the sword.

A day later he opened his eyes.

Deep red eyes snapped open, accompanied by a burst of bloodthirsty aura—the kind that carried the will of death.

It spread through the training hall, even reaching beyond it and enveloping the entire training building. All the grasses around the training building immediately lost their color as the aura swept over them.

Fortunately, there was nobody around; otherwise, they would have collapsed from sheer terror contained within the aura. The aura continued to emanate from Klaus for a few minutes before it finally calmed down.

He closed his eyes, and when he opened them again, they had returned to their usual golden hue. An hour later, not a trace of the aura remained around him.

His gaze then shifted to the sword hovering before him and smiled. "Looks like Dad has a few things to tell me once I find him."

Klaus immediately recognized the sword, its true name, and its nature. He could feel a bond now formed between them. Everything about the sword is now in his mind.

"Celestial Requiem... A good name," Klaus muttered with a smile. The sword seemed to respond to its name. It shrank and entered his forehead. A sword tattoo appeared for a few seconds before disappearing again.

He took out his phone and looked at the time and date. "Ten more days to go." He put the phone away and closed his eyes again.

In the next moment, he was back inside his soul sea, a shocked expression on his face.

The soul sea had become larger, and now, instead of nine closed doors, one was open. From within that door, Klaus could feel a powerful energy emanating. The red star was now far back only showing as a small red dot.

The Seal of Slaughter had also grown, filling a larger portion of the sea. As for the Eye of Malevolence, some changes had started to appear. Klaus could tell that these changes would soon become more pronounced.

However, what shocked him even more was the Pentaface Bead; it had undergone whatever upgrade it was undergoing. The runes around it were no more. Just by looking at it, Klaus could tell there was something different yet unrecognizable about it.

He moved closer to it and gently touched it. The moment his hand landed, he felt some information enter his mind. It took just a few seconds, but it left a smile on Klaus's face.

"Three new skills huh, interesting." His smile widened.

After withdrawing his hand, he immediately focused his attention on the door, contemplating what to do next. A few seconds later, he began moving toward it, but the senior's voice stopped him.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you."

Klaus halted and then asked, "Why do you say that, senior?"

"Your soul strength is still not strong enough to resist the pressure. It wasn't supposed to open until after you began cultivating the Second Paragon Star Diagram. But due to some unforeseen circumstances, it opened ahead of time.

"You can enter after you start cultivating the second Paragon Star Diagram."

"I see. I guess I should stay away from there for now." Klaus didn't want to argue. Had it not been for his past self helping him awaken the Slaughter Aura, he would have indeed exploded.

The golden energy, along with the Seal of Slaughter, had influenced the awakening. Had he not received a secret absorption technique when he did, he would have indeed died. That scared the hell out of him.

Suddenly, the fire dragon appeared inside his soul sea. It roared and circled around the soul sea for a few seconds before coming to a stop in front of the Pentaface Bead.

"Brat, have you figured out a way to make your dragon absorb the energy?" the senior asked.

"Yes, senior. I can also use the same method to enhance the Slaughter Aura" Klaus replied. "By the way, senior, is the Pentaface Bead also called the Demon Bead?" he asked.

"I can't answer that," the senior responded. Klaus smiled slightly. He had to figure things out on his own, at least for now.

Meeting his other self was like a wake-up call for him. He needed to get his affairs in order before the next visit. Although Number Three said he wasn't ready for anything yet, Klaus knew he had to be ready for anything, after all, there was more to Fruity he hadn't learned yet.

He formed a couple of hand seals. A diagram appeared beneath the dragon. The golden energy surged and began entering its body. Soon, the dragon was encased in a Golden Cocoon inside the soul sea.

'Too bad I still haven't awakened the Forbidden Ice elements yet' He sighed inwardly. Had he awakened them, he would have been able to use the golden energy to increase their strength and even the Ice Lotus.

Klaus waited a few more seconds, carefully watching the dragon. Seeing nothing wrong, he left the soul sea. On the outside, he formed another seal, and the golden energy soon started to be absorbed by him.

For the next three days, he absorbed the energy. Then, a few hours into the third day, the dragon's roar echoed across the soul sea.

"Finally..." Klaus smiled. He stood up and left the training hall.

### Chapter 317 - 317: Charmed [Bonus]

Klaus left the training ground with a smile on his face. At first, he had wanted to discuss more things with the senior, but something told him that doing so could be disastrous. It wasn't that he didn't trust the senior; he did.

It was just that digging deeper would only add to his growing karma. He could already feel it—his next tribulation was going to be a hard one. Although he didn't fully understand how everything worked, he first wanted to get the Grandmaster stage tribulation out of the way before piling up more Karma.

What Number Three had said to him was like a wake-up call. He had indeed been soft and too cautious. However, now that he had awakened his aura, there was no need to be so careful anymore. He had to be more adventurous, even more than before.

The only downside was that he still didn't know how to open the Pentaface Bead as Number Three had mentioned. But, more importantly, he wanted to know why he had referred to it as the Demon Bead. It had always been the Pentaface Bead in his memories from Fruity, so where did that name come from?

"I feel like I don't know anything," Klaus muttered as he walked toward the main building. The new house he'd bought had five training rooms, though the main training room was about 2 km from the main building.

He didn't want to scare anyone while he trained. Unleashing any sinister aura would terrify his mother, so he chose to distance himself from the main house.

'Why is everyone looking at me strangely?' Along the way, Klaus noticed the maids and security staff glancing at him oddly.

Especially the ladies—they had a pink tint on their cheeks as he passed by them. Klaus was taken aback but chose to ignore them.

However, he was truly surprised when he entered the house and found his mom, sister, and Miriam frozen, staring at him in shock.

Klaus stood there, unsure of what had caused them to react that way. He examined himself, confident he hadn't unleashed his aura or used the Eye of Malevolence, which had now become several times stronger.

So, what was the cause?

He walked closer and waved his hand in front of his mother. The gesture seemed to snap them out of whatever had come over them.

"You... what happened to you?" his mother asked.

"What do you mean, Mom?" Klaus wondered. He had only gone into seclusion and come out several days later, nothing unusual aside from being cocooned. Even that wasn't the first time.

However, when he thought of the aura awakening process, he realized something might have changed about him. To confirm, he walked over to a mirror in the room. What he saw even shocked him.

"Damn, I look good," Klaus said shamelessly, brushing his hair back. His hair had grown longer and become even whiter. For some reason, just looking at it made one want to bury their face in it.

His height had also increased slightly, though he still hadn't reached the long-awaited 6 feet—he was close, closer that it wouldn't take a month to reach that.

However, his appearance, especially his facial features, had become even more refined. If he could previously charm 6 out of 10 ladies, the current him could make any lady swoon, explaining the expressions on even his mother's face.

'Fuck you, Fruity, Fuck you, Number Three. Now who's the handsome one?' Klaus thought, a smirk playing on his lips.

Although he hadn't quite reached the level of the two he had just insulted, if they were to walk side by side, no one would look down on him. Fruity and Number Three were exceptionally handsome, but he was getting there.

He turned to the three ladies. "Well, ladies, you seem to have been charmed. Care to give this young master a massage?"

"Tsk, just because you've become a little more handsome doesn't mean you have what it takes to charm anyone. Isn't that right, ladies?" Klaus's mother said her expression back to the familiar one he knew.

"Right," Hanna chimed in, strangely also back to her usual self.

"Miriam?" Klaus's mother added with an amused expression. Unlike her and Hanna, Miriam was indeed charmed. The pink flush in her cheeks gave away exactly what was on her mind.

Klaus's Mother and daughter exchanged a smile and left the hall, giving the couple some privacy. Klaus walked closer to Miriam, wrapped his arms around her waist, and pulled her closer.

Miriam didn't protest the pull; she simply leaned in as Klaus locked lips with her. It had been over a month since he had gotten intimate with her, so Miriam didn't resist or even protest, even though they were still in the hall.

A minute later, their lips parted, and Klaus looked into her eyes. "You seemed hungry," he said with a teasing smile.

"I just missed you," Miriam replied.

"You mean you missed my body. After all, it's only been a few weeks since we were last intimate, and for someone who's lived several decades, a few months shouldn't be anything to you," Klaus teased, making sure she was still in his grip.

"You..." Miriam blushed. She wanted to protest, but when she felt Klaus's hands lower to her butt, her heart skipped a beat, and a wave of pleasure flooded her body.

The Miriam from five months ago would never have dreamt of being in such a state or, even worse, allowing anyone to hold her hand.

When Klaus first held her hand after his duel with Max, she was overwhelmed with emotion which wasn't like her. She was the ruthless and arrogant war goddess of the eastern region, so what happened?

Her life changed since that day...

As time went by, she started feeling things she never felt before. It began after Klaus and Lucy had their first time, and Anna dragged her away to question Lucy. She couldn't refuse their invitation, so she went along.

Lucy, who wanted her nightmare to end, told them everything. At first, Miriam wasn't interested in whatever had happened between Lucy and Klaus, but as she continued to listen, she began to feel something.

Since then, whenever the ladies met and started gossiping about Klaus, she was present.

Gradually, she started developing feelings for him. It wasn't immediate, but whenever Klaus teased her, saying he wanted a hug, she would feel a jolt in her body, a feeling that made her want to accept his offer.

Still, she never gave in, probably because she still felt guilty about what happened to her sister.

However, after witnessing Klaus's near-death a second time, she couldn't hold back anymore. She let her heart out, and when Klaus accepted her for all she was and is, she decided to give him her purity, finally becoming his woman.

Since then, she began to re-discover her true self—the young girl who only wanted to have fun and forget her worries. Now, in her eyes, Klaus was her man, her everything. His family was now her family.

She was happy and loved helping Klaus relieve some stress. Now, after a month of not being intimate, she couldn't help but feel excited when she felt Klaus's hands on her butt.

"You're different somehow. It's like something has changed in you," Miriam said.

"I know, right? I've become much stronger," Klaus responded. "Want to experience just how much stronger?" he added, speaking closely into her ear.

Miriam's body tensed, and before she could regain control, Klaus swept her off her feet and ran to his room, where the next few hours would be filled with cries of pleasure from the mighty War Goddess.

Chapter 318 - 318: New Discovery [Bonus]

"Mmmh," Klaus groaned, and Miriam's moan cut across the room as Klaus released his star juice into her nether cave for the umpteenth time. Miriam's body shook as the hot juice started filling her up.

They had been going at it for the past few hours, and Klaus, who hadn't had any sex in weeks, was really stressed out. Miriam felt the same.

The two had been embracing each other for hours. Finally, it seemed they had reached their limits—or more accurately, Klaus had reached his limit.

Miriam, despite being a Sovereign, had barely been able to hold on until the end. Klaus asked her several times if they should stop, but she said no. She could see Klaus had been going through a lot in the past weeks, so she wanted him to release all his stress.

After releasing every last drop of his star juice, he pulled out his long, semi-hard, glistening dragon and lay on top of Miriam. Soon, they both drifted into sleep, waking up hours later.

Miriam was the first to wake up, but she didn't wake Klaus. Instead, she continued to watch his handsome face as he slept peacefully on her chest. The sight filled her with warmth.

Later, Klaus woke up feeling very satisfied and stress-free. He had indeed released a lot of pent-up stress, something he had been holding back for weeks.

"We should wash up," Miriam said, and Klaus nodded. Their bodies felt sticky from all the energy released during their intercourse.

Soon, they were in the bath, with Miriam resting on Klaus's chest as he washed her body—though his hands rather seemed to focus primarily on her breasts. But who was to complain? They were his to use as he pleased.

Miriam wore a small smile on her lips. Minutes later, she asked, "Klaus, how do you plan on handling the Legacies? The Union Trial is just around the corner"

She sounded sad and worried. After all, although her supremacy was unquestioned in the eastern region, she didn't have much power in the central region. So she was concerned about the ban placed on Klaus.

"Why are you worried? If those idiots didn't learn their lesson, I guess I'll just have to leave an impact next time," Klaus said jokingly.

"You don't seem worried," Miriam observed.

"Why should I be? They're just a bunch of idiots trying to use their titles to suppress everyone. This time, they've picked the wrong target."

Miriam could feel that he wasn't worried at all, which made her very relaxed a bit. After all, even though people didn't know about her and Klaus yet, she knew that once the truth came out, no one would look down on her.

The brat she picked as her husband sure was daring and powerful. Many will bow before the legacies, but Klaus doesn't even have them in his eyes.

"Just don't cause too much trouble," Miriam said. Klaus smiled and gently kneaded her breasts, squeezing her nipples slightly. This elicited a moan from her. She tilted her head slightly and asked,

"Klaus, when do you plan to... you know, do it with Anna and Lily?"

Klaus, half-expecting a question like that, raised an eyebrow at her question. He smiled faintly.

He had come to accept that the women in his life had all reached some kind of understanding, one that seemed to involve helping each other get into his bed—not that he rejected the idea.

It was just too shocking. The ladies who were supposed to be competing were now helping each other.

"They don't seem to be ready to take that step just yet, so I'm holding back for as long as they need to prepare," Klaus answered.

He had shared some intimate moments with them, but each time, he could sense they weren't ready for anything more, so he held back.

When they were ready, he wouldn't deny them anything.

"By the way, why do you ask?" Klaus inquired.

"Well, it's just that after our first time when we became connected, I started getting stronger, so I want them to become stronger too."

Klaus nodded. He expected as much. Lucy had already become a force to be reckoned with in the academy. The last time they talked through their connection, she told him excitedly how she easily defeated the 21st ranker on the Inner Disciple Ranking chart.

It was all possible because his star qi started affecting the women he became intimate with. Lucy and Miriam were now growing stronger, especially Miriam, who had been spending so many nights with him.

"When they're ready, I will link them up," Klaus smiled.

"Well, they better hurry. With Lucy not around, I feel like after your breakthrough and becoming a Grandmaster, I wouldn't be able to hold on for even an hour," Miriam joked, her cheeks flushing with embarrassment. Klaus just smiled at her predicament.

"I will be sure not to break you, my dear," Klaus replied.

"I won't break easily. After all, I can feel that within the next six months, I'll be ready to break through and become a Transcendent," Miriam said.

"Well, good for you," Klaus praised her. "By the way, I want to give you a Cultivation technique and a few martial techniques, but I don't know anything about your Talent, Class, and other things."

"Well, I guess it's good we have this connection between us. I can transfer everything about my cultivation to you, or more like grant you access" Miriam said with a proud smile.

"You can do that?" Klaus asked.

"Yes, Lucy and I figured it out a few days ago—well, it's more like she did; my contribution was minimal. She is very brilliant," Miriam said, her gaze full of admiration.

"Hey, snap out of it! She is my woman, not yours," Klaus joked, noticing the admiration in Miriam's eyes. Even the Cold War goddess was pleased by Lucy's intelligence, which was enough to convince him that she was indeed very awesome.

"We are sisters now, so get used to it," Miriam pouted. Klaus just smiled and requested the details about her status page.

Immediately, he received the information. Strangely, it appeared like how when he accessed his status screen. He could see her Talent, Class, stats, and other details, including her skills and techniques.

Klaus compared her stats to his and could only smile. His was nowhere near hers, but he knew those were just numbers. Although he couldn't defeat Miriam in combat, True Great Sages wouldn't be much of an issue.

He knew that once he broke through to the Grandmaster stage, he would be able to take on multiple True Great Sages without any problems.

Although every Tier 7 monster or Zombie was comparable to Great Sages, a true Tier 7, like the Blood Princes he fought in the Demon's Abode, couldn't be underestimated.

Had it not been for the Blood Moon Transformation back then, he would have been overwhelmed. But now, he knew he was heading toward the stage where, without any enhancement, he would be able to take on multiple Tier 8 powerhouses at once.

"According to Lucy, if I level up, it will reflect on the screen for you to see at any time. Isn't that awesome?" Miriam added.

"Indeed," Klaus nodded. "Do you want to see mine?" he asked.

"No," Miriam answered without hesitation.

"Why?" Klaus inquired.

"I feel like the moment I see it, I would start doubting myself as a warrior," Miriam replied.

"Oh, and why is that?" he asked, amused.

"Klaus, you are a Tier 3 human who could take on thousands of Tier 6 and 7 monsters. Even if they are just ordinary, no Tier 3 should be able to do that. I'd rather save myself the trouble and move on," She explained, and Klaus could only smile.

"Your friends are coming," Miriam said, and Klaus nodded. He could sense them heading toward his house from kilometers away.

"We should tidy up and go out before they arrive," Miriam suggested, raising herself. However, before she could get up, Klaus turned her around. The next 30 minutes were spent in the bathtub, embracing each other.

When they were done, they got dressed and went out to meet Anna and the others who had arrived so they could all head to Union City, where the Union Trial would take place.

#### Chapter 319 - 319: Progress Report

"Klaus, when did you become this handsome?" Mark asked, looking suspiciously close at him. He wasn't the only one; his other male friends were doing the same. Luckily, Miriam, Lily, and Hanna were sitting with Anna and didn't blush as deeply as Miriam did.

Klaus looked at his friends and smiled. The expressions on their faces were just funny.

"I'm telling you, Danny, if we keep following Klaus around, we'll never get any beauties," Daniel said. Klaus had indeed become very handsome, the kind that would make any guy jealous.

With his looks, Klaus could have any lady he wanted, and with his strength, no one below the Great Sage stage could threaten him. He was both handsome and dangerous—a powerful combination.

"Relax, guys. With the beauties I have now, I won't stand in your way," Klaus said with a smile. "Friend to friend, though, if you stick around for a while, you'll start swimming in beauties. I heard there are many at the academy," he added.

But as soon as he spoke, three sets of eyes locked on him, making his back break into a cold sweat. He turned around with a guilty smile, meeting the gazes of Miriam, Lily, and Anna.

"What I meant to say was, no beauty would dare come closer with these amazing fairies by my side."

Everyone burst into laughter at Klaus's antics. Although they all knew the white-haired rascal wouldn't have to do much to win over the ladies, they just decided to let the moment pass.

Klaus was just a wild one; his friends knew that. After all, he had managed to win over the War Goddess herself. If word got out, men would build churches and start worshipping him as their ultimate 'Rizz' god.

"By the way, Kilian, how's Scarlet?" Klaus asked. Before they'd left Sinji Valley, Kilian and Scarlet seemed close, so if he hadn't messed things up, they'd probably be even closer by now.

Kilian smiled and was about to answer when his sister, Lily, spoke up. "They're practically married now."

"Oh, really?" Klaus raised an eyebrow.

"Yes! Did you know Scarlet came to visit? For three whole weeks, they trained together," Lily added with a teasing smile.

"My man," Klaus said, giving a playful bow.

"Hey, brat, are you encouraging him? Although they said they were training, I know they were up to other things," Lily glared at Klaus, making him feel like he was being scolded by his mother. Klaus's mother even gave her a thumbs-up.

Unlike Miriam, who always chose to stay calm whenever Klaus's friends were around—especially his male friends—Lily is rather fiesty regardless of the settings they are in.

Klaus sensed the same in Anna, though she was suppressing hers. The two innocent-looking ladies, in his view, were low-key vipers who would surely give him trouble in the future.

Klaus just smiled at her antics and turned to Kilian. "Good to see you've made progress in your love life buddy, but I hope you haven't been slacking off in your training," he said, pausing.

"This goes for all of you—how has your training progressed so far?" Klaus asked.

Daniel was the first to speak. "Although when using the skill, the hammer retains its original form, it seems to have some effect on the mind. Right now, I can only make the hammer twice as big and five times heavier, but I know once I break through to the Grandmaster stage, I'll be able to use the skill to its full power."

"Impressive, Daniel, but you need to master the skill before you break through. Push yourself to master it fully before even thinking about leveling up," Klaus advised before turning to Danny.

"I'm at about the same level of progress as Daniel, but I've managed to enhance the sharpness to six times out of the possible eight," Danny reported.

"The same goes for you, Danny—no breakthrough to the Grandmaster stage until you've mastered the entire skill," Klaus commented. "What about you, Mark?"

"I've been training my stamina and agility over the past week, so currently, when I use the skill to summon the spear, I can wield it for an hour. That's the maximum I can manage in chaotic battle conditions."

"That's impressive. In a one-on-one battle, you can last longer if you know what you're doing," Klaus said, making Mark smile. "But you can do better. Like Danny and Daniel, until you can use the skill for two hours in the endless trial, don't even think about breaking through."

Miriam nodded as she watched Klaus assess his friends' progress. His mother held a small smile on her face, her reason unknown. However, she was damn proud looking at her baby boy all grown up now.

"Kay, your turn—progress report," Klaus prompted.

"Well, the Lion's Roar Pierce skill consumes a lot of qi, so at first, I could only use it 120 times before running out. But after constant training, I've managed to push it up to 150 uses."

"Good, but take it to 200 before breaking through," Klaus advised. "You're an archer, Kay, so you rely on arrows to fight. Make sure to enhance your fire elements more so you can use the skill for a longer time."

"Okay," Kay nodded.

"Don't worry, after the trial, we'll make arrangements to enter forbidden zones so you can all train more intensively," Klaus said before turning to Kilian.

"I can create the two clones alright, but I can only maintain them for a minute max. After 15 minutes, I can't use the skill again," Kilian said with a slight sigh.

"Impressive, that's actually very good," Klaus replied.

"Really?" Kilian asked, looking shocked. He'd been frustrated by his limited progress, thinking a one-minute max was too short.

"Yes. The skill requires great mental strength, so being able to divide your mind three ways as a Master-stage expert is already impressive," Klaus explained. "Clearly, whatever you and Scarlet did wasn't wasted at all. Nice work, buddy."

"But you'll need to push harder—aim for at least two minutes before breaking through," he added. He then turned to Lily.

"What about you, my dear?" Klaus asked.

"With my current stamina, I can only use the skill for a maximum of two hours," she replied, and Klaus gave her an approving nod.

She possessed the wind element, and her skill allowed her to create copies of her wind arc attacks. Each arc looked identical, so any of them could be the real one. However, that didn't mean the clones were merely illusions.

They contained 70% of the main wind arc's attack power, so being able to maintain this skill for two straight hours was already impressive.

"I'll reward you later," Klaus said with a wink. "And what about you, my Ice Princess?" he asked, turning his smile toward Anna, the strongest among his friends.

"For my water element, the skill now allows me to trap a large quantity of Tier 5 monsters. However, if I limit the radius to a couple of meters, I can trap a weak Tier 6 and 7 monster for three seconds."

"As for the Ice skill, with my current Qi level, I can summon three Ice Rhinos that last for 15 minutes before I run out. If I summon two rhinos, I can keep them active for 45 minutes. And if I summon just one, I can hold it for an hour and 15 minutes."

"Well, damn, looks like you went all out with this one!" Klaus joked. "Nicely done, my dear. I'll reward you too later," he added with a smile.

Anna blushed.

"And what about you, sis?" Klaus turned to Hanna. She smiled, about to respond, when their mother interrupted.

"Why don't you show us instead in Oracle..."

Chapter 320 - 320: A Loophole

Klaus didn't object when his mother suggested that Hanna demonstrate what she had learned rather than just describing it like the others.

His mother rarely showed interest in his cultivation, except to ensure his happiness, so seeing her enthusiastic about something related to cultivation made Klaus eager to see what it was.

Like Kay, Hanna was also an archer, but with the lightning element. She hadn't been the best and brightest like Lily and the others when she first awakened as a warrior, she was only average.

With a single passive healing ability and no active skills, Hanna had to rely solely on her class and talent to master her archery skills. She was ordinary at best.

But everything changed when she met Klaus. She started training harder, and although she hadn't awakened any new skills or techniques, she was thriving with the class and talent she had originally awakened.

Klaus was impressed when she ranked fourth in the regional trial. From then on, she continued to grow, thanks to the skills Miriam had given her. Miriam also provided her with resources, and Klaus did the same.

Like with his other friends, he gave her a skill called [Exploding Bolt Piercer]. This skill allows her to mold an arrow with an arrowhead coated in lightning.

The arrow also gains a 20% speed enhancement, so when released, it moves very fast. The chaos begins upon impact: when the arrow pierces a target, the arrowhead explodes, releasing a field of lightning that can stun or even kill those close to the explosion.

Klaus didn't give them any overly powerful skills from the hundreds he had learned from his past self. He wanted to understand more about their abilities before making any decisions that would impact their lives permanently.

Although he wasn't about to spoon-feed them, he also didn't want his friends to be subpar. He was already a dragon; the least he could do was turn his friends into tigers and lions.

Now that Oracle was available to the general public, every home had one. Klaus, who was practically a co-creator, had more consoles than he could count. Hanna quickly slipped into one, and soon, she was in the endless trial.

Klaus and the others watched as she summoned her bow and waited for the monsters to arrive. Before long, the tides poured in.

Hanna waited until they were within 1 km of her before a one-meter-long arrow, crackling with lightning, appeared in her bow. The pointed end—the arrowhead—was entirely made of lightning. Klaus looked at it with a narrowed expression.

'It looks ordinary yet dangerous,' Klaus thought to himself.

Although he hadn't used 99% of the skills and techniques in his mind, Fruity was able to pick them up very fast and that was how he was able to have them now. So all he could rely on to determine their strength were the grades.

The various grades were Common, Epic, King, Earth, Heaven, Legendary, Mystical, Ancient, Divine, and God grade. The skills he had given his friends were just Epic grade.

They weren't that powerful in his eyes. However, to his friends, these skills were the strongest in their arsenal at the moment.

When he saw the ordinary-looking yet somehow dangerous arrow, he was a little puzzled. He couldn't understand where that dangerous feeling was coming from.

But he got his answer quicker than expected. Hanna let loose the arrow, which instantly began crackling with electricity as it exited the bow.

It took only a moment for the arrow to reach its target; the 20% speed boost was highly effective. When the arrow pierced the monster it was aimed at, an explosion erupted, blowing it to bits.

What followed was a 200-meter-wide lightning field that instantly consumed all the monsters within that radius. The skill worked as intended, but Klaus could tell it wasn't over.

As expected, the next event confirmed his suspicions. The lightning field, which had spread 200 meters wide, began to compress again. Watching closely, Klaus saw that at some point, Hanna held a ball of lightning in her hands.

The lightning field shrank to a diameter of 20 meters.

Hanna suddenly crushed the lightning ball in her hands, causing the shrank field to explode outward. This time, the entire 2 km radius was consumed, wiping out all monsters from Tier 4 to Tier 6 on the battlefield.

As for the Tier 7 monsters, some were paralyzed, some were injured and on the brink of death, only a few managed to withstand the lightning but were thrown back by the shock wave.

Hanna smiled, ended the trial, and removed the helmet. Klaus looked at her with a gaze that demanded an explanation.

"Mom helped me unlock this hidden feature," Hanna said.

"Wait, what?" Klaus raised an eyebrow at her statement.

"Hey, brat, don't you think I have what it takes to help your sister?" Klaus's mother asked, pouting.

"Do you want the truth, or should I lie?" Klaus replied with a grin.

"You bastard!" Klaus didn't know how, but despite his quick reaction to escape, his mom managed to grab hold of his ear.

What followed was a twist that he knew would leave a mark. A few seconds later, Hanna explained what happened.

"The skill works as you described, but somehow, Mom found a way for me to harness the lightning field for a devastating wide-area attack. However, I can only use it once, or when I have over 90% of my qi left.

The moment it drops below that, I can't harness the field anymore. So, to use it, I have to start my attacks with it because once my qi drops below that threshold, I lose the ability. But I have a feeling that once I break through, I'll be able to use it at least twice or three times."

"That's awesome, sis! I can't wait to see you kick butt during the Union trial," Klaus said with a smile, making his mom puff out her chest—a gesture she probably shouldn't have made, considering the ample asset standing firm on her chest.

Klaus narrowed his gaze at his male friends, who were suddenly looking elsewhere entirely.

He smiled mischievously and turned to his mom. "Alright, Mom, now that you're an expert in finding skill loopholes, what else are you hiding?"

"Well, I discovered I'm an Angel of Death. Can you believe that?" his mom joked, flashing him a smile.

"Very funny, Mom. But I'd love to see your wings someday," Klaus replied. "And please, put on a bit more clothing—you're teasing my friends," he added.

This time, he managed to escape, dashing off to his room. Miriam noticed Anna and Lily eyeing the direction Klaus ran to and gave them a small smile.

She could tell they wanted some alone time with him, but since she was around, they didn't want to make the first move.

What they didn't know was that Miriam wanted nothing more than to see them take the final step. But, alas, no one knew what the two of them talked about; they just weren't ready to move that far yet.

A while later, Lily and Anna, like sneaky twins, ran off to Klaus's room, trying to be subtle. But Miriam saw them long before they even took a step.