

Strongest Mage with the Lust system

Chapter 541: Ancient temple

"Rrrrrgghh!!"

Bloody veins popped up in Ella's eyes, and her body spasmed. Her head throbbed in pain and she felt faint, about to lose her consciousness when she heard Max's voice.

"...I... can't... pl...ease... help..." She said through gritted teeth, trying not to blank out but the prospect of fainting so she wouldn't feel pain was too alluring to her right now, so she slowly closed her eyes, a wave of fatigue washing over her mind and body.

Just then, inside her body... near her heart...

The 'showdown' between Max's bloodline energy and the dark pattern came to an end. His bloodline energy had dispersed while the dark pattern flickered faintly, clearly weakened. It then merged back into her heart.

As soon as the dark pattern calmed down, the excruciating pain Ella was feeling vanished. As the wave of relief washed over her, she felt utterly drained and fainted.

Phew!

Seeing she was no longer suffering, Max sighed in relief before waving his hand and causing a bed to appear beside him. He then gently scooped her up in his arms and laid her down on the bed. "Should I wait for her to recover, or should I call Ellie?" He muttered with a frown as he looked down at his still raging dragon. Although his lust wasn't as uncontrollable as before, it wasn't fully quenched and could flare up if not fully satisfied.

After thinking for a moment, he sighed, "Let's wait for a while... I don't want to force her too, if possible."

No one knew how big the desert on the western border of the Green leaf kingdom was or what lay inside it, because those who had gone deeper, never returned. Over the centuries, the Green leaf kingdom and other kingdoms that bordered this desert had sent multiple five-star mages and even a few king rank mages to explore this uncharted territory, but the result was the same... none returned.

Thereafter, this desert was named 'desert of oblivion' and all the investigations were stopped. Of course, this information wasn't made public, nor the people were prohibited

from entering and exploring. The royal families wished that someone would be lucky enough to return after entering the deeper regions and would bring some useful information to them. But to this day... all those who dared to enter more than 100 miles deep never returned.

The desert covered a vast area, easily bigger than the entirety of the Green leaf kingdom. At the center of the desert was an expansive mountain range. In the depths of the mountain range, in a deep valley where no sunlight reached, stood an ancient temple-like structure. It wasn't big and looked as though it would collapse anytime soon.

Outside the temple, two people sat cross-legged, their eyes closed. One was a middle-aged man, in a khaki robe, with a long beard and unkempt hair, while the other one was an old woman in black robes and had a head full of white hair.

Right when Max's bloodline energy clashed with the dark pattern, the old woman's eyes snapped open and her brows knitted together.

"What is it, old witch?" The middle-aged man asked, his eyes still closed.

"Someone almost removed the bloodline curse I cast on someone." She said and then mumbled, "Although it's been over a thousand years, and the curse has already weakened by quite a lot, no one should be able to remove it. Strange..."

"Tch! Old witch. Apart from those old monsters, who in this backwater place can remove your curse, even though it isn't anything remarkable." The middle-aged man scoffed.

"Sense carefully. Maybe something happened to the cursed one."

Boom!

Old witch narrowed her eyes at him, and an oppressive aura burst out of her, pressing down on him.

"Who do you think I am? I would make such a mistake?"

"There were 589 people that had inherited my bloodline curse and within the past a few hours, everyone died except two. And just now, one of the two had their cursed severely weakened."

Boom!

The middle-aged man opened his eyes and his aura burst forth, countering the old witch's aura, albeit just barely.

However, if someone was here, they would notice that despite their auras being way more powerful than an emperor mage's aura, nothing was destroyed in their vicinity as it

should have been. This was the [Aura manipulation] which Max had achieved thanks to his bloodline, but he only touched the surface of it and was nowhere close to their level. They were the true monarch rank mages and were expert in [Aura manipulation].

"Anyone can make mistakes, especially old goats like you." The man chuckled. Despite being a little weaker than her, he didn't seem afraid of her. He then continued, "Or are you telling me that someone really managed to 'weaken' your curse? Who in this backwater place can do it, apart from those old monsters?"

He was perfectly aware how strong the witch was and how strange and wickedly powerful her witchcraft was.

When he called her 'old goat', the old witch's pupil constricted and a murderous gleam flashed past her eyes, but then she glanced at the temple and sighed.

"Yes, you stupid cunt. Someone really did that, and he wasn't one of those old monsters because if it was, it wouldn't merely weaken."

The old witch said and then stood up. "I'm going to take a look. I can't let that bastard's descendents to live freely." Her eyes flashed coldly as she said this and emitted a ghastly aura, which was different from before.

Whoosh!

Saying this, she kicked the ground and flew into the air. Just as she was about to fly out of the valley, a faint voice sounded out from the temple.

"...Stay!"

Swoosh!

As soon as the voice sounded, she froze mid-air.

The old witch had a shocked expression same as the middle-aged man who bowed toward the temple, "My humble greetings, senior. I'm sorry we disturbed you."

"...Mm." Came the answer.

The old witch also bowed, but she didn't have the same the reverent expression on her face. She even looked a little angry as she said, "Why are you stopping me, senior? Didn't you hear somebody dared to mess with me? I have to check it out."

The middle-aged man flinched seeing how rude she was but then sighed because he knew she wouldn't be punished. '...Background is indeed important.' He sighed.

"...That is of no consequence. You should learn to forget your past enmities. Besides, was he really your enemy?" The voice sounded.

"..."

Old witch opened her mouth to refute but then closed it. She then growled, "I still want to go and check who meddled with my affairs. Can I go or are you going to stop me still?"

Sigh!

There was no response for a moment before the voice sighed.

"...If you were her disciple, I would have killed you for this kind of behavior."

Although the voice was still calm, without any ripple, the old witch couldn't help but feel cold chills run down her spine and lowered her head, "...F-Forgive me, senior."

"...Do you know why I stopped you now when I never did before?" The voice asked.

"No, senior. Please enlighten me." Old witch said. Although it would seem the 'senior' stopped her because he wanted her to let go of her past enmities and not waste her time, she knew better.

"...You said there were 589 cursed people, but everyone, except two, were killed. Why do you think they died?"

Old witch frowned, "Maybe someone killed them for fun? After all, they are just ordinary people, with no ability to protect themselves, and they don't have this tiny kingdom's protection. So, anybody could kill them without fearing about the consequences."

"...You are not wrong." The voice said.

"...But if I'm not wrong, they didn't die in the hands of humans or beasts or other races on this continent but the demon race."

"Oh?! They are here again?" The middle-aged man casually asked, not concerned at all.

The old witch's expression darkened. "Didn't I assign that beast to activate the concealing formation when those mad people come? Why didn't he—"

While speaking, she closed her eyes and exclaimed, "Oh, so he has died. What a waste!"

The middle-aged man ignored the old witch and waited for the voice to continue because the main reason why he stopped the old witch was yet to be revealed and he had a feeling that it was something serious.

Chapter 542: Charmed Ella

As he expected, the voice continued,

"...Unlike before, this time, the invasion isn't for the training purpose or to recapture this land. They have an ulterior motive, and if I'm not wrong, the races of this continent have colluded with them, too."

Hearing this, the expression of both the middle-aged man and the old witch changed. Evidently, they understood what their 'ulterior motive' was.

The old witch narrowed her eyes and harrumphed, "Hmph! They are digging their graves."

The middle-aged man, however, seemed worried and asked, "Senior, if that's true, doesn't this mean those old monsters have finally decided to move?"

"Tch! So, what if they have? You old coward!" The old witch scoffed, but worry flashed in the depths of her eyes, too.

Although they were very strong and didn't fear fighting against most monarch rank mages, they couldn't do anything against those old monsters. There was a very large chasm between the monarch realm and the supreme realm, after all.

"...You need not worry about them. Just call the others back and wait." The voice said.

"Yes, senior." The middle-aged man nodded and took out his communication crystal.

...

Inside the temple, there was a 10 feet tall, rectangular, golden stele in the middle of the hall. On the floor around the stone were many formation marks arranged in a big, complex formation.

On the right side, just outside the formation's boundary, a handsome middle-aged man in a clean white robe was sitting cross-legged, a calm expression on his face as he stared at the golden stele.

He appeared to be even younger than the man outside the temple, but in reality, he was way older than him.

Sigh!

A while later, he sighed, stood up and walked over to the stele. A golden badge with a winged dragon carved on it appeared in his hand. He looked at it for a moment and then placed in the center of the stele and murmured, "I wonder what will happen this time?"

Ha!

After twenty minutes, Ella's eyelids fluttered open. At first, she panicked, thinking that she would feel that excruciating pain again, but when she didn't feel any, she heaved a breath of relief.

Noticing her breathing pattern change, Max—sitting beside her on the bed—opened his eyes and asked, "Are you feeling alright?"

"Ah...!" Ella flinched when she heard this and turned her head to look at him. Upon seeing him, her breathing became a little heavy and her face started turning red.

Seeing this, Max sighed. He had already expected her to hate him after what he did to her. But in the next moment left him surprised because she... smiled? And meekly nodded, "Yes, s-sir Max. I'm fine. T-Thank you for your concern."

'Mm?!' He raised his brows in surprise. He could clearly see that not only was she not repulsed by him, but instead of hate, there was a look of excitement and... lust and obsession in her eyes.

'What happened to her...' Just then, he recalled the blurry memory when suddenly she had 'submitted' and started enjoying herself. He thought for a while, trying to understand what may have caused this, and suddenly, his eyes flashed.

'System, are you no longer suppressing my charm?' Although there was a possibility that his lust overlord bloodline had somehow affected her, he felt it must be because of his 'abnormal' charm.

Sure enough, the system confirmed his guess.

[That's correct, host.]

'Suppress it again.' He didn't ask why it stopped suppressing it, because it was probably because the system wanted Ella to submit to him, though he faintly felt this wasn't the reason.

[Apologies, host. The system can no longer do it.]

'Why?' Max frowned. 'Is it because you want me to learn to control it or something like that?'

[Yes, host. But this is just one of the two reasons.] The system said and without waiting for Max to ask, it added, [The other reason is that the system can no longer do it because the continuous integration of the lust overlord's bloodline is continuously increasing host's charm, and the lust overlord bloodline's ability to resist outside influence is getting stronger.]

[If the system were to suppress your charm, it'll consume a lot of energy which the system can no longer afford to spend. Of course, even if there wasn't a lack of energy, the system would still not do it. Host should learn to control it~.]

"Tsk!" Upon hearing this, Max clicked his tongue, annoyed. He knew it was for the best if he learned to control it, but it would take time, which he lacked very much now. Besides, if he went near Emily without controlling it, she would be affected, too. Though he liked the prospect of her becoming his woman... he didn't want his 'unnatural' charm to be the reason for it.

He thought for a moment, glanced at Ella, who blushed slightly feeling his gaze on her and asked the system, 'How does my charm affect women? It doesn't manipulate their minds, right?'

[Of course not, host. It just makes you appear more appealing to them and gives them a sense of security, comfort and happiness etc. when they are with you.] The system responded.

Max nodded, relieved. As long as he wasn't taking away their reasoning power, it was good. He didn't want a woman without her own personality, after all.

'Okay. Tell me how should I go about controlling it? Is there any technique or something like that?' He asked. [Host, the charm isn't something one can turn off and on whenever one wants. But it can be controlled and the way to control it is to gain mastery over your aura sphere.]

After a pause, the system continued, [Mastering the aura sphere is very important, especially to you, host. If you can master it, not only can you control your charm, create a force-field to suppress and even kill your enemies, which you did a while ago, you can also use it to erase your presence, to increase the effectiveness of certain spells and techniques and many other things.]

[In short, you'll be a lot stronger once you can control your aura sphere.]

Chapter 543: Golden pupils

'So... does the system shop have anything that can help me learn how to control my aura sphere?' Max asked after hearing how beneficial gaining control over the aura sphere was.

[There certainly is something, host.] The system said, [Since the host wants to learn as quickly as possible, the system would advise you to purchase these two.]

As the system spoke, a floating panel appeared in front of him. There were two items shown in it. First was the [Ryser's tear] and the second was [Aura Sphere mastery (Entry level)].

[Ryser's tear] just like last time, was priced at 10,000 SPs while the [Aura Sphere mastery (Entry level)]'s cost was 5000 SPs. Seeing this, he opened his status window to see his current 'wealth'.

[Lust points: 15,000]

[Kill points: 120,000]

[Shop points: 250]

'Mm? 15,000 Lust points?' A surprised expression appeared on his face as he glanced at his LPs and then at Ella, who gave them to him, and asked the system, 'How come I got so many from her?'

His surprise was understandable. After all, Ella was just an ordinary person. How could she give him 15,000 LPs in just one round of sex when even Amara only gave him 3000-5000 per session?

[Don't be surprised, host. Even though she isn't a mage, she isn't ordinary. Huh?] The system said.

'Explain clearly. What is not ordinary about her?' Max asked, annoyed, when the system stopped speaking.

The system didn't respond for a few seconds, making him frown. 'What's wrong?'

[I've a piece of bad news, host. But let's first explain why she isn't ordinary.] The system said. When Max heard the words 'bad news', a solemn expression appeared on his face. Just as he was about to tell him what it was, the system continued.

[As you know, she has an inherited a bloodline curse which makes her unable to sense mana and thus, cultivate. It also produces negative yin energy and store inside her body because of which she always feels weak and if she hadn't met you, she would've died before the age of 50.]

[So, host, you gained so many Lust points because she had a vast amount of negative yin in her body, which the system purified into pure yin.]

'Okay. I understand. Now tell me what the bad news is?' Max hurriedly said. He was worried because he knew since the system used the word 'bad', it meant things were serious.

[...for some reason, the host's father has woken up.] "What?!" Max's eyes widened, and he shouted out, causing Ella to flinch and stare at him in shock.

"S-Sir, Max. What happened?" She asked.

Ignoring her, he asked the system, "How can he wake up? Didn't you put him in a comatose state?"

[...The system did and he shouldn't wake up since it's only been over two weeks. But he did...] Clearly, the system didn't know how Ashton woke up so soon when he was supposed to 'sleep' for two more weeks.

Max clenched his fists and asked through gritted teeth, "Tell me, how much time he has now?" [10 days or maybe less... The system needs to be near him for a more accurate assessment.]

"10 days!" Max took a deep breath and relaxed his jaws and clenched fists while the resolution in his eyes become firmer.

He then mentally ordered, 'Convert 47,500 Kill points into shop points and buy the [Aura Sphere mastery]. As for the rest of Kill points and lust points, add them to [Intelligence].'

[Good idea, host. But even though increasing [Intelligence] would boost your comprehension ability, this approach will take more time than if you used [Ryser's tear]. The system said.

'Do I have 15,000 Shop points?' Max asked.

[Oh, you can just have sex with her again and you'll have enough--]

'Just do what I said.' Max interrupted.

[Alright, host.]

[Ding! Purchase successful! Do you want to learn the [Aura Sphere mastery (Entry level)]'s knowledge? (Yes)/(No)]

Max clicked the (Yes) and learned the skill. [Intelligence: 200 -> 287]

[Lust points: 0]

[Kill points: 500]

[Shop points: 0]

Immediately, he sat cross-legged and closed his eyes, and started to comprehend the knowledge he received.

Ella stared at him in confusion and thought, 'What happened? Why did he suddenly become so anxious and... who he was talking to?'

...

Ninam City, Garfield mansion.

In Ashton's room, Ashton was lying on the bed, his eyes closed and breathing faint. Amelia was sitting beside him on the bed, holding his hand and looking at his shriveled-up face.

There were tears in her eyes as she gently touched his face and muttered, "Don't worry, husband. Max has promised he will save you. You just need to hang on. He will soon return."

Among his three wives, Amelia was closest to Ashton. When she was a child, her family's enemies had attacked her family and killed everyone in her family. She would've died too, but Ashton's father, who was a friend of her father, had gotten the news and had arrived and saved her.

Since there was no one to take care of her, he brought her back to his family, where she grew up with Ashton. They quickly became friends and then fell in love. When Ashton became a two-star mage, they got married.

Even after Ashton married Esther and others, their strong bond remained intact. She gently wiped her tears and murmured, "...But It's been two weeks. Why aren't you waking up? If you woke up, maybe you'll get better sooner."

Max hadn't told them... or, to be more accurate, he forgot to tell them he had put Ashton in 'sleep mode' for a month. So, Amelia was worried because in these two weeks, he didn't move at all, nor did his breathing pattern changed even for a bit.

Just then, Ashton's eyelashes fluttered imperceptibly, but Amelia, who was looking at him closely, noticed.

'Is he going to wake up?' She thought, her heartbeat rate increasing.

Under her hopeful gaze, Ashton's eyelashes quivered again, and a faint golden energy seeped out of him, covering his body for a few seconds before vanishing.

When the golden energy vanished, Amelia could see Ashton's condition had improved slightly and his breathing was no longer faint like before, but had grown slightly stronger.

Then, slowly, he opened his eyes, revealing a pair of golden pupils instead of his normal brown.

Chapter 544: Curse destroyed [R-18]

Amelia's breathing hitched when her gaze met his. Those golden eyes made her feel uneasy while a feeling of awe also arose in her heart.

But in the next moment, the golden light in Ashton's eyes flickered and disappeared. Along with it, the uneasy feeling also disappeared.

'What was that?' Amelia thought before shaking her head. 'No, that's not important.'

She then hurriedly asked, gently caressing his face with her tender fingertips while tears fell from her eyes, "H-Husband... how are you feeling?"

Ashton had a look of confusion in his eyes for the first few seconds before the corner of his lips lifted slightly into a smile and a weak voice left his mouth. "...Not too bad."

He then tried to lift his hand to wipe her tears, but couldn't move. So, he spoke instead, "Hey... why are you... crying? Aren't I alive? Or.. cough! You want to... make me sad?"

"No... no. I don't." Amelia hurriedly shook her head, wiped her tears and forced a smile on her face.

"Let me call others. Everyone has been worried about you." She said and hurriedly took out her communication crystal and messaged everyone.

...

Phew!

After cultivating for an hour, Max opened his eyes and exhaled.

Immediately, he heard the system's voice.

[How is it?]

'It's quite complex and... ethereal. But I'm confident to master this entry level within 2-3 days.' Max said.

[So, what are you going to do about your charm problem?] The system asked like a curious child.

Hearing this, a small smile appeared on his face. 'Although I haven't mastered the complete entry level, I can suppress my charm to a 'safe' level.'

"..." System didn't say anything in response.

Just then, he heard Ella's voice. "Um, sir Max. Is everything alright?"

He glanced at her and was surprised to find her sitting on the bed, hugging her knees, naked.

"Why didn't you wear anything?" He asked. Although it didn't affect him, the weather was slightly chilly for an ordinary person.

Ella blushed and looked down at her feet before saying in a low voice, "I don't have spare clothes and the only dress I had..."

"Oh! Sorry about that." Max awkwardly scratched his nose when he realized he had ripped her only clothes.

"No... it's alright. I know you didn't mean to..." Ella meekly said.

Her naked body and submissive attitude ignited his lustful fire, which he had barely calmed down.

Max wasn't surprised when he noticed this because he already knew he hadn't completely relieved himself.

Ella, who was sneaking glances at him, noticed little Max coming back to life, and her face flushed even more while her sacred cave tingled. She nibbled her lower lip and shyly said, "...Um, do you want to... do it again, sir Max?"

Whoosh!

No sooner had she finished speaking than Max jumped her and pushed her down on her back. He then scooped her legs up and put them together on his left shoulder before grabbing his raging hard-on and putting the bulbous head on her wet entrance.

"Again... If I lose control and be rough with you, I'm sorry." He said.

"Un~" Ella sucked a deep breath when she felt his member kiss her entrance and nodded, "It's alright, sir~ You can do whatever you want~."

"Glad to hear that." Max nodded, and thrust his hips forward, sliding his bulging rod to the base inside her.

Ahnn~!

Ella gasped, her eyes rolling up in ecstasy. Although she knew something was wrong with her since she suddenly felt so attracted to him, but she felt this heavenly pleasure she was feeling with him inside her was worth it.

She moved her hands back and grabbed the bed headboard for support. Seeing how she was readying herself, eager to have him ravage her, Max licked his lips and stopped controlling his lustful urges bubbling inside him.

He pulled his hips back until only the glans were inside her and then gave a hard thrust and slid his full eight inches thick shaft inside her welcoming tunnel while his jewels hit her soft ass.

Thump!

Ahhhng~! As his cock stretched her narrow tunnel and kissed all her pleasure points, she felt an electric sensation wash over her, and moaned aloud while clenching her insides around his cock, making him groan in pleasure too.

Then, without stopping, he started fucking her tight hole with deep and hard strokes.

Thump! Thump!

Schlick! Schlick!

Ahn~ Haa~ Mm~

Both were lost in pleasure, moaning and groaning without care, while the bed cricked under their intense love-making.

After ten minutes, Max felt his liquid churn inside his jewels. Not caring for Ella for climax with him, since she had already done it a few times in these ten minutes, he erupted inside her with a loud groan of pleasure and filled her with his cream.

Nngghhh~!

As his boiling hot lava entered her womb, an intense pleasure hit her nerves. Her eyes lost focus and her body jerked. A loud, orgasmic moan escaped her lips, and she climaxed.

Ella had a dreamy expression on her face as she reeled in pleasure. However, just then, the pink energy from Max's semen arrived near her heart, and just like before, an intense pain tore through her body, causing her to let out a shrill scream.

Ahhhhhhh!!

Seeing this, Max slowly slipped out of her cozy cave and let her legs fall on the bed.

"I can't let you faint this time." He muttered and then, ignoring her pain, he rolled her over before grabbing her waist and raising her ass up.

[Yes, host. This is a good idea. The pleasure will negate some of her pain and she wouldn't faint.] The system approvingly said.

'Aren't becoming more human-like?' Max said as he rubbed his cock on her leaking cave up and down and then, with a hard thrust, he entered her depths.

[Yes, host. Why? You don't like it?] System asked.

Max, for some reason, could imagine 'it' pouting like a little girl.

'No. I like it like this more since I can talk to you and don't have to hear that monotone voice,' Max said, focusing on ramming her from the back.

Sure enough, his idea worked and Ella's pained grunts gradually lowered and her body wasn't as stiff as before.

Near her heart, the pink energy and the dark pattern were constantly clashing. Each time, both would lose some of their power. A few seconds later, the pink energy completely destroyed the pattern, but it had also lost more than half of its potency.

It circled her heart before merging into it. When it did,

Ha~!

Ella let out a breath of relief, and then gradually, her body relaxed.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

Ahn~ Haa~ Nngh~

Seeing this, Max increased his pace and started humping her deeper and faster. Ella also started moaning while her soft insides gripped around him.

Suddenly, Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Mana in the surrounding surged and started entering Ella's body.

"What's happening?!" Max noticed this and asked in surprise.

[Host, quickly stop her. Because your bloodline energy and the remnant of the curse's energy had merged into her body, she seems to have gained a high level of mana affinity and in unconsciously absorbing the surrounding mana. But she is doing without refining and purifying it, which would destroy her body.] The system's voice resounded in his head.

'Is it so easy to gain high mana affinity?' He thought before quickly shouting at her. "Ella, stop!"

Chapter 545: Oliver [1]

"Ahn~! What do you mean, sir~?" Ella asked, panting as she enjoyed the pleasure coursing through her body.

"You are absorbing too much unfiltered mana. Stop it or it will harm your body," Max warned, and seeing she wasn't paying attention, he reluctantly stopped moving his hips.

"Huh?! I'm absorbing mana? How can I...?!" Ella broke out of her pleasure induced daze, but was confused when his words registered in her mind. All her life, she had been trying to sense mana but could not. So, why was he saying she was absorbing mana? But very quickly, she realized she was indeed absorbing a lot of mana.

'I'm really absorbing mana? This... how is this possible?' She thought and then panicked.

"S-Sir, I-I don't know how to stop." She shouted, fear creeping up on her face.

Despite being an ordinary human, Ella had quite a bit of knowledge about magic and mages. So, she knew how dangerous it was to absorb unfiltered mana. But she couldn't stop because she—just like everyone else in the town—could not sense mana and never bothered to learn any mana cultivation technique and thus didn't know how to stop.

Hearing this, Max frowned. How was he supposed to help her with it?

Fortunately for them, the system came to their rescue.

[Host, the system can transfer your knowledge of controlling mana and cultivation to her. However, you'll feel headache for a while afterwards.]

'It's alright. I can deal with some headache. Tell me what should I do, touch her forehead?' Max asked.

[Yes, host. Place your hand on her forehead.] Max nodded, pulled her toward him and made her sit in the cross-legged position before placing his right hand on her forehead. "Stay still. I'll transfer the knowledge of basic mana cultivation to you. Follow it and stop absorbing the mana and expel the mana you've already absorbed."

As soon as he said this, system's voice sounded in his head.

[It's done, host. The rest depends on her.]

"Hm." Max nodded and was about to say something to Ella when he noticed she had closed her eyes and her brows were furrowed in concentration.

'Let's hope the unfiltered mana hadn't damaged her much.'

[Don't worry, host. If she can stop the mana from seeping into her body and then refine and purify the absorbed mana within a few hours, she will be safe.] The system said and then added, [In the meantime, why don't you bring Ellie here and teach her the mana cultivation technique? Then when you have sex with her and remove her curse, she won't have the same problem.]

'Do you think she would want to do it with me knowing that I have just done the deed with her mother, too?' Max shook his head. Before he took Ella and left, he had noticed the expression on Ellie's face and knew she was angry and hurt.

[Don't worry about that, host. Just hit with your charm and she will become obedient just like her mother.] The system said.

Max shook his head, 'It's alright. I'm not in a hurry.' Although upon mission completion, the overlord bloodline integration would speed up, he preferred it took some time so he could learn to control it.

After all, if he couldn't control it, no matter how powerful his bloodline become, it would create more problems and would be less useful.

Ice sovereign mountain...

Whoosh!

A handsome, silver-haired and silver-eyes man landed on one of the few tallest mountains and headed toward the gigantic building on its peak—the headquarters of the Dawn faction.

The man had an excited look on his face as he increased his speed. He was Oliver. From the day the news of the demons' invasion was announced, he had been in seclusion, cultivating the [Ice God Technique] and had woken up just an hour ago. He immediately went to tell his father, Julius, the good news but found out that the Elders of Dawn faction were having a meeting. So, he immediately rushed over despite knowing anyone who wasn't an elder or had status higher than an Elder wasn't allowed to join the faction meeting, let alone barge into an ongoing meeting. The reason Oliver came here was because he knew he wouldn't be punished.

Why? Because he had finally comprehended the first volume of the [Ice God technique]—a feat very few could achieve. Even without [Ice God technique], he was considered the genius of the Dawn faction and now that he had comprehended the legendary technique of the sovereign mountain, his value to the faction and even to the Ice Sovereign mountain as a whole would increase by several times. After all, the sovereign mountain's rules dictate that a disciple that has comprehended the [Ice God technique], will have a status equal to an Elder. So, would they punish him for walking into a faction meeting where he, with the status of an Elder, can be? Of course, not.

When he arrived in front of the building, the female guards stopped him.

"Please stop, sir Oliver."

"I want to go in." Oliver said, flashing them a sunny smile. The female guards blushed at this and bowed their heads slightly toward him. "Sir Oliver. Forgive us, but you are not allowed to go in. The Elders are in—"

Before they could finish, Oliver interrupted them, "I know. You guys don't have to worry about someone punishing you."

Seeing the guards hesitate, Oliver sighed and released his ice elemental energy.

Swoosh!

Immediately, a pure white, ethereal halo appeared around him.

The female guards' eyes widened in surprise when they saw this and hurriedly bowed 90 degrees to him. "Apologies, sir Oliver."

Oliver retracted his energy and smiled at them. "It's alright. You don't have to apologize. You didn't know this."

"So, can I go in now?" He asked, with the same warm smile on his face.

"Congratulation, sir Oliver! And please, go in." The guards congratulated him before stepping to the side and opening the gates.

"Thank you." Oliver nodded entered the building.

Chapter 546: Oliver [2]

After he went in, the guards closed the gate and exchanged glances between them.

"That's a genius for you. He has comprehended the legendary [Ice God technique] at such a young age." One of them said.

"You are right. But if we had access to it, maybe we could also have comprehended it." The other one said, feeling envious of Oliver's privilege.

The first guard didn't say anything because she felt the same.

...

Oliver walked over to the meeting hall, where another two guards stopped him. So, he once again showed the [Ice God's Halo] to them before they opened the door.

'Let's go.' He took a deep breath, nodded to the guards, and stepped inside.

As soon as he did, he became the focus of many sharp gazes and felt a heavy pressure envelop him.

"What are you doing, Oliver?" Julius, his father, asked with a frown on his face.

Oliver took a deep breath and raised his head. In front of him was a long table with over two hundred people sitting on the both sides. At the end of the table sat two people—a beautiful middle-aged woman and man with a long white beard. They were the supreme Elders of the Dawn faction—peak monarch realm existences. Right now, both were looking at him with an obvious displeased look in their eyes, just like his father, who sat near them.

"Greeting, supreme Elders and the rest of the Elders." Oliver bowed to them and greeted before cupping his fists, "I apologize for coming here like but..."

While speaking, he glanced at his father and the supreme Elders and continued, "...I couldn't wait to share something with everyone here, which I believe you will be pleased to hear."

"What are you playing at, boy? Don't waste our time and get the hell out of here before I punish you." A man, standing directly opposite to Julius, scolded. Others were also displeased but didn't say anything upon casting a glance at Julius.

Julius' expression darkened when he heard the man scold his son like this, "What are you getting angry at, John? Didn't he say he had something important to tell us? Why don't we hear it first?"

John, Julius' distant cousin and also his competitor, smirked in response, "What?! Did I say something wrong? Even if he had something to tell us, he should've informed the guards and they would've told us. But no, he barged in despite knowing only Elders are allowed in the meeting hall?"

Julius grinned, "If he didn't have something important, do you think the guards would've allowed him entry?"

"Maybe he forced his—" John stopped speaking when he realized Oliver, despite being a five-star genius mage, couldn't have forced his way in since there were dozens of guards outside, including a few king ranked guards.

"Alright. Tell us what you wanted to, Oliver?" The female supreme Elder said, ending their argument.

Julius looked at his son, his eyes sparkling. He knew his son well enough to know he wouldn't be here without any good reason, and right now, he could only think of only one... His heart rate spiked when he thought of it and wait for Oliver to speak.

Oliver bowed slightly to the supreme Elder and then released his Ice God's energy.

Swoosh!

Crack!

Crack!

As soon as the pure white, ethereal halo appeared, two distinct sounds of breaking ice resounded in the hall—one made by John and the other one by Rose, Lily's master. Both had ugly expression on their faces. However, everyone ignored them, their eyes glued to Oliver's halo.

"Hahaha! Good! Good! Good! You did very good, my son." Julius's laughter broke the temporary silence and resounded in the hall.

Supreme elders' eyes twinkled while other Elder looked at Oliver in admiration and nodded.

Seeing everyone's reaction, especially the supreme Elders', Oliver grew ecstatic.

"Your name is Oliver, right? Julius' son?" The long bearded supreme elder asked as he stroked his beard.

"Yes, supreme Elder." Oliver respectfully bowed.

"Comprehending the [Ice God Technique] is indeed a big achievement worth celebrating. But from what I can see, you must've succeeded less than an hour ago and you should be consolidating your comprehension and cultivation since you've broken through to peak five-star too. So, why are you here?" The supreme Elder asked.

Hearing his son had broken through to peak five-star from high-stage five-star, Julius' smile grew.

"This disciple knows it, supreme Elder. But I had something better in my mind." Oliver said, briefly casting a glance at his aunt, Rose.

When Rose noticed this, she clenched her fists.

"Oh?! And what is that?" The supreme Elder asked.

"Supreme Elder, two weeks ago, I was there when the news of demons' invasion was announced but I didn't depart for the battlefield and had instead gone into the secluded cultivation because I was very close to comprehending the first volume of [Ice God Technique]."

"I had planned to go to the battlefield once I succeeded in comprehending it, since fighting is the most effective way to consolidate a technique's comprehension." Oliver calmly said.

"Hm. You are right. Fighting is indeed the best way." The supreme Elder nodded appreciatively.

Seeing Elder's pleased expression, Oliver's excitement grew, and he continued, "So, apart from informing esteemed Supreme Elders and Elders, disciple wanted your permission to take a few other disciples with me so we could help each other out."

"Our permission? As far as I know, you don't need our permission for this. You could just ask the said disciples. I'm sure they won't refuse you." The female supreme Elder said as he cast a glance in Rose's direction, her eyes twinkling. She was Oliver's grandmother and Julius had informed her that her grandson liked Rose's disciple, but Rose didn't let him court her and he wanted her help to 'convince' Rose.

"You are right, supreme Elder. No disciple would refuse me. But I was afraid one of the disciples' master would prohibit me from taking her with me."

"That's why I wanted the supreme Elders to convince her master since going with me would be beneficial for her. I heard she is also trying to comprehend the [Ice God Technique], I could share my insights and help her." Oliver said, barely holding his

excitement back. "Oh?! Why would her master wouldn't let her go? Who is her master? Let me talk to her." His grandmother said.

Rose's face darkened when she saw this act, but didn't say anything.

Oliver smiled and pointed at her, "It's Elder Rose, supreme Elder."

Earth spirit village...

As they waited for Max to return, Elves were talking amongst them, discussing what happened to Max and when he will return.

While Emily was sitting cross-legged a few meters away from Ellie, who sat hugging her knees to her chest, with dried tears marks on her cheeks, looking in the direction Max had disappeared with her mother.

Whoosh!

With Ella in the princess carry, Max arrived where Emily and others were.

Ella blushed when she saw everyone looking at them and quickly got down from his embrace.

Ellie rushed over and hugged her mother, sobbing. While Emily approached Max and asked, "Are you alright now?" "Yes. Thank you for... convincing Ella to help me." Max awkwardly said.

Emily glanced at Ella and Ellie and sighed. "I seem to have made a mistake. Instead of her mother, I should've sent one of the Elf women with you."

"Hm? Why?" Max asked, confused.

"Because... she is pregnant." "WHAT?!"

Chapter 547: Do you want to become a mage too?

Ice sovereign mountain, Dawn faction meeting hall...

Before the female supreme Elder could continue with their play, Rose sighed and stood up. She bowed toward the two supreme Elders and then said, "Supreme Elders, I know you are going to order me to allow my disciple to accompany him to the battlefield and I know I can't refuse your order. But I, with all due respect, want to tell you that if he dares to harm my disciple in any way..."

Saying this, she put a hand on her heart and spoke in an icy voice that sent shivers down the listeners' spine, especially Oliver's. "...I vow I will disregard the consequences and will utterly destroy him. If I don't, I'll be damned to die a horrible death."

Silence!

Her heart oath surprised all Elders, including the male supreme Elder, while the expressions of female supreme Elder, Julius and Oliver turned ugly.

John's eyes flashed when he witnessed all this and immediately asked, "What do you mean, Elder Rose? Isn't Oliver your nephew? Why would you think he will harm your precious disciple? Do you know something we don't? Maybe nephew Oliver, despite being a genius and having a good public image, has a heart of a demon?"

Bam!

"Don't you dare spout nonsense, John!" Julius slapped the ice table in front of him and growled at him.

John, however, didn't flinch back and grinned, "What?! You are getting angry? Maybe what I said is true?"

"You..." Julius wanted to argue back but the male supreme Elder interrupted them.

"Stop it, you two!"

He then glanced at Rose and asked. "Child, why did you take such a vicious heart oath?"

Rose glanced at Julius and Oliver and shook her head, "To ensure Oliver doesn't harm my disciple. He likes my disciple and has harassed her multiple times, even though she has clearly indicated she doesn't like him. So, I was afraid he would do some unseemly things to her if she didn't have me to protect her."

Boom!

As soon as he said this, a chilling, oppressive aura burst out from the female supreme Elder and weighed down on her, which almost forced her to her knees. "Do you know what you are saying, Rose? Not only are you doubting Oliver's, my grandson's, character, you also doubt his family, MY family teachings that raised him." She said in a heavy voice.

Rose gritted her teeth and looked at the supreme Elder defiantly.

The male supreme mage glanced at his fellow supreme mage and sighed, "Stop it, Synthia. It's unseemly of you to suppress an Elder like this."

As soon as he spoke up, the pressure weighing down on Rose vanished and she heaved a small sigh of relief.

Synthia, the female supreme Elder, frowned in displeasure but didn't say anything.

The bearded man nodded and said, "Rose, I can see this disciple of yours is very precious to you. But don't worry, Oliver won't harm her. If he does, I'll help you punish him."

"I understand, supreme Elder." Rose nodded, but her expression was ugly. She had hoped she could refuse to send Lilly away with Oliver after the drama she created, but the man's words clearly indicated Lilly had to go with Oliver.

'If I was a monarch rank mage, they wouldn't dare force me like this...' She thought.

Oliver smiled widely when he saw Rose relent.

Earth Spirit village.

Emily sighed, "Yes. She is pregnant. Ellie told me after you two had gone away."

Hearing this, Max glanced at the crying Ellie in her mother's embrace and then at Ella. "Why didn't she tell you before?"

"It's my fault." Emily said, feeling guilty. "I forced them to make a choice. I told them that one of them had to help you if they wanted to stay with us and be protected. Ella didn't want her daughter to make the sacrifice, so she volunteered. Ellie was about to mention that her mother was pregnant, but Ella didn't allow her."

After his initial surprise, Max calmed down and surprisingly, he didn't feel guilty but instead, he felt... a rush of excitement. Yes, for some weird reason, he felt excited and had the urge to have sex with her again, to dominate her.

What surprised him more was the fact that he realized this wasn't entirely because of the lust overlord's bloodline.

He quickly controlled his emotions and patted Emily's shoulder. "No, it's not your fault. You did what you had to, to help me. Besides, you didn't know about her pregnancy. So, there is no need for you to feel guilty."

'Mm?' Emily looked at him in surprise. She hadn't expected him to take this news so...well?

Ella caressed her daughter's back, trying to calm her down. "Shh! It's alright, my baby girl. Don't cry."

It took Ellie some time to calm down. After which she realized her mother didn't seem to be emotionally hurt like she had expected her to. Although this surprised her, she felt relieved too because she was worried about her mother's emotional health.

But she couldn't help but be suspicious. 'Is she pretending to be alright so I would not worry?'

It was as if Ella could understand what her daughter was thinking. She smiled and said, "I have good news for you."

"Hm? Good news?" Ellie was confused. What could be good right now?

Emily also looked at the mother and daughter duo. Just like Ellie, she was also surprised to see Ella smile and got curious when she heard she had some good news.

Ella didn't speak. Instead, she raised her hand in front of her chest and closed her eyes.

"Hm?" Ellie raised her brows, confused. Emily also frowned, thinking about what she was trying to do, when suddenly, she noticed Mana gathering above her palm.

"She has become a mage?" She cast a questioning gaze at Max.

Max smiled and nodded. "Yes. She has."

"What did you do? How could she become a mage?" She couldn't help but ask. After she met him two weeks ago, he had surprised her multiple times. So, she thought she had become immune to it and wouldn't be surprised, but he proved her wrong.

Ella was already in her late thirties and didn't have even an ounce of mana in her body. It was almost impossible for her to become a mage at this point, but here she was, showing off her magic to her daughter.

Max didn't hide it and explained how his bloodline energy removed the curse and granted her mana affinity.

After hearing his explanation, Emily went silent for a while.

"She was cursed? Your bloodline removed it and she coincidentally gained mana affinity?" She mumbled, closed her eyes for a moment, and then looked at him and asked with some hesitation.

"This bloodline? Did you inherit from aunt Hannah?" Max thought for a moment and then shook his head. "I inherited it, but not from my mother." "Oh!?"

Swoosh!

Just then, a small ball of mana condensed on Ella's palm. Upon seeing it, Ellie's confused expression transformed into a shocked one as she exclaimed.

"Ahh!? This... this is mana?" "Mm-hm." Ella nodded with a smile on her face.

"H-How? How is it possible, Mom?" Ellie asked, unable to believe it. Ella glanced at Max and said, "It's Sir Max. He removed my curse." After hesitating for a while, she bit her lower lip and asked, "You also want to become a mage, right?"

Chapter 548: Three Empires

"Of course, I do!" Ellie immediately nodded her head and then glanced at Max, wanting to ask if he could remove her curse too, but hesitated.

Her town has been suffering from the curse for generation upon generation, but they couldn't figure out a way to get rid of it. Just this was enough for her to tell how difficult it was to remove the curse. Max must have used some powerful spell or used some incredibly rare resources to remove her mother's curse.

'Mm? But would he do that for her? Is it because he felt guilty taking advantage of mom? Or did mom make some shady deal with?' She became suspicious.

Seeing Ellie's expression, Ella sighed. She could guess what her daughter was thinking. Therefore, she pulled her into her embrace and hugged her tightly. "Don't think too much. He didn't ask me for anything in exchange, but..."

Ella blushed, too embarrassed to say what she did, and Ellie had to do if she wanted him to remove her curse too.

Ellie hugged her mother back and waited for her to continue.

While Emily glanced at Ella, then Ellie, and then Max.

"What is it?" Max asked, noticing her strange gaze.

"Nothing." Emily shook her head and pointed at the two demons laying in front of the Elves. "Why don't you kill those two and we continue our journey?" She then glanced at Ella and Ellie. "They can talk while we fly."

Max glanced at the duo and, seeing they needed some time to talk, he nodded, "Alright."

Swoosh!

The thunder sword appeared in his hand. Clenching the hilt, he walked toward the demon duo.

Noticing him walking over, the two elves who were watching over them stepped back.

The demons had their eyes closed, but they weren't unconscious. So, when they felt the elves retreat and another presence arrive before them, they opened their eyes and saw Max raising his sword.

"Please, wait! Don't—" Their eyes widening in horror, they hurriedly opened their mouth and tried to beg for their lives. Unfortunately for them...

Slash!

Max ignored them. With a swift slash, he separated their necks from their bodies.

[...You've gained 3000 Kill Points.]

[...You've gained 4000 Kill Points.] He then dug out their cores before glancing at the other corpses. Noting that their demon cores had been retrieved, he walked over the demon leader's corpse and asked the system if he could sell it in the system shop, but was disappointed when the system told him he could not.

After which, he waved his hand.

Swoosh!

Scree~!

The majestic silver-eagle appeared in front of him and screeched, flapping its wings.

"Let's go guys." Max said to the elves and jumped onto the eagle's back. Elves followed the order while Emily also came over with Ellie and Ella.

The central plains were on the east side of the continent. To travel to the central continent from the Green leaf kingdom, one would need to traverse many small kingdoms, many inhabited regions, and three empires' territory.

Outside the central plains, the three empires—The Black Dragon empire, The Crimson Dragon empire and The Knights' Glory empire—were the most influential, and the strongest.

The Black Dragon empire, the second strongest of three, occupied the northern territory while the Crimson Dragon empire occupied the southern territory. The strongest of the three empires, the Knight's Glory empire, controlled the central territory and shared the border with both empires and the [central plains'] border.

Currently, just like every small kingdom, the three empires were also under the demons' attack and many villages, towns, and smaller cities had been destroyed.

In the Crimson Dragon empire, two cities were the strongest—the Royal Crimson city, and the Hellfire city.

The Royal Crimson city was the capital city of the empire and the place where the Royal family lived. As for the Hellfire city, it was the trade hub of the empire and the Strongest family after the Royal family—the Darvis family—controlled it.

Hellfire city, Darvis family...

The Hellfire family's meeting hall resembled a throne hall. But instead of a throne, there were three luxurious seats at the end of the hall and there were more than ten seats on both sides of the hall, fully occupied.

As for the three main seats, an old woman occupied the middle seat while a beautiful young lady was in the seat on the right and a middle-aged man was in the left one. These three were the Grand Elders, the emperor ranked mages of the Hellfire family.

"How many people we lost this time?" The old woman asked with a somber expression on her face.

"Three five-star, 10 four-star, and over 50 three-star mages. Also, the king ranked mage who led them was also seriously injured." A woman, who had a scroll in her hand, reported.

Hearing this, everyone's expression turned heavy.

"What about the other side? How many they lost?" The middle-aged man on the left main seat asked.

The woman hesitated before saying, "...Just a few weaker demons." "Hm? How?" the man asked, frowning.

"Our information was wrong. We were told that there were just a hundred demons with a king ranked demon leading them. However, the survivors told me there weren't just hundred but several hundred and three king demons." The woman reported.

Hearing this, murmurs broke out in the hall. Everyone started speculating why this happened and some even said that their scouts may have betrayed them.

The middle-aged sighed and raised his hand. "Please be silent, everyone. Let's not speculate wildly. Elder Helen, please continue."

The woman nodded, a grave expression appearing on her face. "Just a while ago, our scouts reported that the number of demons in all three empires has skyrocketed. Our scouts captured a few demons and found out that their leaders have officially declared war against us."

"..."

Everyone went silent upon hearing this.

The youngest Grand Elder in the right main seat glanced at everyone and noticed everyone had heavy expressions on their faces, except for a man at the end of the right row. She nodded slightly in his direction before clicking her tongue in annoyance.

"Tsk! How cowardly! If they have declared war on us, we should prepare to fight back instead of wearing those fearful expressions. I'm really disappointed in you all." She then glanced at the man who showed no fear on his face and smiled, "My nephew Schwartz is the youngest of all Elders but unlike you all, he isn't afraid. I would suggest that you take some lessons on courage from him. It'll do you good."

Yes, this man was Schwartz, one of the participants of the Crimson monarch's trial, along with Max. After he got the [Hellfire Emperor Art] from the Crimson Monarch, his strength grew rapidly. Within three months, he broke through from high-stage five-star to early-stage six-star realm—the king realm and shocked everyone.

When everyone was wondering about the reason behind his sudden growth, he revealed his secret and told everyone about the Crimson monarch's trial and the reason behind his sudden growth—the [Hellfire Emperor Art]. Yes, he hadn't told his family about it right after he returned because he knew if he did, he would have to submit the Art scroll to the family and despite his contribution, he won't get the chance to learn the art for a few months if not years because the high-ranking Elders would want to learn it first.

Of course, while he contributed hugely to the family by obtaining their ancestor's famed art, him not telling the family about it for three months dissatisfied many. But no one dared to say anything about it because his aunt was one of the three Grand Elders and also because he didn't really commit any crime.

Hearing the compliment from his aunt, Schwartz smiled and then grinned at his fellow Elders, "If any of you decide to follow the Grand Elder's advice and want some lessons from me, remember to bring some good quality wine for me as payment. Otherwise, don't waste my time. I don't have much free time."

"..."

Everyone was speechless. Even the three Grand Elders shook their heads and smile wryly.

Seeing the mood had lightened up, Helen glanced at Schwartz with a lovely smile on her face. She then turned to the three Grand Elders and said, "Grand Elders, I have something else to report."

"Yeah, go on." The Grand Elders nodded.

"The Royal family has sent a messenger. He is waiting outside."

As soon as the Royal family was mentioned, everyone's gaze sharpened.

A moment later, the old lady nodded. "Bring him in. Let's hear what they want to say."

Chapter 549: Crimson Dragon spell [1]

The envoy, a middle-aged man in crimson robes with golden stripes on the edges, was brought in. He looked around with an indifferent look before glancing at the three Grand Elders.

"Greetings, Grand Elders." He slightly nodded his head instead of bowing to them, a clear sign of disrespect.

A few Elders grew furious at this. Even Schwartz narrowed his eyes but didn't say anything because it was not their place to 'discipline' him when the Grand Elders were present.

If previously, the Darvis family hated and opposed the royal Crimson family. Then now, after Schwartz told them it was the Crimson monarch's prime minister—and the person whose descendants were the ruling the crimson family—who killed their ancestor, the Darvis family wanted nothing more than to destroy them to their last member. This was also the reason the Darvis family didn't stop killing the Royal family's people, even after the demons' invasion. Of course, they knew it wasn't a good decision since their forces would be divided in two, making it difficult to deal with both sides, but none opposed the decision. They just hated the royal family that much.

The old woman and the male Grand Elder just frowned. Just when the old woman was about to say something, Boom!

"Hmph!" Schwartz's aunt snorted. Then her emperor's aura burst out of her and descended on the envoy in waves, immediately forcing him to his knees.

Thud!

"Doesn't your royal family teach you basic etiquette? If you meet someone of our stature, you bow down before you speak."

"You—Cough!" The envoy's face turned red under the pressure and because of humiliated. He opened his mouth to speak when suddenly the pressure increased a few times, causing his internal organs to churn and made his cough out blood.

He wanted to release his aura to counter the pressure, but couldn't do it. His control over his body seemed to have vanished the moment her aura descended on him.

Seeing him on his knees and cough out blood, Schwartz and the other Elders smiled in satisfaction. This turn of events did not surprise them because everyone knew, despite having a beautiful, innocent face, this youngest Grand Elder—Viona—wasn't one to endure the disrespect, especially from the royal family. The old woman sighed, smiling wryly, and waved her hand, "Viona, it's enough. There is no benefit in killing a lowly envoy." Viona grunted and reluctantly withdrew her aura.

Ha!

The envoy heaved a sigh of relief and threw a healing pill in his mouth before stabilizing his breathing.

When he raised his head and looked at Viona, there was anger, hatred and an intense fear in his eyes. He immediately moved his gaze away from her, stood up and bowed properly toward the old woman and the other Grand Elder. "I apologize for my rude behavior, Grand Elders."

"Heng!" Viona snorted, seeing he was ignoring her.

The envoy shuddered and quickly bowed toward her, too.

"It's alright. I know your dog fam—ahem, I mean, your royal family doesn't teach you enough. So, it's not your fault. Now, don't waste time and tell us why are you here?" The male Grand Elder said.

The Elders chuckled when they heard him call the royal family, the dog family. Envoy's face darkened, but he said nothing about it. Taking a deep breath, he started, "Grand Elders, I'm sure you also agree demons are the most dangerous problem. If they aren't defeated quickly, our empire would suffer disastrous losses. So, the royal family wants the Darvis family to stop your attacks on our forces until we can get rid of the demons."

The Elders went silent and looked at the Grand Elders. They also knew they should prioritize fighting demons. Of course, there were some who thought it was an excellent opportunity to get rid of the royal family. However, none dared to voice out their thoughts and waited for the Grand Elders' decision.

The old woman glanced at Viona and Agenor—the male Grand Elder—and started communicating mentally.

After a while, she looked down at the envoy and nodded. "We agree to make a temporary truce. However, if we see anyone from the Royal family or anyone from your master's empire, the Black Dragon empire, in a 5,000-mile radius of the Hellfire city, we'll stop at nothing to destroy you."

The envoy gulped when he saw her scary expression and nodded, "Thank you for agreeing, Grand Elder. I'll relay your words to his majesty, the emperor."

Saying this, he didn't stay for a moment more and headed out of the hall and then the city.

After he went away, the old woman looked at Helen and said, "Helen, call our people back and tell our allied kingdoms to prepare for the war against the demons."

"Yes, Grand Elder." Helen nodded and started sending messages.

The old woman then glanced at Schwartz and asked, "What about the reinforcement from the central plains? Are they coming or not?"

Schwartz took out his communication crystal and sent a message. After a while, he stored the crystal and with a heavy expression on his face, he said, "Grand Elder. They are delayed because a large number of demons have stopped them at the central plains' border. They are trying to force their way out, but it would take some time."

"Oh!? The demons really are going all out this time." The old woman muttered and closed her eyes.

Agenor stood up from his seat and said, "Everyone, without the reinforcements from the central plains, this will be a very tough battle. But no matter what, we won't let the demons run amok in our territory."

"Heed my order! Close the city gates and deploy more people to guard the city. If you see demons coming, ring the bells. Once our people gather, we'll start the war."

"Yes, Grand Elder!" Everyone nodded and rushed out of the hall.

The central plains' border was a vast forested and mountains region where countless magic beasts and a few other races that didn't want to involve themselves in the outside world's affairs lived.

Currently, a large part of the forest area was in ruins because a few hundred thousand demons ambushed the people who came over from the central plains' various factions to fight them. The demons' purpose was simple. They wanted to delay them so their demon armies could destroy and occupy the various kingdoms and empires.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

A handsome young man in flaming red robes with golden trimmings rained down countless fire arrows on hundreds of demons in front of him. After the dust and fire settled, more than half of them had died and the remaining ones were seriously injured.

Seeing this, the man looked disappointed and clicked his tongue, "Tsk! Aren't the demons supposed to be stronger than humans? How come these are this weak?"

When the people behind him, who wore similar robes, heard this, they smiled wryly. One of them couldn't help but say, "Senior brother, Aaron, since these demons are too weak to give you a fight, why don't you join senior sister Margaret and help her fight those king ranked demons?"

"..."

Chapter 550: Crimson Dragon Spell [2]

550 Crimson Dragon Spell [2]

Aaron looked in the distant sky where a beautiful woman in a pink dress was single-handedly fighting against three king ranked demons.

Watching this scene, his blood boiled, and his aura flared. For a moment, it seemed he would fly into the sky and join the battle, but in the next moment, his aura vanished and his shoulders slumped. Sighing, he said, "I want to, but she won't let help her. I can insist, but..." He shuddered and shook his head, "...I don't want to get beaten and end up in bed."

Everyone behind him chuckled upon hearing this.

"You really do fear, senior sister. Senior brother, is it really true she beat you up when you guys joined the Fire valley?" A cute young lady asked.

Aaron glared at her, making her lower her head and laugh silently.

Seeing this, he sighed inwardly, 'Just in a few months, I changed a lot.'

It was true. He really changed a lot. He wasn't arrogant and self-centered like before. If it was before, he would've attacked her for laughing at his expanse.

'I was really a horrible person before, huh?' He smiled bitterly upon remembering how everyone used to maintain a distance from him. Even his family members stayed away

from him as if there wasn't anything important. Now, however, he had many friends and followers who he can talk freely and laugh with.

'It's all thanks to her, Crimson Monarch, and that guy... Max. I wonder how strong he has grown after receiving Crimson Monarch's legacy.'

Boom!

A loud explosion in the sky brought him out of his thoughts.

He looked up and saw Margaret Adler had forced the demon trio back. She then raised her dainty right hand up.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Immediately, a large amount of fire elemental Mana started gathering above her. The demon trio's expressions turned heavy. They could feel the spell she was going to cast was several times more powerful than the spells she used before and it could threaten their lives. They exchanged quick glances and rushed toward her, wanting to interrupt her spell casting. Margaret, however, gently raised her left hand in front of her. Her hand glowed before crimson red fire started burning on it. When the demons were about to reach her, three fire spears shot out of the glowed toward them at lightening fast speed.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

The demons clenched their fist and covered them with their demonic energy before punching at the incoming spears.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The spear exploded one after another. Although they didn't harm them, they pushed them back a few meters. Just as they were about to charge at her again, more fire spears shot toward them. The demons looked up and noticed the fire elemental mana had stopped gathering and was now taking the shape of a giant python like creature which emitted a deathly aura.

Seeing this, they stopped trying to charge forward. One of the three stood in front of them and started destroying the fire spears, while the other two started casting their spells. Hundreds of balls of black energy appeared in front of them, which then shot toward Margaret at an incredible speed.

Margaret wore the same indifferent expression which she had until now. She eyed the black balls and an equal number of fire spears shot from the glow in her left hand, aiming to destroy the balls.

The demons smirked when they saw this.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

As the balls and fire spears collided, the fire spears got destroyed. Although the black balls became slow and smaller, they continued shooting toward Margeret and split second later; they were in front of her.

Margeret, however, didn't even flinch. Right as the balls were about to smash into her, a thin layer of crimson energy covered her.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

...

Aaron and the group watched the battle without blinking. When the black balls smashed into her and exploded one after another, engulfing her figure, everyone except Aaron stopped breathing.

The young lady who previously asked if Margeret had beaten him or not, looked at him and worriedly said, "Senior brother, shouldn't you go and help her now? Those demons are bullying senior sister with numbers."

Aaron shook his head and smiled wryly. "How are they bullying her? Look closely, it's senior sister who is bullying them."

"Yeah, junior sister. Look, their attacks couldn't even scratch senior sister's energy barrier." A man in his mid-twenties pointed at the sky.

The young lady looked up. As the energy and smoke from the explosions dispersed, Margaret, surrounded by the layer of crimson energy, appeared in her vision. Seeing Margaret was unharmed, she sighed in relief. Then she noticed the mass of fire elemental energy had almost finished transforming. It transformed into a ten feet long serpentine creature. Countless scales covered its whole body. It had two large wings, although transparent, and two fiery eyes. Also, it had an intimidating presence that sent chills down everyone's spines.

However, the most eye-catching thing about it was the fact it looked... alive. Yes, rather than a lifeless mana form, it looked like a living being.

"This... senior brother, is this the senior sister's famed Crimson Dragon spell?" The young lady asked.

Aaron's eyes flashed with a hint of envy as he looked at the Draconic creature floating above Margaret and nodded. "Yeah. This is it."

Everyone looked at the dragon with glittering eyes. The young lady opened her mouth again, wanting to say something, but just then, the Margaret lowered her right hand and pointed at the demons. "Go."

Whoosh!

...

The demon trio's smirks disappeared when their attacks couldn't harm Margaret even a little, let alone force her to stop her spell casting.

Just as they were about to cast another spell, an intense feeling of dread washed over them, which made their hearts shudder.

"Fuck! A monarch rank spell..." One of them shouted out.

Hearing this, the other two followed his gaze and when they saw the lifelike creature floating above the frustrating human lady, their pupils constricted in fear.

"RUN!" both of them shouted at the same time. Turning around, they fled in different directions while praying, 'Please don't target me.'

Margaret raised her delicate brows when she saw this. She then targeted the demon, who was farthest from her, and pointed her hand at him. "Go."

Whoosh!

The demon's speed was no joke. Within these short few moments, he had fled over 200 meters. However, the moment Margaret said 'Go', the dragon caught up to him and slammed into him.

BOOM!!!

The dragon exploded into a giant mass of crimson fire, creating a deafening booming sound, and fire engulfed the demon.

When the explosion settled, and the flames vanished, there was no sign of the demon. He was completely wiped out.

The other two demons who had escaped far by now couldn't help but shudder. They also felt lucky that Margaret didn't target them. After casting a last glance at her, they vanished into the distance.

As Margaret saw them disappear, she looked disappointed and muttered, "I need to figure out a way to lower my casting time. I can't let them run away like this each time."

Chapter 551: I'm going with her

551 I'm going with her

After the explosion calmed down and the targeted king rank demon 'evaporated', everyone gradually came to their senses and someone in Aaron's group murmured their confusion. "Senior sister is just a king rank mage, right? How can senior sister cast a monarch rank spell?"

"Isn't it obvious?" The young lady said, her eyes glued to Margaret's figure in the air, "Senior sister is a genius. No, genius word doesn't define her awesomeness. She is beyond genius and what is impossible for others, for her, is nothing but a minor problem."

Everyone smiled wryly and shook their heads, not wanting to say anything, but the man continued.

"How can it be so simple, junior sister Eve? We have countless geniuses in the flame valley. Senior brother Aaron is such an example since he can fight king rank mages when he is just a peak five-star mage, but even he can't cast spells that are two ranks higher than his corresponding realm. I don't think—"

Slap!

A woman standing beside him slapped the back of his head, interrupting him from speaking further.

"Hey, what was that for?" The man asked, frowning.

The woman glared at him. "Are you stupid? Don't you know you shouldn't talk about these things? No matter how senior sister does it, it's her secret. Why do you want to know it?"

The man realized his mistake and glanced at Aaron, who had a displeased look on his face, and quickly said, "Don't misunderstand, senior brother. I didn't mean to..."

"It's alright. Just don't reveal your intrusive thoughts." Aaron warned.

Eve glared at the man, and sent a mental message to him, [You doubt senior sister? You stupid senior brother, I'll tell senior sister about it. She'll teach you a lesson.]

The man, who just sighed in relief, froze. He glanced at her with a stiff smile and communicated back, [Junior sister, I don't doubt senior sister. I know she is 'beyond

genius', just as you said. I was just curious, that's why I asked. So... can you please let this matter rest?]

The woman beside him noticed his unnatural expression and followed his gaze to Eve. Sighing, she shook her head.

[Hmph! I'll forgive you this one time.] Eve glared at him before moving her gaze back to her idol, Margaret.

Aaron also looked at her. 'Perhaps the Crimson Monarch's legacy wasn't just his spell...'

Just then, his communication crystal buzzed in his spatial ring. He took it out and checked the message.

Swoosh!

Suddenly, Margaret appeared in front of them. She raised her brows when she saw some demons were still alive. "Quickly finish them. We need to hurry."

Everyone nodded, and they quickly killed them and dug out their demon cores. After they were done, Eve hopped toward Margaret and excitedly said, "Senior sister, that was amazing! You completely destroyed that demon king in one attack."

Margaret just smiled lightly in response.

Eve's eyes brightened when she saw her smile. She threw herself at her, but it was as though Margaret knew she would do it, so she stepped back, easily dodging her. Eve pouted her adorable little lips before jumping at her once again. Margaret sighed and extended her hand. Eve understood her intentions, so instead of hugging her, she grabbed her arm with both hands like a child and said with puppy eyes.

"Senior sister, please teach me that spell. I also want to kill king rank demons."

Margaret gently flicked her forehead, making her flinch, and asked, "Have you mastered the spell I taught you last time?"

"Not yet, but I'll—" "Master that first. Only then I might consider teaching you anything else," Margaret said, interrupting her.

Others returned after finishing their task and gave Eve an envious look. Unlike her, who somehow became close to 'Unapproachable' Margaret, they couldn't be so casual with her, let alone ask her to teach them her skills.

Aaron walked over and with a serious look on his face, he said, "Mar... senior sister. I received a message from Schwartz a while ago. The demon armies have surrounded

their cities, and given the fact they have tried to delay us here, they are about to start the war. We need to hurry the things up."

Margaret's expression turned solemn. She then took out her communication crystal. [Master, I'm leading my team into the Crimson Dragon empire's Hellfire city.]

"Let's go. We'll fly straight toward the Hellfire city. Be careful of any sneak attacks from the ground." Putting the crystal away, she waved her hand and covered some of her team members who can't fly in her mana and flew into the air, heading out of the forest.

Ice sovereign mountain, main entrance...

Oliver, along with three people—two male and one female, was waiting with his eyes closed, looking extremely calm. The female in the group kept sneaking glances at him while sighing in her heart.

Noticing this, one of the two men, slightly tall and slightly muscular with a beard and mustache, clicked his tongue,

"Tch! You are hopeless, woman. You know he wouldn't have given you a second glance if not for your talent. But you still haven't given up hope. I say forget him and become my companion. Though my background isn't as impressive as his, and I haven't learned the fabled [Ice God Technique], I doubt there are many who can beat me in my realm."

"You!" The woman froze.

She then panicked and glanced at Oliver. When she saw he didn't 'seem' to have heard him, she sighed in relief, but at the same time, she was disappointed too, because it was impossible that Oliver didn't hear him. His not reacting to the man's words meant he really didn't like her romantically, which she obviously knew, but didn't want to accept, so this hurt her. Feeling hurt, disappointed, and angry, she snapped, and released her peak five-star aura, "You stupid musclehead! Do you want to die?!"

The man remained unphased at her lashing out, "There is no need to get angry. I simply told you the truth. It would be better if you gave up on him. Besides, you can't beat me."

"You bas—" "Hey, quit it, you two!" the other man cut in when he saw three figures flying toward them. Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Rose, Lilly and Little Snow in her human form flew over and landed in front of them.

Oliver opened his eyes. When he saw Lilly, he was dazed for a split second before recovering his senses. 'She has grown even more beautiful.'

Taking a deep breath, he stepped forward. Gracefully, putting his right hand on his left chest, and a handsome smile on his face, he bowed lightly toward her, "Hello Lil... junior sister. I hope you've been well since the last time we met."

Before Lilly could respond, Rose snorted in annoyance, "She has been well and you better make sure it remains the same when I meet her next."

Oliver's expression fell for a brief moment before he nodded. "Of course, Elder. I'll do my best to ensure junior sister's safety."

"It'll be enough if you don't harm her." Little snow murmured under her breath, but given how sharp everyone's hearing was, they heard her clearly. Oliver, however, completely ignored her, his gaze on Lilly. "Shall we depart now, Junior sister, or do you need to bid farewell to your master and fellow sister?"

"There is no need. I'm going with her." Little Snow snorted, trying but failing to hide her contempt.

11:25

Oliver's eyes flickered when he heard this but didn't comment.

Seeing how they were wasting time, the mustache man spoke up, "Since everyone is here, can we just go now? I heard there are demons blocking the way to outer region, I want to fight them."

Lilly looked at her master and bowed. "Farewell, master. We'll meet soon."

Rose gently helped her. "Be careful out there." She then looked at Little Snow. "You too."

Both Lilly and Little snow nodded. "Yes, master."

Seeing they were ready, Oliver waved his hand and summoned a beautiful, white feathered peacock.

Swoosh!

Just as he was about to invite Lilly up, Little Snow transformed into her beast form.

"Come up, big sister."

Lilly smiled and, with a light jump, she landed on Little Snow's back, who immediately flapped her wings and flew into the sky.

Oliver glanced at Rose and gave her a perfunctory bow. "We shall depart now."

He then climbed the peacock with others and flew after Lilly.

...

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Bang! Bang! Crack! Thud!

Three figures, two horned demons and a human, were engaged in a fierce battle. Each time they clashed, minor explosions and bone cracking sounds filled the abandoned city.

From far, it seemed the demons had the upper hand because they landed hits on the human seven out of ten times. The human was in a very bad condition, his clothes were in tatters and his body drenched in blood. But despite all this, the human was... smiling.

Chapter 552: Stifled silence

552 Stifled silence

Bang! Bang! Bang!

"Fuck! What kind of human is he?" As the fight continued, the horned demons couldn't help but curse.

Initially, when they started fighting, and the human stopped his companions from helping him, they mocked and sneered at the human and felt he was overestimating himself. After all, he was just a peak three-star mage while they were mid-stage four-star demons.

They thought they could quickly kill him before killing his companions. However, even after fighting for more than half an hour, although they seriously injured him, they couldn't seem to kill him. Also, despite being so gravely injured that he could barely stand on his feet, he was still smiling, and this gave them chills.

"Lunatic! If only I could use my skills, I would immediately reduce him to dust. Fuck! This is getting annoying!"

One of them cursed while the other nodded in agreement before they continued their assault on him with their fists and legs, wanting to pummel him to death. Of course, they wanted to use their spells to kill him quickly, but the damned human always interrupted their casting. So, they had no choice but to fight in close combat.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

"Haha... you ugly bastards, put more strength in your punches. I don't feel a thing." The bloodied human laughed as he blocked the attacks directed at his vital points while letting others smack into his body.

"Argh! Die you bastard!" The demons become more enraged when they heard this.

...

In the distance, a group of elves and humans watched the ongoing fight with incomprehensible expressions on their faces.

"I can't see how this... is beneficial for him." One elf muttered. The others nodded in agreement when they heard this.

Just then, the four-star elf standing at the front touched his beard and said, "If I'm not wrong, he is cultivating some kind of body strengthening art."

The female four-star elf beside him nodded, a surprised look on her face. "This guy... he is very... surprising."

The other elves revealed a look of surprise when they heard the man, "A body strengthening art?! Where did he find one? I'm sure the Green leaf kingdom doesn't have one."

"...Maybe he got it from the central plains?"

...

'Did he go to the central plains after joining the cloud academy?' Emily raised her brows when she heard the elves' discussion. However, she quickly shook her head. She had talked to Anna and knew everything that had happened after Max joined the academy. Although he vanished for a month without a trace, she knew he hadn't gone to the central plains because the journey alone would've taken him more than a month.

'Just what happened to him?' She thought, but quickly stopped this line of thought. Everyone had secrets, and it wouldn't do her any good to think about his.

Just then, Ella spoke up, "Um, miss Emily... maybe you should help sir Max now? He is much too injured."

Ellie frowned when she heard this. She didn't like her mother getting concerned about him. It was too... weird.

'Would I be the same if I...' Her cheeks blushed red, and she quickly shook her head, not thinking about it.

In the past few days, her mother had tried to convince her to... do 'it' with him. Although she knew if she agreed and did 'it' with him, her curse would be lifted and she could become a mage which she always wanted, she found the thought of it just too... uncomfortable and morally wrong. After all, her mother was already sexually involved with him.

'Perhaps the morals of the mage world and the ordinary world are really different and I shouldn't be bothered by them anymore...' As she thought this, her breathing grew heavy and cheeks, ears and neck reddened, making her look like a ripe tomato. Fortunately for her, no one noticed her or she would've felt embarrassed.

Emily gave Ella a cursory and somewhat annoyed glance before saying in an icy cold voice, "Don't worry about him. He is strong enough to take care of himself."

Ella became flustered at the cold reception. "I-I was just..."

"I know. So stop it now." Emily frowned in displeasure.

"O-Okay." Ella meekly bowed her head and retreated to Ellie's side before revealing a bitter smile. She could tell Emily didn't like her at all because of her relationship with Max.

'But isn't she the one who forced me to do it in the first place?' She thought, feeling angry. Ellie had calmed down by now and noticed her mother's perturbed look. "What is it, mother? Did she say something?" She frowned. She had also noticed Emily's treatment toward her mother had become uncharacteristically colder ever since her mother and Max started spending time alone.

Seeing her daughter give Emily a cold look, Ella hurriedly shook her head. "N-No. She didn't say anything. I... just remembered something. So, don't worry about it."

Ellie looked at her mother in silence for a moment before nodding, "Okay."

Just then, a pained scream resounded throughout the area, followed by another.

"Ahhhhhhh!"

"Ahhhhhhh!"

When she looked at the source of the screams, she was the horned demons flying back while spitting out blood, their chests badly mangled.

The bloodied figure, Max, chased after them and before they could crash onto the ground, the thunder sword appeared in his hand, and with two quick slashes, the demons' head went flying.

Bang! Bang!

Before the bodies fell down, he punched at the heads, exploding them into blood mist and stored the unharmed demon cores in the inventory.

Thud! Thud!

Phew~!

Along with the demon corpses, Max landed on the ground and exhaled a turbid breath of air. Thud!

Cough! Cough!

In the next moment, he fell onto his knees and broke out in a coughing fit, and then spat out a few mouthfuls of clotted black blood.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Emily and others arrived, looking at his battered body with concern and astonishment.

"Are you alright?"

"Are you alright, sir Max?"

Emily and Ella asked at the same time. Seeing this, Emily frowned while Ella fidgeted nervously. The elves didn't say anything, afraid to break this stifled silence.

Welcome back guys! Sorry for the long delay.

Blizzard54k

Chapter 553: Wake up call

"Haha... yeah. I'm alright. Just some superficial injuries. Don't worry about it." Max laughed and broke the silence. After having such a 'fulfilling' fight, he was in a good mood and didn't want to let such trivial things ruin it.

Everyone gave him strange looks when they heard him and thought, 'These are superficial injuries?' Of course, they weren't. He was badly hurt; many of his bones and internal organs were seriously injured. He knew even grade three healing pills won't be able to heal him in a short time. Fortunately, although they were quite severe, none of them were life threatening. Besides, his bloodline's healing ability had already kicked in. In the past few days, apart from hunting down the demons on the way to the capital city

for the kill points, he also tested out the extent of his healing ability. Although he didn't know how effective it would be if his vital organs such as heart, brain etc. suffered injuries since he didn't dare let the demons critically injure him, he found out it was incredible, way more effective than top-tier grade three healing pills. Also, once he got injured, it would automatically kick in, meaning he wouldn't have to get distracted mid fight because of his injuries. Even more unbelievable, once the injured body parts healed, they would become stronger than before. If he used [Barbarian God Physique] while the bloodline healing was in effect, the strengthening effects would be even more significant. Of course, all things had its advantages and disadvantages. His bloodline ability naturally was the same. From what he found out, it consumed his bloodline's energy to work. Once his bloodline ability was used up, he would fall into a temporary state of weakness.

For the sake of cultivating his body, he fought the two mid-stage four-star demons barehanded and let them thoroughly beat him up. Right now, he didn't want to waste his time talking or convincing everyone he was fine, but quickly circulate his body strengthening technique to absorb all fruits of his hard work.

However...

Just as he was about to tell them to leave him alone for a few hours... Emily's cold and angry voice sounded. "You call them injuries 'superficial'? Do you think we are blind? Stop being so flippant about everything. Even if you wanted to train your body, you should've found some safer method. What do you think would've happened if those two had some unique bloodline or had some hidden trump card? YOU WOULD'VE LOST YOUR LIFE!!"

Her angry shouts made Max flinch. When he looked up at her, he saw her eyes were dripping with tears, which made his heart tremble. In all his life, he never saw her behave like this. She was always calm and indifferent, as if nothing in this world could make her show any emotion, but now she was crying because she 'risked' his life. How could he not be moved? Seeing him look at her in a daze and not responding, Emily grew angrier. However, she didn't say anything this time, but turned around and walked away.

Seeing this, Max snapped out of his daze and instinctively asked, "Where are you going?"

"Hmph! Just contact me when you are healed and ready to continue the journey."

Emily's crisp voice, tinged with a hint of anger, sounded out as her figure disappeared from his vision.

Max watched her disappear and revealed a bitter smile. Although her care for him moved and made him happy, he didn't like the fact he made her angry. A moment later,

his shoulders slumped down and he sighed 'I don't have a choice but to train my body this way since I can't find something like blood pool.'

Just then, Rey said with some hesitation, "Leader, I don't know if I should say this, but... I think you have yet to face some tough challenges or life-threatening situations until now. Even if you have encountered some difficulty, everything must have been under your control or it was not enough to threaten your life. That's why you... how should I put it... that's why you subconsciously 'take everything lightly'."

Saying this, he wore a solemn expression on his face and added, "This mindset is very dangerous. I hope you think about it and correct it as soon as possible."

The four-star elves also nodded in agreement. Seeing this, Max frowned and thought, 'Is that really true?'

Soon, he realized what they said was probably true. He really hadn't encountered any hopeless situation. The most dangerous situation he ever encountered was when Rima was kidnapped and he fought with the demonic mages. However, even then, he didn't have any sense of danger since he almost instantly killed the three-star mage after over-drafting his vitality.

'Without the sense of danger, one is sure to die sooner or later in a world where only the law of jungle works.' Realizing all this, he heaved a cold breath, 'The only reason I'm still alive is mostly because the system. If I didn't have the system... Fuck, there is no use thinking like this now. I should be careful from now on and not risk my life—No!'

Just then, he remembered his main purpose. 'I only have around ten days left to save my father and a few days less to reach the four-star realm and complete the mission, so Lilly would be safe. I have no choice but to rush things and take risks.' Thinking this, he clenched his fists while his heart burned with urgency.

Thinking this, he took a deep breath and stood up before nodding at Rey, "Thank you for the advice."

He then glanced at others. "I'll need a few hours to heal. You guys should rest and recover."

Saying this, he walked away and found a secluded place, sat down, closed his eyes in meditation and stabilized his breathing and calmed his mind. A few minutes later, he started circulating the [Barbarian God Physique]. Although taking healing pills could significantly accelerate the healing process, he didn't take any because the longer his body was in the injured state, the quicker his physique would progress toward level 2.

Rumble~! Rumble~!

As the [Barbarian God Physique] circulated, it seemed to have taken control of the faint pinkish bloodline energy that was slowly seeping out and diffusing into his body, healing and strengthening his body. A moment later, the blood throughout his body rumbled and streams of bloodline energy rushed out before diffusing into his bones, marrow, and internal organs.

Slowly but steadily, his body started strengthening. His bones started becoming denser, his marrow grew thicker and purer, while his internal organs grew stronger and thrummed with vitality.

As soon as this process started, a wonderful sensation washed over his body, which almost made him groan in pleasure.

'How refreshing! If not for the pain I have to endure to injure myself to this degree, I wouldn't have to look for alternative body forging methods to advance my physique level.' He thought, enjoying the sensation.

Time passed, and quickly one hour was gone. Suddenly, the streams of bloodline energy grew thinner. 'Am I going to run out of the bloodline energy?' Max thought in surprise. Although, in the past few days, he would fall in a weakened state after his body healed, he never really ran out of the bloodline energy.

'Maybe it's because I never injured myself so badly and didn't run the [Barbarian God Physique] more than a few minutes... Argh!!' Just as he was thinking about the reasons, the bloodline energy became almost nonexistent and suddenly, a sense—stronger than what he felt in the past few days—of weakness overtook his senses. At the same time, an overwhelming urge to have sex surfaced in his mind, which almost made him growl.

'Damn it! If I knew this would happen, I wouldn't have exhausted the bloodline energy completely.' He cursed in his heart and quickly stood up. But this action made him wince due to pain because he was yet to be completely healed.

Whoosh!

Quickly taking a handful of grade three pills, he rushed toward the place where the group was staying.

Because the place where they were was just a small settlement, there were only grass huts which were already destroyed. So, everyone had found a relatively intact hut to rest.

Whoosh!

Sensing someone approaching, the four-star elves opened their eyes. When they saw it was Max, they were about to greet him when Max rushed over, grabbed Ella, who was sitting together with Elli, by waist and vanished into distance.

The duo exchanged glances before shaking their heads while other elves opened their eyes and looked around in confusion. As for Elli, she panicked when her mother suddenly disappeared from her side and was about to shout when the male four-star elf told her what happened.

Upon hearing this, some elves frowned while some revealed perverted smiles. As for Elli, she tightly clenched her fists.

Chapter 554: Profiting from disaster

"Ahn~!"

"Nngh~!"

"Ahh~!"

A mile away from the place where everyone was staying, moans of absolute pleasure reverberated in the area for an hour before gradually subsiding.

In a half-destroyed straw hut, Max moved away from the top of Ella and flopped beside her, unconsciously revealing a satisfied grin on his face. As for Ella, she was half unconscious. Her eyes were glazed over, her face shone with a rosy color and her naked body was glistening with crystalline drops of sweat. The addition of a milky river flowing down from between her legs created an exquisite scenery.

After a few moments, she came to her senses and, while taking in deep breaths, asked, "S-Sir Max... are you alright now?"

Max glanced at her in silence for a moment, causing her heartbeat to rise. Just when she thought her question might have displeased him, he revealed a gentle smile and nodded, "Yes, I'm alright. Thank you."

His gentle smile and soft voice made Ella's heart fluttered. Her cheeks glowed an enchanting red and she could only let out a soft 'Un' sound.

Her bashful demeanor caused his heart to race, and he found himself leaning toward her. Ella froze for a moment before realizing what he wanted to do. So, she leaned her face toward him and closed her eyes, trying to take control of her galloping heart but failing.

Just then, she felt his hot breath on her face before his lips landed on hers. Almost at the same time, his tongue pried open her small mouth, slithered inside and started a sensual dance with hers.

A few minutes later, he reluctantly broke the hot kiss and left Ella breathless, but satisfied.

He then cast a spell to clean himself up, gave her soft breasts a quick squeeze and ordered, "Get up and start your cultivation. Don't waste the energy go to waste."

"Mm~ Yes, sir Max." Ella nodded and sat up, her movements stiff. She then cleaned herself up with a spare piece of cloth, wore her robes, and tidied up her hair. Only then did she close her eyes and started cultivating.

Seeing this, Max also sat cross-legged and started circulating his mana and partly recovered bloodline energy. Under the nourishment of his rich mana and bloodline energy, after half an hour, the remaining injuries also healed. But because he hadn't recovered enough bloodline energy, he was still in the state of weakness.

'I need to find some other way to recover the bloodline energy.' He thought. Although having sex could help him do it, if the other party's cultivation wasn't strong enough, he wouldn't be able to recover enough energy—just like now. Although he did it with Ella for an hour, he only recovered a few percent bloodline energy, barely enough to neutralize the backlash of complete bloodline energy exhaustion.

Just then, Emily's cold yet beautiful surfaced in his mind. 'Maybe... Fuck! What am I even thinking?!' Quickly throwing the thought to the back of his mind, he opened the status screen.

[Status]

[Name: Maxwell Garfield]

[Cultivation: Peak three-star]

[Age: 18]

[Strength: 150]

[Agility: 150]

[Stamina: 150]

[Vitality: 150]

[Intelligence: 287]

[Mana: 80,000]

[Element: Fire (Concentration: 70%)]

[Lust Points: 4800]

[Kill Points: 300,000]

[Shop Points: 1500]

Seeing the result of his hard work for the past few days, Max couldn't help but lick his lips in satisfaction.

"System, sell those two demon cores, too."

[Done, host.] System responded almost at the same time and the shop points got updated.

[Shop Points: 1620]

Nodding, he converted 200,000 Kill Points into Mana points and increased his mana count to 100,000 from 80,000.

Rumble~!

As 200,000 kill points vanished, dense streams of purified mana appeared around his core and slowly flowed into it, filling it to the brim.

Crack! Crack!

Suddenly, the core made creaking sounds, and a few cracks appeared on the outer surface. It seems despite all the tempering and strengthening, it still couldn't endure the collective pressure of 100,000 mana units.

"Crap..." Max's face paled and panic set in. Forcefully calming down, he started using his old method of core strengthening by assimilating mana into the core. However...

Crack! Crack!

More and more cracks continued to appear while the previous ones grew wider and deeper.

This crumbled his forcefully established calmness and, within a moment, his entire body was drenched in cold sweat.

By now, he knew he didn't have time to strengthen his core slowly. Therefore, he turned to the system and opened his mouth to ask for something which can help him.

"System, hurry. Buy something that can help..." However, before he could finish speaking, system's unhurried voice sounded. When he heard what it said, his eyes shone with pleasant surprise.

[Host, would you like to use your remaining Lust and Kill points to reconstruct your mana core? This reconstruction would raise your mana core level to the peak four-star, making it easier to breakthrough to the four-star realm. Do you agree? (Yes)/(No)]

Max knew simply increasing his mana to 100,000 units wouldn't be enough to breakthrough to the four-star, and he had to fulfill three other conditions, two of which were the same as what he did to breakthrough to the three-star realm—transforming three-star mana into four-star one and the core reconstruction. Of course, although they were the same, the difficulty and danger level was tens of times higher. The last one was to strengthen his body to a level where it can endure the four-star mana.

Now that the system offered him to help survive this unexpected disaster and also complete one of three steps in exchange for some points he could simply earn with some effort, he was beyond exhilarated. He knew this was a special case. If it didn't concern his life, he wouldn't have gotten such opportunity. Therefore, he immediately tapped 'Yes'. Just as he did, a pure white light covered him and he lost consciousness. Gradually, the light grew brighter, and he started floating a few feet above the ground.

Boom!

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Suddenly, a powerful suction force erupted from his belly. A moment later, the mana in the surrounding few miles became restless and surged in his direction.

...

A few miles away, two demon groups were rapidly moving toward the capital city when they sensed the sudden change in the mana flow. Immediately, they changed directions and rushed toward the place where all mana was converging.

Similarly, a group of humans were moving toward the capital city when they felt the change. Feeling curious, they also rushed over.

Since people so far could sense such a big change in mana flow, the Elves and Emily also noticed this. After a brief moment of shock, they exchanged glances and could see panic on each other's faces.

"Is he breaking through?"

"Damn! Such a huge commotion! This will attract trouble."

"How reckless! Doesn't he know this place isn't safe?"

"Let's go. We need to make sure he isn't disturbed."

Although displeased by his recklessness, they also rushed over, determined to guard him with their lives.

...

Surprisingly enough, while everyone was alerted, Ella, who was just a few feet away from him, seemed completely unaware and continued to cultivate. As the mana concentration around her increased, her mana absorption rate spiked. Within a few minutes, she reached the peak of one-star and started condensing her mana core.

Chapter 555: Brilliant radiance

Whoosh! Whoosh!

A short while after Max lost consciousness, and the system started reconstructing his core, causing such a big commotion, the Elvin group and Ellie arrived. When they saw a figure shrouded in a brilliant white light, hovering in the air, they were stunned. "What the...?"

"There is someone in the light..."

"Who is it...?"

"Whoever he is, it doesn't look like he is breaking through."

"Where is the team leader? He should be around..."

The elves discussed in hushed voices. Just when they were wondering where Max was, they noticed Ella, sitting under the figure shrouded in the bright white light.

"This figure... he is team leader?" Rey muttered, astonished. The others were the same. They had witnessed people breakthrough to the three-star, four-star and five-star realm. However, none of them witnessed such a sight before today. It was simply... divine.

As they stared at Max, wrapped up in the pure white light, they unconsciously stepped forward and came under the light's glow.

Rumble! Rumble!

Immediately, their mana cores trembled, and mana started circulating through their mana veins according to cultivate techniques. Their pores opened and the impurities in their mana, blood, and flesh were slowly pushed out.

"This... my cultivation is increasing..."

"My mana core... it's recovering..."

"How amazing! I feel I can easily refine my mana into the four-star level and reconstruct my mana core..."

"..."

Everyone was shocked upon noticing the changes occurring within them. After their shock subsided, they revealed looks of joy. This was especially true for the female four-star elf, Shasha, because her mana core had some cracks that were now rapidly recovering.

Swoosh!

Suddenly, a large amount of mana poured into Ella's body, which was absorbed by her newly formed mana core, helping her step into the two-star realm.

Ecstatic, she opened her eyes but had to close them again because of radiance. A moment later, as her eyes adjusted to the bright light and saw Max hovering in the air and others sitting around him with their eyes closed and looks of pure joy on their faces, she was shocked as she couldn't understand just what was happening.

However, when she felt her mana circulate automatically through her veins, becoming purer and stronger, she understood what was going on. Then, a reverent look appeared on her glowing face as she gazed at Max's hazy figure and muttered, "Sir Max is truly extraordinary."

Suddenly recalling something, she turned her head around and glanced at her daughter, Ellie, and when she saw her standing with her eyes closed with a calm look on her face, she sighed. "If her curse had also been resolved, she would've benefitted a lot from this brilliant radiance. What a pity!"

Just then, the bright white radiance started dimming down, and a moment later, it completely disappeared. Max, who was hovering in the air, suddenly dropped. Thankfully, Ella quickly moved and caught him in her arms. However, her face turned red and her hands felt as if they would explode because he was too heavy for her. So, she quickly put him down and took deep breaths while caressing her aching arms.

Rey, Shasha, Ellie and others opened their eyes. When they saw the radiance had disappeared, they couldn't help but feel slightly disappointed before everyone started discussing their harvest.

When the male four-star elf, Kamesh, noticed tears streaming down Shasha's face, he raised his brows before he smiled, "Congratulations, Miss Shasha. I hope there isn't any problem with your core now."

"Mm." Shasha nodded. Quickly wiping her tears away, she smiled as she gazed at still unconscious Max and said, "When I agreed to come here, I was prepared to lose my life. But I never expected I could heal my core. It seems my choice was right."

Kamesh also glanced at Max and nodded. "Yeah. I feel by the time we return—alive—we would've grown a lot."

"Haha! I reached peak three-star. Amazing!"

"...more than half of my mana has reached four-star level... This is great!"

"...My mana is now purer and my mana veins have also become stronger."

...

Rey smiled when he heard everyone's excited exclamations. Though he didn't show it, deep down, he was shocked beyond belief. Ever since he first met Max, he knew he wasn't ordinary. This feeling only continued to grow throughout their journey toward the capital. Initially, when he saw Max fight the early-stage four-star demon, he found it extraordinary. However, just a few days later, he saw him fighting and killing mid-stage demons without exerting too much effort while he was still a peak three-star mage who had yet to start converting his mana to the four-star level; he found it shocking.

However, today, he finally realized Max wasn't someone the words "Extraordinary" or "Monstrous" could describe. He had a feeling if he followed Max for a few years, he could reach heights he never even dreamt of reaching.

Thinking this, he clenched his fists in excitement before determination flashed in the depths of his eyes.

On the other side, Emily was also stunned. However, she quickly recovered. Her figure flashed, and she appeared in front of him, completely on guard as she watched everyone. Only after she determined no one had any ill intent toward him, she relaxed a little. After that, she checked Max if he was alright. After finding there was no problem with him, she glanced at Ella and asked, "What happened here? Why is he unconscious?"

Emily's cold gaze sent shivers down her spine. Flustered, she quickly shook her head, "I-I'm sorry, but I don't know. After we... did t-that, Sir Max told me to cultivate. When I woke up, he was hovering in the air and you guys were already here. S-so I don't know what happened in the meantime."

Emily fell in thought when she heard this. But suddenly, she raised her head and gazed into the distance, a grave expression appearing on her face. She then shot to her feet, told Ella to look after Max and released her aura before she barked, "Everyone, people incoming! Get ready to fight."

Hearing her, Shasha and Kamesh revealed confused expressions. However, when they paid attention in the direction Emily was looking, their expression turned grave. Immediately, everyone became alert and took out their weapons or readied their spells to fight.

Just then, a crisp and demonic voice sounded out from the distance.

"Hehe, little girl. You got some sharp senses. Why don't you submit to me, I'll treat you well."

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Right after the voice, several figures appeared in front of them, looking at them with ferocity in their eyes.

Chapter 556: Dangerous situation

The expressions on everyone's faces changed when they saw the group of demons standing in front of them. Only Emily had the same indifferent expression, but one could see the expression in her eyes was grave. Clearly, she could feel this demon group wasn't easy to deal with.

The demon group had nine purple skinned demons. The one standing in the middle looked like a young man. He was the one who had spoken a while ago.

With a playful smile on his face, he gazed at everyone and his smile continued to grow when he saw everyone in front of him had grave and fearful expressions. However,

"Hm?" He suddenly paused when he saw Emily didn't seem too afraid. But a moment later, he chuckled and appeared in front of Emily with a gust of wind. Before she could even blink, he was holding Emily's hand.

Emily's gaze narrowed and her aura grew fiercer, but she didn't try to pull her hand back and only continued to stare at him.

Seeing this, the demon grew even more interested. Smiling, he said, "Hello beautiful, I'm Marsh Purplewind from the Purplewind demon tribe. You are a very interesting girl. So, what do you think of my offer?"

Shasha, Kamesh, and others focused their attention on Marsh, their magic spells ready to kill. Although they knew he was way stronger than any demon they had encountered before, they showed no fear and were just waiting for Emily to put some distance between them so they could rain down their attacks on him.

"You want me to submit... to you?" Emily asked, her voice unusually calm.

"That's right." Marsh nodded. "If you submit to me, I'll help you complete your incomplete wind spirit physique."

Hearing this, Emily's eyes flashed. "You can tell what my physique is?"

Marsh revealed a smile. "You don't have to worry. Your concealment spell hasn't lost its effect. The only reason I can tell you have a wind spirit physique is because my physique is also a wind spirit physique."

"No wonder." Emily nodded in understanding. Whoosh!

Then suddenly, her sword appeared in her other hand, which she slashed toward his neck at a blindingly fast speed.

"Tch! How violent!" Marsh clicked his tongue when he saw her attack. Just when the sword was about to cut through his neck, he disappeared and appeared in front of his group. Still smiling, he asked, "So, I take it as your refusal?" Emily looked at him as he was a clown, which made Marsh's lips twitch. A female demon beside him spoke up at this moment, "Young lord, since you fancy her, just force her to submit. There is no need to ask for her opinion on the matter." Marsh shook his head and wrapped his arm around the female demon's slim waist. "You are wrong, little Jun. I have to ask her because, unfortunately, I can't force her to submit."

The demoness and other demons behind them revealed surprised expressions when they heard this and their gazes were no longer casual when they glanced at Emily.

"Young lord... you mean she is stronger than you?" The demoness, little Jun, asked, an incredulous expression on her face and her big, round eyes wide open.

Marsh tightened his grasp on her waist and flicked her forehead with his other hand. "You are really silly, little Jun? If she was really stronger than me, would I have dared to ask her to submit?"

"Then why can't you force her, young lord?" Little Jun asked in confusion as she caressed her forehead.

"Because of her incomplete wind spirit physique. She can detonate her physique if I try." Marsh sighed. He then glanced in distance and said, "Friends, how long are you going to hide? Isn't this time to come out now?"

"Hmm?"

Hearing this, the demons glanced in the direction Marsh was looking, their expression turning grave. Since they didn't know if it was humans or demons, they had to be alert. The elves also looked over, slight hope rising in their hearts. 'Please don't be demons.' Ella thought. The number of Purplewind demons was already higher than their group's. If other demons joined, they won't have any chance of survival. 'Only if Sir Max wasn't unconscious...' As she thought this, she glanced at him, wanting to see him wake up. Unfortunately, he showed no signs of waking up.

As everyone looked in the distance, a sinister chuckle sounded, dashing the elves' hopes. Disappointment flashed in Emily's eyes for a brief moment before she glanced at Max and took a deep breath.

"Keke, Purplewind's kid, you seem to have become stronger in the past few days. Not bad."

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Along with the voice, a group of seven horned demons revealed themselves.

"Horned demons..." Rey muttered, his expression turning ugly. Subtly, he moved and stood in front of Max, shielding him with his body so the horned demons wouldn't be able to see him. He knew Max had some deep enmity with horned demons since a group of strong horned demons had come to the Ninam city to kill Max, but were chased away by the guard commander. If they were the same ones and saw Max, things would definitely turn ugly.

"Oh, so its horned tribe rising genius, Nule. How come you are also here?" Marsh asked with a smile.

"Nothing. We were just passing by when we noticed the disturbance and came to check things out." The horned demon, who seemed to be the leader of the group, said before asking, "Since you were here first, care to tell me what caused the disturbance?"

Hearing this, Marsh patted his forehead. "How forgetful of me! I completely forgot to ask this from our friends here." Saying this, he looked at Emily and indifferently said. "Tell us what caused the disturbance and I will consider letting you leave here alive."

Emily stayed silent as she tightened her grasp on her sword.

"Hm? You don't want to? Fine, let me kill a few of you first. I'm sure that will open your mouth." Nule sneered and pointed his hand toward one of the three-star elves before shooting a black beam of demonic energy at him.

Whoosh!

The elf who was targeted felt chills run down his spine and sweat covered his forehead. He could feel he would die if this energy beam struck him.

Slash!

However, before it could reach him, a silver light flashed and destroyed the beam. The elf sighed in relief when he saw this and glanced at Emily, who had destroyed the attack with gratitude in his eyes.

Nule's face darkened when he saw his attack being interrupted and roared in anger, "You bitch! You dare block..."

Whoosh!

However, before he could finish his sentence, Emily disappeared and appeared in front of him before stabbing her sword at his head.

"What a girl..." The corner of Marsh's lips curled up. He was getting more and more interested in her. Unfortunately, she rejected his offer.

He then glanced at the horned demon group and thought. 'Maybe they will help me change her mind.'

If he could absorb Emily's wind spirit essence, his wind spirit physique would have a high chance to evolve and become stronger. That's why he was so interested in making her submit. Once she submitted, he would ensure wouldn't be able to detonate her physique. After that, he could slowly extract her essence.

Nule stared at Emily with a sneer on his face, but didn't move. Clang!

Just when the sword was about to stab into his head, an older demon standing beside him reached out and slapped it away. He then grabbed at her neck.

Emily's eyes narrowed at this. She could feel this demon was a lot stronger than her. Maybe he was a mid-high or even a peak four-stage demon, but she didn't panic. Changing her grip, she poured her elemental mana into the sword and slashed horizontally.

Bang!

Her sword struck the palm but only managed to stop it.

"Heng!" The demon snorted in displeasure when he saw this. Clenching his palm into a fist, he covered it with demonic energy and punched out.

"Watch out!" Shasha and Kamesh shouted out in alarm when they saw this. They could feel this old demon was probably in the five-star realm. Even a casual punch of such a being could instantly kill anyone in the lower stages of the four-star realm, while Emily was just a high-stage three-star mage. Furthermore, this wasn't a casual punch, since he had used his demonic energy.

BANG!!

A loud bang resounded, and a figure was sent flying.

Chapter 557: Durden

Everyone, be it demons, elves or humans, looked at the figure that was sent flying in shock because the figure wasn't Emily but the old horned demon.

From what strength he showed, everyone here could tell even though he wasn't a five-star demon, he was a seasoned demon in the peak four-star realm, stronger than ordinary peak four-star demons. So, it was shocking to see him suffer a loss in the exchange against someone in the high-stage three-star realm.

However, only Marsh, Nule, and Emily knew it wasn't she who sent him flying, but a bolt of lightning.

When they looked in the direction from where the bolt of lightning came, they saw a group of three humans—two men and a woman—walking over. The three of them wore purple robes, indicating they were from the same organization. The one who attacked just now was the man in lead and looked to be in late twenties. As for the other man, he was quite young and looked no older than 15 while the woman seemed to be in early twenties. Unlike the man leading them, who had a calm look on his face, the young man and woman were cautious as they walked over.

The trio stopped a few meters away from the demon groups before the man asked Emily, "Are you alright, miss?"

Emily retreated to her group before nodding, "Yes. I'm alright. Thank you for the help, senior."

"Haha, I'm not much older than you. So, no need to call me senior." The man casually laughed, before saying, "Let me introduce myself. I'm Durden and they are my junior apprentice brother and sister, Adam and Jasmine."

Emily, Shasha, Kamesh and others looked at him in a daze, thinking, 'Is this the right time to introduce yourselves? Can't you see we have demons to deal with?'

Except for Marsh, whose expression turned grave, all the other demons became furious seeing him talk as though they were air.

After seeing his companion wasn't injured, Nule barked, his expression dark, "Kill this bastard!"

The horned demons behind him immediately launched their attacks. The old horned demons hesitated a little because, from the previous attack, he knew this man was stronger than him. But seeing everyone attack, he also cast his demonic spell and attacked.

When Emily saw this, she poured her mana into her sword and was prepared to cast her wind sword spell to help him when the man frowned and swiped his hand at the incoming attacks.

Rumble! Rumble! Rumble!

Following his gesture, the sky darkened and thunder rumbled above him before multiple inch-thick thunderbolts materialized and shot out toward the incoming attacks. Boom! Boom! Boom!

When the thunderbolts clashed with the various demonic attacks, loud explosions resounded one after another and shockwaves spread out.

The old horned demon's expression turned ugly. Now he confirmed he wasn't this purple clothed human's match. Nule and other horned demons' expressions were also ugly. As for Marsh, he didn't have much change in his expression since he already expected this.

Rey, Shasha and others sighed in relief when they saw how easily he resolved all attacks.

"We are safe. With this senior here, the demons can't do anything to us." Ellie whispered to herself, her tense nerves finally relaxing a little. The elves near her also relaxed. Unlike them, Emily kept her guard up. She knew more often than not, humans were more terrifying than demons. Until she knew this Durden guy's true intentions, she wouldn't dare relax.

On the other hand, Durden's eyes blazed with lightning and he slowly raised his right hand. As he did, a terrifying aura spread out from him and made everyone's heart tremble in fear. However, just then, Adam cried out, "Big brother!" Jasmine also looked at him with an anxious look in her limpid eyes.

Seeing this, Durden sighed and lowered his hand. He then glanced at the old horned demon and Marsh before saying in a terrifyingly cold voice "I'll count to three. If you filthy demons are still here by then, I'll kill all of you."

"You..." Nule's expression turned ugly, but just as he was about to flare up, the old horned demons stopped him. Marsh's and others' expressions also turned ugly when they heard this. However, they didn't leave because they could see something was wrong with Durden. Maybe he is injured...?

Thinking this, their eyes flashed. But when they wanted to attack, they hesitated.

However, Durden didn't care about their thoughts and started counting. "One..."

"Two..."

When Marsh and the old horned demon saw how quickly he was counting, seemingly not wanting them to leave, their expressions changed. Before Durden could count to 'three', Marsh barked at the demons behind him, "Let's go."

At the same time, the old horned demon grabbed Nule and ran away, not even bothered to take the rest of the horned demons with him.

"Three..."

"Run!" The horned demons paled and turned around to run away, but it was already too late.

Crackle!

As soon as he counted to three, lightning crackled in Durden's hand before he flicked his fingers toward them.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

"Noo...!!!"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Some of the weak-willed demons cried out in despair when they heard the lightning crackle behind them. But it didn't last for long before all of them exploded in blood mist. Even the toughest parts of their bodies, their demon cores, were destroyed.

"Five-star mage..." Rey muttered in astonishment. Although he had guessed it when the old horned demon was sent flying, it was only a guess. But now he was sure Durden was a five-star mage.

"I need to get stronger..." Emily clenched her fists as she watched the blood mist slowly disperse. If she was as strong as him, she wouldn't have to rely on others to save them. Shasha and Kamesh also looked solemn.

Cough!

"Big brother!"

"Sir Durden!"

Suddenly, Durden coughed out blood and staggered. Adam and Jasmine anxiously cried out and supported him.

Seeing this, Emily and others understood why he didn't kill the demons immediately upon his arrival and why Adam and Jasmine were so anxious earlier.

Chapter 558: Sudden change

"Are you alright?" Emily asked as she walked over with Shasha and Kamesh.

"Yeah. Just some old injuries acting up. Nothing to worry about." Durden wiped the blood from his lips and smiled. Adam looked at him and complained, his eyes becoming misty, "Big brother, why did you attack? Weren't they already leaving?"

Durden smiled and ruffled Adam's hair. "Haha, I couldn't bear to let all of them leave alive. Also, my injuries are no longer serious. So, stop worrying about me too much." Saying this, he leaned down and whispered in his ear, "Also, don't cry or these guys will look down on you."

Hearing this, Adam's youthful face turned red. He sniffed and asked, with an embarrassed expression, "Hmph! Who's crying?!" "Haha, no one, no one." Durden laughed before his gaze swept over Emily and others. "What about you all? You alright?" He asked. Then he noticed the unconscious Max and frowned. "And what's the matter with that guy? Was he injured? No... it doesn't seem like it. Hm? Don't tell me he was the cause of the commotion a while ago?" As he spoke, his eyes flashed with surprise, as though he noticed something.

Emily's expression turned grave when she saw him show an interest in Max and immediately stood in front of him. "He is fine. You don't have to worry about him. If there is nothing more, please leave."

Sensing the hostility in her tone, Adam and Jasmine frowned in displeasure, "Watch your tone! If it wasn't for us, you would be rotting corpses by now."

Emily paused for a moment before she shook her head, "We're very thankful for your help and if there is a chance, I'll repay you. But even if you hadn't come, we wouldn't have died, at least not all of us." Speaking until here, Emily looked at the duo coldly, "Besides, he is the one who saved us, not you two. So, watch your tones as well."

"You're ungrateful..." Adam's face flushed red in anger but before he could lash out, Durden stopped him and laughed, "Why are you guys bickering over nothing? We are all friends here." He then gave Emily a deep glance before calmly saying, "You don't have to worry. I have no ill intention towards any of you. I was just curious. If you really want us to leave, we'll leave, no problem. But If I'm not wrong, you guys are heading toward the capital city, right? If yes, then it would be better if we travel together. That way, we can take care of each other."

Emily hesitated when she heard this. Seeing this, Durden's expression was the same, but Adam and Jasmine became angry. Their big brother clearly wanted to help them, but she was hesitating as though they weren't good people.

Shasha and Kamesh stayed silent since they couldn't make the decision. But right at this moment, Emily glanced at them, asking for their opinion. This surprised the duo. They exchanged glances before Shasha nodded at her. "We also think it's a good idea, miss. But it's up to you to make the decision."

Emily nodded at her before she looked at Durden and said, "Alright. But we have to wait until he wakes up. If you are in a hurry, you can go ahead without us."

"It's alright. We also need to rest for a while," Durden said before glancing around. "But we should find another place. The chances are high the demons would return if they find reinforcements. They are known to be vengeful."

"Okay." Emily nodded. Then, the group left the place.

...

After what seemed to be a very long time, Max regained his senses. Just then, the system's voice sounded.

[Congratulations, host. Your mana core has been upgraded to the peak four-star level.]

'That's great...' However, before he could be happy about it, the system's voice sounded once again. This time, it was very feeble, barely audible. [Host, I've a bad piece of news... the system has used up almost all its energy... and will fall into a dormant state. But worry not... this is a blessing in disguise for you.]

Boom!

When Max heard this, he felt an explosion go off in his head and his mind blanked out.

"How? How did this happen?" He asked in disbelief.

However, the system didn't answer. "How... Arrgghhhh!!" Just as he wanted to ask again, an overwhelming pain flooded his senses that made him let out a heart wrenching scream. In the next moment, he lost consciousness once again.

...

Emily and the group had taken refuge in a barren valley a few hundred miles away from the place they encountered Marsh and horned demons.

Emily was sitting crossed legged, cultivating with two mana stones in her hands. Beside her lay Max, unconscious. Suddenly, she heard him mutter. "How? How did this happen?"

Hearing this, she opened her eyes. When she saw his face had turned pale, and his body was shaking, she frowned, 'Is he having a nightmare?'

Just as she was thinking of waking him, his eyes shot open, his twitching body stilled before he let out a loud scream.

"Arrgghhhh!!"

Emily panicked when she saw this. But before she could do anything, he fainted, blood flowing out from his seven orifices.

"MAX... what happened?" She lost her composure and tears welled up in her eyes. Hurriedly, she lifted his head and put it on her lap before she took out a few healing pills and fed them to him.

As the pills dissolved in his body, his bleeding slowly stopped, but his complexion didn't improve. Worried, she tried using her mana sense to check if anything was wrong, but was shocked to discover her mana was unable to penetrate his body.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Just then, Shasha, Kamesh, Durden and others arrived, and asked, "What happened? What was that cry?"

Taking a breath, Emily recovered her composure and calmly said, "Nothing. He woke up for a brief moment and must have cried out due to pain. You guys go and rest."

After everyone went away, she fell into deep thought while gazing at Max's pale face.

Chapter 559: A new start [1]

When Durden returned, he had a thoughtful look on his face, which surprised Adam and Jasmine.

"What are you thinking about, big brother? Also, what was that cry?" Adam couldn't hold back his curiosity.

Hearing his voice, Durned came to his senses and smiled, "Nothing. That guy had momentarily woken up and cried out due to pain before fainting again. Go on, continue condensing your mana."

Saying this, he sat down, closed his eyes, and started treating his injuries.

Adam looked at him and grumbled, "You didn't tell me what you were thinking about so deeply."

Seeing this, Jasmine revealed a faint smile, "If it's something we should know, senior brother will tell us. Since he didn't, we don't need to know."

...

Seeing Max's face turning paler bit by bit, Emily became increasingly anxious. But she couldn't do anything to make him feel better, and this made her feel helpless and useless. After a while, she could no longer restrain her emotions and tears welled up in her eyes.

"Please be alright, please." She muttered as pearl-like tears slid down her cheeks.

Meanwhile, Max, whose all senses to the outside world were cut off, was in a daze. He couldn't believe he 'lost' the system just like that. 'But why am I not feeling sad about it?' He wondered. Strangely, he wasn't feeling sad about losing the system. Instead, he felt as though some kind of restraints had lifted, making him feel lighter.

Suddenly, his attention was attracted to his chest, where he could 'see' a mass of pure white energy shining like the sun. Slowly, it broke down into two smaller lumps before one of them merged with his blood, causing it to boil like magma. As his blood rumbled and boiled, more and more wisps of lust overlord's bloodline energy appeared and started condensing. This process lasted for a long time. When it stopped, Max could 'see' a tiny stream of pink blood flowing alongside his normal blood. Although the two were like water and oil and didn't merge, they flowed smoothly without any problem. Furthermore, he could 'see' that sometimes, his pink blood would emit wisps of pink

energy, which then would be absorbed by his red blood. Each time it happened, his blood grew stronger, albeit just a little.

Just then, the other lump of white energy dispersed in tiny, barely noticeable streams and surged throughout his body. Just when Max was wondering what it was going to do, new, complicated pathways, just like blood vessels and nerves, started appearing throughout his body. Snap!

Unfortunately, Max couldn't witness the whole process because his consciousness was suddenly 'forced out' of his body and his eyes snapped open.

Ha! Ha! Ha!

As he regained his senses, he realized he was sweating a lot and was gasping for breath. Furthermore, a very anxious and misty-eyed Emily was looking at him from above as she gently wiped the sweat off his face.

'No wonder the back of my head feels comfortable. It's on her lap...' The corners of his lips curved up.

When Emily saw him open his eyes, her face shone with delight. "Y-You are awake?" Seeing her lose her composure like this, and obvious tear marks running down her cheeks, Max's heart trembled, and he lightly nodded his head, "Hm. I'm sorry for worrying you." Saying this, he wanted to sit up, but realized there wasn't even an ounce of energy left in his body. So, he slowly raised his hand instead, and gently wiped the droplets of tears hanging on her eyelashes.

Emily's face reddened when she realized Max had seen her crying face. Hurriedly, she took out another handkerchief, and cleaned her face before wearing her usual indifferent expression and nodded, "Don't worry. Everything's fine as long as you are alright."

Max's heart softened upon hearing this, but he didn't say anything and just kept laying on her lap. A moment later, he asked, "How long was I unconscious and did anything happen in that time?"

"2 days. You were unconscious for 2 days." Emily said before explaining, "You caused a huge commotion 2 days ago..."

When he heard how two demon groups were attracted to them by the commotion he unconsciously caused, his expression turned ugly. He blamed himself for causing the disaster for everyone. But when he heard everyone was fine, he heaved a sigh of relief.

"Are they still here?" He asked about Durden's group.

Hearing this, Emily's expression turned uncertain as she slowly nodded, "Yeah. They are still here. Although that little guy and girl urged him to leave and not waste time waiting for you to wake up, Durden didn't leave. He would come here to check up on you a few times daily. I... don't know what he is planning."

"From what you told me about him, I doubt that he would have any ill intentions towards any of us. So, don't worry." Max smiled, not wanting her to worry about it anymore.

Step! Step!

Just then, they heard the sound of footsteps. When they turned to look, they saw Ella and Ellie coming. Ella had an anxious look on her face while Ellie was frowning, and looked a bit annoyed.

As they came closer and saw Max laying on Emily's lap, looking at them, the duo looked relieved before a hint of anger flashed in Ellie's eyes. As for Ella, her face blossomed into a happy smile before she rushed over and sat on her knees beside him.

"Sir Max, you are awake. I-It's great. I... we were very worried."

"Hm. Sorry, I made you worried." Max smiled at her, which made Ella smile in joy. Emily, however, softly snorted at this, but didn't say anything.

Ella then glanced at Elle and beckoned her over. "Ellie, come quick and greet sir Max."

Sighing inwardly, she walked over and slightly bowed her head at him. "Hello, sir Max. It's good you woke up. Everyone was worried about you."

Max could see she didn't have any good feelings toward him and also knew why. So, when he heard her, he asked with an amused smile on his face, "Were you also worried?"

Chapter 560: A new start [2]

"I..." Ellie hesitated a little before nodding, "Yes. I was worried too. After all, we won't be able to survive if something happens to you."

"Ellie!" Ella shouted out. With a worried look on her face, she secretly glanced at Emily. She was worried Emily would get angry at her because she was indirectly saying Emily and others would abandon them if Max wasn't there for them.

However, she was thinking too much because Emily didn't react at all to her words.

"Did I say anything wrong, mom?" Ellie defiantly asked.

"You..." Ella didn't know what to say in response, but her face flushed red in anger. Seeing this, Max spoke up. "There is no need to get angry at her, Ella. She isn't wrong." Saying this, he looked at Ellie straight into her eyes and nodded, "You are right. Without me, no one here would care about you guys. Do you know why? Because you guys are strangers to them and, most importantly, you are nothing but burdens."

As he spoke, his voice kept getting colder and emotionless. "I know you are angry at me because you think I took advantage of your mother. To be honest, you aren't entirely wrong. But you aren't entirely right, either."

"Not to mention I SAVED YOU! I got rid of her curse, which would've killed her in a few years. I also gave her a cultivation technique and helped her become a mage. These aren't favors you can repay even with your lives, since you are worth nothing right now."

"Not to mention I SAVED YOU! I got rid of her curse, which would've killed her in a few years. I also gave her a cultivation technique and helped her become a mage. These aren't favors you can repay even with your lives, since you are worth nothing right now."

"The least you can and should do, right now, is show me some gratitude, but no, you are here acting like a child and getting angry at me. Do you know the consequences of making me angry?"

Ellie's face turned pale and her mind went blank when she heard him. "I-I didn't mean..." Tears welled up in her eyes as she tried to tell she wasn't ungrateful. But before she could say anything, Max shouted out, "Get lost! I don't want to see you until you can understand the reality of things."

Ellie stood still, stunned, for a few moments before she turned and ran away, her tears falling down her cheeks.

"S-Sir Max, she d-didn't mean that. Please don't mis—" Ella was also stunned. She didn't think Max would suddenly become angry at Ellie. However, she quickly came to her senses and tried to placate him. But Max interrupted her and waved his hand. "Don't worry about it. Go take care of her. Don't let her run too far from the group."

Hearing this, Ella heaved a sigh of relief and rushed after her daughter.

After they left, Emily looked down at him and asked in a soft voice, "What happened? What are you worried about?"

"Hm?" Max looked at her in surprise upon hearing this.

Seeing his surprised look, Emily revealed a light smile. "What? Did you think I can't see something is bothering you or else why would you suddenly get angry at her? That isn't like you. So, tell me, what's wrong?"

Hearing this, Max smiled bitterly, shook his head and closed his eyes. He was indeed worried about something, but he didn't want to tell her about it because if she knew, she would get worried, too. Drip!

But just then, a droplet landed on his face, causing him to open his eyes. Just then, another droplet landed on his face. Max's heart trembled when he realized Emily was crying and the droplets were her tears. He became flustered and quickly raised his hand to wipe her tears. "Hey, why are you crying? What happened?"

Emily grabbed his hand, not letting it reach her face and said while her tears continued to fall on his face, "Do you think if you don't tell me about it, I won't be worried? If yes, then you are wrong. Please Max, don't try to bear everything yourself. I'm your elder sister. Let me share your burden. If you don't tell me, I... I'll get angry."

Max couldn't bear seeing her cry and sighed, "Okay. I'll tell you. But first, stop crying or I won't tell you."

"Um." Hearing this, a brilliant smile blossomed on her face and she gradually stopped crying. Max wiped her tears with a gentle expression on his face and before he sighed and his expression turned solemn.

"You know how I couldn't cultivate before." He started, "Half a year ago, I got an inheritance treasure. It is the reason I could cultivate and become a three-star mage in just a few months. However, to help me two days ago, it exhausted all of its energy and had become dormant. It can no longer help me. I was relying on it to get the medi—"

Mid-speech, he suddenly paused and his expression changed because right at the moment, the last trace of white energy within his body had disappeared and a message appeared in his mind.

[Host, most of the system's divine energy was exhausted to help you and the remaining energy wasn't enough for the system to operate normally. So, the system decided to use the remaining divine energy to complete your Lust overlord's bloodline and create your mana veins, which would allow you to cultivate and sense mana like other mages.]

[Remember, the lust overload bloodline is unlike the bloodlines you know. It's a real treasure. It'll give so many surprises but remember to use it well and if possible don't use it in front of others, especially in front of those in Monarch and Supreme realm. Otherwise there will be consequences.]

[Also... the drop of life and the cultivation technique for that girl Garima are in your storage ring. The drop of life is a gift from the system. You can use it but the cultivation technique is locked and can't be used until you complete it's respective mission.]

[Now, the system will go dormant until you can help it recover its divine energy. Although the system can't help you locate where it because of insufficient energy, there are definitely places in this world where you can find it.]

[The system and I hope... you are alive and.. strong enough to dominate this... world when we... wake up. If you aren't... strong... enemies... find you...]

After going through the message, Max realized the thin stream of pink blood in his body was the lust overlord's bloodline. He then closed his eyes and tried to sense mana to see if he could really sense it and left pleasantly surprised. He could finally sense mana.

His excitement rose even more when he found a crystal bottle containing a drop of sparkling liquid and a wooden strip in his storage ring. When Emily saw him close his eyes, furrowed his brows and sigh, she thought he was worrying about losing his treasure. She lovingly caressed his cheeks and consoled, "Little Max, don't worry. So what if you can't use your treasure? People face many setbacks on their road to become stronger. Some weak willed give up and lose everything but those with strong will, they don't. They persevere, work hard and eventually, they achieve their dreams. I know you are strong. So, don't be so worried or lose hope. Treat this as a new beginning, a new start towards your dreams."