

From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft)

Chapter 451

Flame Goddess Halia stood wrapped in living fire, her body glowing as if she had emerged from a volcano. Sparks shimmered inside her pupils and twisted outward into coiling dragons of flame, each one looping around her as if the sky belonged to her alone.

Khaedor flickered beside her, drifting in and out of sight. A dark shimmer pulsed from his skin. The ground under his boots gave way, sinking into a hollowed crater as the air around him turned sharp enough to cut.

Seth, Keith and Kenneth traded a quick look.

Their faces tightened once that old fear resurfaced the same fear Halia carved into their bones years ago with a single casual motion.

Back then, she barely lifted a hand and crushed the three of them in seconds. No one wanted to imagine what she looked like when she stopped holding back. Khaedor, standing next to her, made the weight even worse. His strength had always been the type no one could measure.

If those two joined forces, even someone ranked above the Infernal Crown Transcendent would think twice.

No one knew if Leander could handle both at the same time.

"First on the International Combat Units... Khaedor, the God of Madness? Second on the board... Halia, the Flame Goddess?"

Leander kept his hands behind his back. A crooked grin tugged at his lips as if the whole scene amused him.

He remembered glancing at that ranking list once. Countless names rose and fell over the last decade, entire positions overturned. The top two never moved an inch. That was real dominance.

Out of the over twenty Transcendent Realm masters assembled here, only these two compelled him to focus on them.

Halia's elemental mastery ran so deep that the world shifted whenever she focused.

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Meanwhile, Khaedor hid his strength beneath a deceptively calm exterior. His body lacked Torrez the Raging Bull's brute ferocity, yet the internal strength lying underneath still brushed against Leander's Devourer Form. That sensation marked a genuine predator.

Together, they easily surpassed the Son of Judgment, Fergus Lynch. If the Infernal Crown Transcendent Realm had levels, Fergus was at the advanced stage. These two moved directly into the elite tier-possibly even the peak.

Khaedor kept his focus locked on Leander. "Jeff, none of us walked in here looking to throw hands with you. You keep acting like Astria is the whole world. It isn't. Your kingdom is barely a corner of what's really out there.

"You aren't even twenty, yet your cultivation already wrecked the record books. Everyone knows you have talent. Talent doesn't make you untouchable. Your current level hasn't reached the top of the Transcendent Realm. Even if you owned it, something higher still waits.

"The step above Transcendent is the King Phase."

The words rippled across the battlefield. Several individuals froze in place, and even Leander showed a flicker of surprise.

"King Phase?" he repeated. His memory flashed to scraps of ancient text he barely skimmed. There were no descriptions or explanations.

Halia caught the hint of confusion in his eyes and smirked. "You don't even know it exists. Your horizon's tiny. We clearly overestimated you."

"This relic isn't yours. We're taking it. Stop us, and you die." Her flames rose in a slow wave. "Make the smart choice. Leave while you still can."

Halia appeared irresistible, with all her features captivating, yet her voice resonated with regal authority. The commanding tone in her words surpassed what many men could produce, showcasing the presence of a genuine top-tier fighter.

Leander stood at the edge of the cliff, his expression smoothing out as he exhaled and shook his head. "I don't know what this King Phase is, nor do I care. King, emperor-these titles don't matter. Anyone who blocks my way will be crushed.

"Power is simply divided into two types: strong or weak. Everything else is just a label." He raised his chin. "Stand in my path, and I'll end you."

The last word was spoken, and a flash of blue light burst from his body. A column of azure shot directly into the clouds, causing the air to rumble. His aura tore through the pressure around Halia and Khaedor as if it wasn't there.

Their eyes flickered. Murder settled into both pairs.

Halia acted first, sweeping her to unleash a hundred-foot fire

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toward Leander. The air behind it ignited, leaving a bright red scar.

Heat hit his face hard, and he instinctively threw a punch.

His force thrust through the dragon's open jaws and shattered it.

Halia never blinked. A flick of her wrist summoned more flame.

Three dragons, each nearly two hundred feet long, twisted upward like burning tornadoes. The temperature spiked so fast the ground crackled.

Leander snapped his fingers. Three thin bursts of force shot out, slicing the air into sharp finger-swords that raced toward the dragons.

The sky popped. The dragons burst into three blazing fireballs long before reaching him.

A streak of blue tore through the flames-Leander.

He blasted forward with a sonic boom trailing behind him. In a heartbeat, he crossed more than a hundred feet and materialized in front of Halia.

Trinity Strike Technique—first form: Soulbreaker.

He threw a punch. The air tunneled around it. Even from a few feet away, the force made Halia's pupils tighten.

"Flame Shield!"

Her will flared, drawing all fire elements to her. Then, the flames erupted into two roaring waves that combined over her chest, forming a blazing shield.

Leander's fist slammed into it. Sparks flew out in a wild eruption. The shield bent inward like someone had hit a steel wall with a sledgehammer.

Halia's expression finally shifted. "What a monster. This power is unreal."

She had known he was strong after he crushed the Dragonbound Array, but that was a distant realization up close, his power felt like a freight train hitting her head-on.

Her Flame Shield came from pure elemental fire, capable of blocking attacks while burning through them. Even armor-piercing rounds

struggled to break it. However it still buckled under his punch.

Leander's grin stretched into a taunt. "Second place... and you hit like that?"

His voice lowered. "A metahuman's still just a metahuman."

Blue light rippled over his fist while the fire parted around him, unable to reach him as he punched deeper into the Flame Shield.

Pop! His knuckles shattered the barrier and went straight toward Halia's cheek.

Her eyes widened. She didn't dodge. His punch connected...

Boom! A burst of flame erupted.

Her body never flew back the way it should have. She simply came apart, breaking into scattered clusters of fire.

"Hm?" Leander's brows tightened once he realized the punch met nothing at all.

The flame clusters swirled from all directions, thickening and merging. Moments later, Halia reformed whole, untouched, and appearing nearly relaxed. The source of this content is

Everyone stiffened except Khaedor.

Leander's eyes narrowed. "A primal-element metahuman?"

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Chapter 452

"A primal-element metahuman?"

Leander stared at the swirling flames re-forming in front of him, genuine interest flashing through his eyes.

The crowd stood frozen. No one understood what they were seeing.

Leander had just thrown a full-force punch at Halia's face. That blow carried enough destructive force to crush bone, cave in a skull, or, at the very least, leave someone coughing blood.

Yet, her body never took the hit.

The moment his knuckles touched her cheek, her entire form scattered into glowing sparks. Those embers drifted for a breath, then surged back together and rebuilt her from head to toe-flawless, uninjured, and immaculate.

The sight sent chills through the spectators.

Seth's eyes widened in disbelief, and his voice shook with it. "She really is a primal-element metahuman?"

Metahumans were individuals born with abilities beyond anything ordinary people could reach, or who awakened powers in ways no one else could. Some

commanded thunder. Others shaped fire, wind, or storms. Some shifted their bodies or saw through anything in their path. Their variations felt endless.

Their entire kind fell into three major branches.

The first branch included the force-type metahuman. Evelyn the Flame Witch and Taylor the Stormcaller belonged here, individuals who manipulated fire or wind and stirred blazes or hurricanes with a thought.

The second branch contained animal-type metahumans who could transform into birds, beasts, or even ancient monsters from forgotten eras.

The third branch stood at the pinnacle of rarity. These were the ones who turned their bodies into living elements-fire, frost, lightning, storms, light, flowing water, molten rock, or drifting sand. They became the element itself, shifting into whatever shape they chose. Physical attacks passed straight through them. Nothing conventional could harm them. Those were the primal-element metahumans.

Halia had just proved she belonged to that group.

Leander's punch never connected with flesh. It met nothing, like striking the empty sky. She had dissolved into flame before his power landed and rebuilt herself without a trace.

Seth's jaw clenched as he glanced at Leander. "This is trouble."

Halia was already one of the world's most dangerous fighters. Realizing she also possessed a primal-element body pushed her into a different league entirely.

Primal-element metahumans were considered nearly immortal. Their bodies could hide within any particle of their element, surviving any impact. No matter how many times they were torn apart, they always re-formed unharmed.

They were almost impossible to injure. Their core dissolved into the element, beyond the reach of ordinary attacks. Only rare techniques or abilities could touch it -the most direct path involved cultivating Profound Force.

Profound Force allowed someone to strike through the elemental form and damage the true body. Without it, nothing worked. A primal-element metahuman could be destroyed endlessly, yet they would always rebuild themselves from their element.

Khaedor watched from the side, arms at ease and expression inscrutable. He likely knew Halia's true nature well before today. There was a reason he stood beside her.

Leander's strength shook worlds, although brute power alone couldn't suppress someone like her.

Even Khaedor would need to activate his Blood Clan mystery arts to inflict real damage on Halia. That was why those two never left the top ranks of the International Combat Units list.

A soft, sultry laugh rolled behind Leander.

"Haha..."

Halia materialized behind him, her voice dripping with confidence.

"Jeff, it doesn't matter how hard you hit. You can't touch me.

"You haven't reached the King Phase or cultivated Profound Force. Your punches won't even scratch me. You can try thousands of times. It won't change anything. This is what a primal-element metahuman truly looks like."

She lifted both hands, fire swirling around her wrists.

"Jeff, from this moment on, you're the easiest target on this mountain."

Her palms closed together, forming an intricate seal. Twin fire dragons twisted inward, weaving themselves into a flaming whip.

"Flame Lash."

The whip burst forward, carving arcs in the air. It moved like a living creature, splitting into streaks that looped around Leander from every direction.

Every crack of the whip drew in the air's oxygen, leaving a shimmering, warped sky in its wake.

Hiss!

Leander slipped through the air with sharp movements. The fiery lash grazed past his shoulders, ribcage, and spine. Burn streaks scorched his clothing, hovering an inch from his skin.

Halia's gaze sharpened. She raised both arms.

The whip spun outward, creating a massive net of flame that wrapped around Leander.

"Close."

The fiery net snapped inward. Every line glowed hot enough to melt iron. The closing trap mirrored the Dragonbound Array from earlier, yet hit harder and carried a crueller force.

Space around Leander compressed, sealing him in a blazing cage.

"Leander!" Seth snapped upright, sharing a tense look with Keith and Kenneth. The three prepared to strike Halia in unison to break the net.

Just then, a violent burst of blue light erupted inside the fiery web before they could move.

Vmmm!

A radiant sphere expanded outward, ripping the flame net apart like paper. Sparks rained down around him.

Halia's expression shifted. "He blocked my Flame Net with raw inner vitality?" Leander stepped out of the embers, his voice low and steady. "Fire tricks won't save you."

He shot forward, grabbing the tail end of her whip as Halia missed her chance to pull it away.

The flames along the whip were Halia's life flame, which had been honed for nearly a century and could

burn almost anything it held

it with his bare hand. Despite the surrounding heat hissing around him, his skin remained unharmed.

Gasps rippled across the battlefield.

"Is he... a god-level being?"

Their shock grew by the second. Every display of Leander's power dwarfed the last.

Khaedor's pupils thinned as he stared at the boy with a blend of awe and hidden bitterness. Despite appearing like a young man, he was nearing sixty. His mixed human and Blood Clan bloodline slowed his aging giving him the time to reach the Infernal Crown Transcendent Realm and dominate the

International Combat Units leaderboard.

Leander, barely nineteen, was already ranked among the top five. His body, mind, and spirit exhibited extraordinary talent.

Even Khaedor understood one truth—this young man walked a path brighter than his own.

Leander gave the whip a vicious tug. Halia lurched toward him, her body pulled off the ground.

His left hand held the flaming whip. His right arm pulled back, ready to deliver another punch.

Halia drew closer, yet her expression

stayed smug. A faint smile curled

her lips "idiot. Jeff, I told you already. You can't hurt me. Throw that punch a million times if you want. Nothing changes.

She stopped inches from him.

Leander's grin spread wide. "Just a primal-element metahuman, and you think you're untouchable? What makes you so certain I can't strike your real body?" The gleam in his eyes startled her. A violent ripple pulsed around his fist. Read complete version only at

Her breath caught.

"Crap!"

She tried to dissolve into flame. Her body shimmered as the elemental state began forming, yet Leander's punch had already fired.

Power roared off his knuckles like a ruptured dam. The shockwave thundered outward, carrying a force strong enough to rattle the mountain itself.

One punch-capable of splitting the earth.

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Chapter 453

Bam! A thunderous crack rolled across the mountains. Leander's fist tore a glowing line through the air before slamming into Halia's chest like a hammer dropped from the heavens.

Every spectator expected her body to scatter into flame again. Primal-element metahumans always dissolved the moment physical force touched them. Nothing solid was supposed to land since nothing could reach their true bodies.

The crowd held its breath, waiting for Halia to blur into sparks.

Nothing happened.

Her body didn't disperse. It plummeted as if a meteor had struck her. A raw scream burst from her throat while a streak of blood arced behind her like a crimson comet.

She crashed into the cliff with brutal force. Flames exploded outward before gathering again into her human shape.

This time, her reformed body didn't stand perfectly.

Blood trickled down her lip. Her chest caved inward, a deep fist-shaped dent crushing the curves she had moments ago. Her breath hitched, uneven and tight.

A wave of silence swept the entire peak.

Halia—the legendary Flame Goddess, a primal-element metahuman—was wounded. The scene shattered everything the crowd believed possible.

Dozens of stunned gazes snapped toward Leander. No one understood how he bypassed her elemental form.

Questions raced across their minds.

Did he possess Profound Force or a hidden technique? What kind of power touched a primal-element metahuman?

Halia wiped her mouth, staring at the blood in disbelief. "How did you hurt me?"

Leander lowered his fist as though brushing dust from his knuckles.

"Why wouldn't I?"

His voice came out flat and cutting.

"Yeah, primal-element metahumans can dissolve their bodies. Standard attacks pass straight through. That's the rule."

He stepped closer, eyes cold. "But that rule doesn't apply to me."

Flames poured toward Halia from every direction as she tried to repair the damage.

"You mastered Profound Force?" Her voice carried doubt and unease.

"No." Leander's response came instantly. "Profound Force isn't my path."

He raised his hand, palm glowing faintly. "My strength hits your kind harder than Profound Force ever could.

"There's a third force capable of striking a primal-element metahuman. Mine is called Nirvana Energy. You might know it better as Nirvana Primordial Energy."

A sharp brilliance lit his eyes, an aura rising that pressed on the world itself.

"That punch earlier was me holding back. If I wanted, your head would've vanished with the rest of your pride."

He curled two fingers at her with lazy contempt.

"Second Seat of the International Combat Units Flame Goddess Halia—you're nowhere near the level required to stop me."

Halia's beautiful features twisted. She had dominated her rank for two decades. Not a single person during that time had dared to humiliate her so openly.

Yet Leander publicly dismissed her before every elite on the mountain, marking a humiliation she'd never tasted in nearly a century.

"Jeff, are you begging for death?"

Her voice trembled with rage. Flames curled along her arms, eyes burning like an inferno ready to swallow the sky.

Leander didn't grant her a glance.

Metahumans didn't impress him.

They relied too heavily on

luck-awakening, talent accidents of

nature. They were powerful

although fragile in mindset. They didn't forge themselves through

discipline or suffering like true

martial artists did.

Halia's second-place rank came from her near-immortal body. Strip that away, and

she sat below a typical Infernal Crown Transcendent.

Leander's gaze shifted past her to the distant man-Khaedor, arms crossed, eyes fixed in place.

"Khaedor," Leander called out. "You're the one worth fighting."

The man at the top of the

International Combat Units finally rose from the ground. He stepped into the sky as if it were solid stone, his presense wering wall.

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They hovered a hundred feet apart, eyes locked, pressure shaking the air between them.

Halia snapped, "Back off, Khaedor! He's mine. I'll tear him apart, so stay out of my way."

Halia fought to resist the effects of Leander's punch and still wanted to continue, but Khaedor gave her a single look that froze her in place. "Halia, face it. You lost."

She wanted to argue, yet the deadly gleam in Khaedor's eyes silenced her. Pride and fear warred on her face, so she stayed silent as her feet touched the ground again.

Khaedor turned back to Leander. "You have spine, Jeff. You're the first to challenge me directly since I killed the former top rank." THIS CHAPTER IS UPDATE BY

He floated higher, wings of power beginning to unfurl in his aura.

"You'll also be the last." Leander cracked his neck, utterly calm. His right hand rose, and two fingers flicked toward Khaedor—a silent challenge urging him to make a

move.

"Great!" Khaedor released a harsh, furious laugh. His arrogance had earned him the title God of Madness

for decades, yet Leander's sheer boldness pushed past anything he had ever shown.

In front of the world's elites, a murderous pulse thundered through his veins. His only desire was to tear Leander apart right here on Aorinth Peaks.

Power surged from him in a wave. Blood-red energy pooled in his palm—the signature might of the Blood Clan. His eyes flooded crimson, pupils shrinking into predatory slits.

"Haah!"

A violent roar burst from his chest. Two enormous bat-like wings erupted from his back, shaping him into a mythic demon.

"Leander, you wanted this. I'll crush you with the full power of my bloodline."

His irises glowed completely red. A pulsing mass of blood essence formed in his hand before he swallowed it whole.

His body expanded a second time. The bat-like wings grew wider-stretching dozens of feet, then a hundred, still spreading.

A ripple of fear ran through the crowd. His aura multiplied, heavy enough to crush the air itself.

"It's beginning..."

The spectators whispered, tensely watching the two figures suspended above the mountain.

They understood exactly what this battle represented.

This wasn't just a duel.

This was an attempt on the throne.

If Leander won today, the entire history of the International Combat Units would be overturned.

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Chapter 454

Two titans hung in the sky, tension stretched tight as a wire.

Khaedor loomed above the valley like an ancient god, power rolling off him in waves that made the air tremble.

Leander floated opposite him, light and ungraspable as if reality barely held him.

A shriek tore across the sky.

Before either could strike, a dark shape came plummeting from above. It hit the valley floor like a warhammer. Dirt blasted outward, and the mountain base quaked violently.

As the dust settled, a massive figure emerged within a new crater. His shoulders were as wide as a fortress wall, and a fierce killing intent radiated from his eyes.

He fell several hundred feet without a bruise. He hovered above the crater as if he had no weight.

"That's Nicholas Adkins... the Bloodthorn Mercenary commander."

Recognition rippled across the watchers.

Bloodthorn Mercenaries ranked second among the four great mercenary corps, and Nicholas stood at their helm. Hundreds served under him, many of them seasoned martial arts masters.

Nicholas himself was their strongest weapon—a Transcendent body-forged with strength so deep no list could measure him. The International Combat Units list ignored mercenaries, although rumors claimed he once traded blows with Torrez, the Raging Bull, head-on.

No one ever spoke of who won, yet one fact spoke louder than any rumor. After that fight, Torrez the Raging Bull never set foot in Bloodthorn Mercenaries' territory again. That alone made it clear he had been the one defeated.

Bloodthorn Mercenaries' base was in the Sahar Wastes, so his arrival here stunned everyone.

Nicholas swept one cold look at Leander before bowing to Khaedor. "Mr. Khaedor." Shock flickered across the crowd. Rumors returned instantly—Nicholas descended from a steward of a Blood Clan count. Khaedor's bloodline came from that very house.

The whispers were true.

Khaedor's voice lowered. "Nicholas, why appear now?"

"I came to support you, Mr. Khaedor," Nicholas replied. "The master feared trouble over the relic, so he ordered me to trail you."

He lifted his arm toward Leander. "Jeff, if you want to face Mr. Khaedor, you have to get past me. Fail here, and you're not qualified to stand before him."

Khaedor stood with a monarch's bearing, pride sharp enough to cut.

"Mr. Khaedor?" Leander released a short laugh, head shaking. "Some mutt thinks it can raise its voice at me?"

His gaze sharpened, and his voice iced over. "Fine. I'll even be generous. Both of you can come at me together."

Nicholas' expression hardened. "Jeff, your arrogance disgusts me. If you crave death so badly, I'll break your undefeated legend myself."

He roared and shot forward. His fist smashed downward with the force of a falling boulder.

Wind pressure alone carved a chunk of cliff away.

Leander didn't dodge. He lifted his fist and struck.

Boom.

The valley trembled as a shockwave radiated outward, causing the ground beneath Nicholas to collapse several yards away from the impact.

Leander barely shifted, hovered in the air, and absorbed Nicholas' punch without budging.

Nicholas flipped back, boots skidding across the earth. "You're a body-forger?" The source of this content is

He arrived late and missed Leander's earlier victory over Torrez, the Raging Bull. The realization left him stunned.

Leander gave no answer. He clenched his fist, surged upward, and cut through the air.

"That level of strength... and you think you can speak on your young master's behalf?"

His gaze turned cold as he launched his punch-slow to the eye, yet blazing fast underneath. Air rippled red from friction.

Nicholas stood firm. As a body-forger, he embraced brute force. His right arm swelled with power, veins flaring, muscle doubling in size.

Crack. He punched.

Leander's fist was barely a quarter the size of his, yet their fists collided with a metallic ring.

The ground split, rocks exploded, and wind screamed.

A silhouette hurtled backward, heels streaking a long trail through the void. Nicholas finally slammed to a stop. His right arm was bent out of shape, shattered by Leander's blow.

A spark lit in Leander's eyes. "Impressive. Your path in body refinement surpasses Torrez the Raging Bull's by far."

Torrez the Raging Bull fell to a single palm. Nicholas, however, took a punch and only lost an arm. The difference drew a clear line. Nicholas' physical strength was well above Torrez's.

Judged solely on body-forging skills, Nicholas was the toughest opponent Leander had faced in years.

Something else sharpened

Leander's focus. Nicholas'

body-forging art carried an undercurrent he couldn't ignore, a

hidden layer of power tucked beneath the surface. That buried

trump card was likely the reason

Nicholas had the nerve to act as the

vanguard for Khaedor.

Nicholas staggered upright, shock flooding his face. He never imagined Leander's

physique would be this overwhelming. Even his Tiger-Demon Body-perfected over decades—could not withstand a single strike.

Khaedor's expression darkened. Nicholas' Tiger-Demon Body had been handed down from his father's bloodline.

It was only a mid-tier Blood Clan art, yet still enough to put Nicholas in the world's top tier. Against Leander, it meant nothing.

The sight compelled Nicholas to reevaluate Leander. His aura intensified, channeling all his strength inward, prepared to act instantly.

"Once more!"

His ruined arm dangled uselessly, although not a flicker of fear appeared on his face. He roared, drove his heel into the earth, and ripped a massive boulder straight out of

the ground. Dust blasted outward as he lifted it overhead with a single hand, then hurled it at Leander with murderous force.

The throw weighed tens of thousands of tons. Even an armored military carrier would have been crushed into pulp beneath it.

Leander reached out. His fingers slid into the stone, as if slicing through soft clay, and split it apart. Before the dust even settled, his hand clamped Nicholas' wrist.

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Nicholas paused for a moment, stunned. He attempted to pull back, but Leander acted first. A surge of strength surged through his arm, rendering Nicholas helpless. Leander grabbed him by the ankle and forcefully slammed him into the ground, causing the valley to shake-similar to a child smashing a toy on the floor.

Bang.

Again.

Bang.

Again.

Bang.

Then Leander twisted, stepped, and lashed his leg across Nicholas' back. The strike cracked like a whip.

Pfft... Nicholas spat blood as he blasted through a nearby hill, splitting the thirty-foot rise cleanly in half.

Leander straightened in the center of the valley and flicked his gaze toward Khaedor. "Your mutt isn't in my league. Stop wasting time, Khaedor. Join the fight."

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Chapter 455

That's insane!

That was the only comment anyone could grasp. In a single exchange, everyone finally understood why people whispered Leander's title, "Iron Sovereign," with awe.

His ranking at fifth on the International Combat Units suddenly felt like a massive understatement. Someone with power like this had every right to aim straight for the throne. Even Khaedor's long-held supremacy looked shaky.

Khaedor's expression hardened. Every tendon in his body snapped with tense power. "Jeff, looks like I need to deal with you personally."

His massive bat-like wings flared open behind him, stretching wide enough to blot out half the sky.

"Batwing Tempest!"

He roared the phrase like a battle cry. The wings beat once, and the sky ripped open. A storm exploded outward, ripping entire trees from the mountain as if they weighed nothing. A tidal surge of wind tore toward Leander like the world was being unmade.

Leander stepped onto empty air as if standing on solid ground. His arm swung through the void.

Wind bucked.

A cyclone erupted into existence behind him.

Gasps erupted across the cliffside.

The two storms collided overhead. The force rattled every boulder on the ridge. Even the Transcendent elites watching retreated quickly, unwilling to risk getting pulled in by the insane pressure.

A thunderous crack burst across the valley.

Boom! As Leander and Khaedor clashed, a mound of shattered rubble nearby burst outward. Nicholas emerged from the debris-blood-streaked, unhinged, and burning with fury.

"Jeff!"

He stomped down. The ground within a hundred feet split like shattered glass. Air began swirling around him, growing thicker and heavier with every breath he took. "Tiger-Demon Body, Demon Rise!"

His body grew larger, veins bulging like ropes. Muscles rippled and tensed beneath his skin, resembling living armor. His aura erupted with a violent shockwave. His fingers shaped into glowing tiger claws.

The true commander of Bloodthorn Mercenaries finally appeared.

"That's his real form?" Seth's voice cracked. His gaze jumped from Nicholas' monstrous transformation to Khaedor's sky-wide bat wings. His knees felt weak.

Faces around him drained pale. Few had ever seen Khaedor unleash his full Blood Clan power. Seeing both him and Nicholas in peak form in the same battle was enough to chill the bones.

"Blood Clan transformation... Another body-forging arts?" Leander narrowed his eyes. None of this surprised him. Khaedor sat at the pinnacle of the Infernal Crown Transcendent Realm. Nicholas had the ability to match Fergus, the Son of Judgment.

Once both released their hidden techniques, their combat power spiked dramatically.

Khaedor fought Leander head-on without losing ground. Nicholas seized that moment, soared upward, and unleashed a punch from over a hundred feet away. The force hit the ground before he did, shredding stone into dust.

Leander's expression didn't flinch. He brought his right fist back and launched it forward, meeting the blow at its strongest point.

A horrifying screech of air tore outward. Nicholas' power slammed in from every direction, concentrated into a single brutal point.

The instant Leander touched it, he slid back three paces.

Shock rippled through the onlookers. They had never seen Leander forced backward.

Nicholas pressed the advantage. His roar cracked across the valley. A streak of shadow whipped sideways-the shape of Khaedor diving in. His wing-blade carved toward Leander's neck like a guillotine.

Leander raised his arm.

Clang! A sharp metallic ring echoed as the blade-hand hit his forearm. A crushing pressure threw him off balance. His feet scraped across the air as he steadied himself.

Nicholas and Khaedor moved flawlessly together. Nicholas hammered relentlessly from the front while Khaedor sliced with lethal precision at the flank. Every blow got more vicious than the last.

"You two cowards... really? Two-on-one?"

Seth, Keith and Kenneth exploded with outrage.

"Khaedor! You're supposed to be the top of the International Combat Units! Two-on-one? Don't you feel ashamed?" Seth shouted.

Khaedor's only response was a cold snort. Born of the Blood Clan and human blood, he was feared worldwide, but he had no regard for pride or honor. His only concern was the win-clean, simple, and direct.

He knew exactly how dangerous Leander was. A solo fight would drag out and drain too much strength. Fighting alongside Nicholas made things far easier. He could conserve energy for the upcoming relic fight.

High above, Leander kept being pushed back. Step by step, blow after blow-no chance to counter.

Keith and Kenneth tensed, ready to leap in-until a blazing wall of fire burst across their path.

"You two insects want to interrupt this? Know your limits."

Halia's icy stare froze them in place.

Truth hit them hard-they couldn't even survive the shockwaves from this battle.

Up in the air, Leander retreated dozens of paces. On his fiftieth step, he abruptly locked his footing on the void behind him.

Boom! A concussion, like an explosion, ripped outward.

Leander raised his right hand, blue energy swirling around his knuckles. He struck forward, but this time, he didn't budge an inch.

On the other hand, Nicholas flew backward like a missile shot from a cannon. He scraped a long, glowing trail through the air before crashing to a stop far away. "What... What is this?" Nicholas stared at his own fist, horrified.

A moment ago, Leander looked overwhelmed. Now, the same punch felt like colliding with a sleeping ancient beast.

Leander had been holding back earlier.

Khaedor's pupils constricted as blood-red light flickered across his wings. The edges honed to resemble legendary blades crafted by gods. Each flap tore through the air like ripping fabric.

He dove.

A scarlet flash sliced toward Leander's throat. The bat-like wings streaked in front of Leander-yet he shot out a palm and caught the wing mid-rush.

Sparks burst.

The crowd froze. Even Khaedor's mind blanked for a beat.

Those wings were terrifying-among the sharpest weapons on earth. They could cut through steel, tear through armored plates like paper, and even split a tank in two. With enough speed, he might be able to cut a fighter jet from the sky.

Yet, Leander caught those wings barehanded and didn't show the slightest sign of injury.

Khaedor's gaze shot up and met Leander's cold eyes.

His heart stuttered.

"Top of the International Combat Units... and that's all you've got?" Leander's grip tightened. Five deep dents dug into the supposedly unbreakable wing.

"Argh!" Khaedor's scream tore

through the sky. His bat wings weren't merely limbs-they were bonded to his blood and soul after years of rigorous training. Seeing them crumple and decay under Leander's touch caused pain to surge through every nerve.

Snapping back to his senses, blood flared across his palm and hardened into a crimson blade. He thrust it straight for Leander's chest.

The blow hit with the ring of colliding metal. Leander's clothes split, but his skin didn't even dent.

Khaedor's thoughts fractured. What physique is this? A god-level being?

Impossible...

Leander's expression darkened to ice. A sliver of primal fear stabbed into Khaedor's

chest.

Leander shifted position, with one arm raised and the other lowered.

The wing tore.

Blood mist sprayed across the sky. Khaedor shrieked as half his treasured wing ripped free like torn paper.

Gasps rippled across the mountains. No one could breathe. Official source is

Earlier, Leander had looked pressured. Now Nicholas was blown away in one punch, and Khaedor's wing lay ruined in Leander's grip.

Bam. Leander didn't pause. His fist drew tight and punched straight through Khaedor's chest. The terror frozen on Khaedor's face didn't even have time to fade.

A jet of flame burst from the gaping

wound. It spread in a violent rush,

racing across his entire body. In the blink of an eye, Khaedor turned into a roaring fireball suspended in

midair. Mis tortured cred in?

tore

through the valley, and everyone watching sucked in a sharp breath.

The strike carried the savage annihilation of Dragonfire—Leander's first fist technique outside of his Trinity Strike Technique.

Infernal Dragonfire Fist.

Flames burst from Khaedor's open wound, soaring into the sky. In midair, the flames morphed into a fierce fire dragon that swooped down, attacking and consuming Khaedor in one savage move.

The sky burned crimson.

Nicholas and the surrounding powerhouses recoiled, their faces pale with disbelief.

Khaedor-the unrivaled number one of the International Combat Units-gone? Just like that?

Sethr, Keith, and Kenneth froze, breath catching in their throats.

They believed Leander could win... but after a brutal fight, not with one overwhelming strike. No one expected such a clean, merciless ending.

This was the God of Madness, Khaedor-yet he died in seconds.

Nicholas faltered, fear gripping his spine-only to realize Leander was standing next to him. "Your master's dead. Good dog, go join him."

Before Nicholas could react, Leander's fingers clamped his skull.

Pressure built.

Nicholas' iron-like skull cracked like brittle pottery. The sound of shattering bone swept through the valley, turning stomachs.

The mighty commander of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries collapsed moments later, head crushed beyond recognition.

Two kills-two top-five rankers. Leander's expression didn't flicker. His gaze slid over the horrified elites as his voice rolled cold across the peaks. "Who else wants to try?"

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Chapter 456

Khaedor's chest was blown straight through by Leander's punch, his body erupting into flames and disintegrating on the spot.

The moment Leander's gaze swept across the group, everyone recoiled instinctively and fell into utter silence.

"What kind of punch was that?"

Halia stood frozen, her eyes darting restlessly.

No one understood Khaedor's abilities better than she did. With her current cultivation, defeating him was nothing more than a fantasy she never dared entertain.

That was why Khaedor consistently held first place, while she could only remain second.

As a half-Blood Clan hybrid, Khaedor carried the inherited might of the Blood Clan. Once he awakened his vampiric body, his wings turned into hardened, blade-like weapons. But even with that monstrous strength, he failed to lay a scratch on Leander.

Leander tore those wings apart with nothing but his hands—then ended Khaedor with a single strike.

She simply couldn't comprehend how Leander achieved such overwhelming force. That punch carried a blazing, obliterating fire. And she, a fire-type metahuman, was leagues beneath that level.

Leander's cold gaze swept over them again. No one dared respond. Even a few experts in the Transcendent Realm staggered backward, unable to steady their breathing.

More than twenty people were present, over a dozen ranked on the International Combat Units list, yet every one of them stood rigid, breath caught in their throats.

Khaedor was brutally strong, and Nicholas-body-tempering commander of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries—was also a powerhouse. Together, their teamwork alone was terrifying. But Leander eliminated both of them.

None of them had the courage left to defy someone capable of such power.

A relic certainly held value, but staying alive mattered more.

"He just suppressed the entire rankings by himself?"

Seth inhaled sharply, completely shaken.

The Armored Duo exchanged a wary glance and lowered their proud heads without hesitation.

Leander had once clashed with the Shadow Division, and although the positive and negative chiefs eventually smoothed the conflict over, plenty of elites still held a grudge. They believed Leander was too conceited. The twins had been part of that group.

But now, all of that resentment had to be swallowed. In this world, power overshadowed everything. Leander's strength was enough to disregard the Shadow Division entirely. Even if he acted distant and untouchable, none of them had the right to criticize him.

That was what true power meant—power dictated the rules.

With just one glance, Leander pressured everyone present into submission. Then, he shifted his attention toward the Flame Goddess, Halia. "Halia, are you still planning to fight me?"

Her expression froze. After a tense moment, she forced a stiff, strained smile.

"You must be joking, Sovereign Ashcroft. With the way you killed Khaedor in one blow, even if we all joined forces, who among us would dare challenge you?"

Her words sounded like flattery, but they were simply the truth.

Leander had blown Khaedor apart. He had now claimed the top spot on the International Combat Units list. No one here could match him.

"You know when to bow to the wind."

Leander let out a faint smirk before turning toward Seth.

"I know Mr. Gardner. Since I've already taken action today, I'll extend Shadow Division a favor as well."

His voice deepened, and a chilling killing intent seeped outward.

"From this moment forward, none of you are allowed to run rampant in Astria.

"If anyone causes trouble here—and I encounter you I'll kill you on the spot. No exceptions. Understand?"

Faces tightened throughout the crowd. Leander was effectively placing limits on every ranked powerhouse present, and for people accustomed to standing above the masses, his command felt suffocating. Yet no one was willing to accept it.

But Leander's strength left them no room to argue. No one dared speak. They could only stand rigidly as the atmosphere grew heavier and darker.

"Well said, Iron Sovereign, Jeff Ashcroft!"

A booming laugh echoed from the distance, slicing through the tense air.

Everyone's heads snapped upward. Three streaks of black light were speeding toward them from the far horizon.

"What in the world..."

Halia, the highest-ranked among them and the one most familiar with global powerhouses, froze as recognition dawned on her. Shock ripped through her voice as she exclaimed, "Those are the three Chief Arbitrators from the Arbitration Office?"

Several veterans listed on the International Combat Units roster recognized the trio as well. Their faces drained of color.

Leander's expression remained composed. He tilted his head slightly, narrowing his gaze.

A sharp hiss cut through the air.

Three streaks of radiance tore across the sky, descending onto the summit almost instantly. Three figures—two men and a woman—hovered above the void, surveying the valley below.

The man at the center clasped his hands behind his back.

He ignored the crowd entirely, fixing his stare solely on Leander.

"Jeff Ashcroft, I've heard your name for ages. Today, we finally met."

These ranked elites were accustomed to commanding entire regions. Yet the three newcomers didn't bother acknowledging them, dismissing them like insignificant beasts.

To them, only Leander mattered.

Leander slipped one hand into his pocket, his expression frosty. "The Arbitration Office really doesn't know when to quit, huh?"

From their very first encounter, he had never forgotten that lingering aura of Doomlight around them. Whenever someone from the Arbitration Office appeared, he sensed it immediately.

The central man spread his hands with an easy smile.

"Jeff, you've been thorn in our side more than once. Looks like you're without skill. Didn't expect even the half-Blood Clan Khaedor to fall to you."

"Now I can believe you killed Fergus."

Leander's voice held no warmth, no anger-only a steady calm. "So, you're here to settle that score?"

The man stood tall between sky and earth, letting out a low laugh.

"No. Our real reason for coming is the relic in the Aorinth Peaks. Running into you here was a surprise. Saves us the trouble of heading to the Central State of Astria to find you."

His gaze sharpened, killing intent flashing across his eyes.

"In the last century-aside from the Dragon Emperor sixty years ago-no one in Astria has ever qualified for our must-kill list. You're the first in six decades. And forcing three three Chier This chapter is updated by

Arbitrators to act personally you

should feel honored."

A freezing pressure swept out like a snowstorm. One by one, the Transcendent

Realm experts blanched, their hearts trembling.

Even Seth and the other two from the Shadow Division inhaled sharply, stunned.

Chief Arbitrators-from bottom to top, the hierarchy of the Arbitration Office was well defined—Arbitrators, Elite Arbitrators, Chief Arbitrators—and above all, the Supreme

Arbiter.

Anyone with true knowledge of the global martial world understood this.

Chief Arbitrators stood as the strongest power beneath the sixteen Supreme Arbiters.

Rumor held that there were twenty Chief Arbitrators in total, ranked first through twentieth by brute strength. Each one alone could overwhelm everyone on the International Combat Units list. Even great nations hesitated before them.

Three decades ago, the superpower Agylae deployed a thousand-strong heavy regiment deep into a desert to encircle four Chief Arbitrators. All but one soldier died. The four Chief

Arbitrators wiped them out

completely. When that story surfaced, the world erupted.

And now, three Chief Arbitrators had arrived here together. This formation could extinguish a small nation without effort.

Halia staggered at first, but then a wild delight sparked across her face.

Leander had overpowered everyone earlier, intent on keeping the relic for himself—a humiliation she couldn't stomach. But now, with three chief Arbitrators on the scene—and considering Leander's feud with the Arbitration Office—they would undoubtedly aim straight for his life.

If chaos broke out, she might seize her chance.

With that thought, she stared at Leander, her gaze turning frigid, a hint of schadenfreude glinting within.

"Jeff, looks like today might be the day you die."

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Chapter 457

"All three Chief Arbitrators came just for him?"

Seth's lips quivered, and every trace of color drained from his face.

The Chief Arbitrators formed the second tier of authority within the Arbitration Office, ranking right beneath the Sixteen Supreme Arbiters. For three of them to appear together—this was a force capable of obliterating a thousand-strong unit from Agylae.

Even the Dragon Emperor of Astria, before he ever reached his peak, had once been hunted by six Chief Arbitrators and driven into miserable retreat like a fleeing stray.

And now three were here. How can Leander possibly withstand this?

The trio descended. Leander slipped one hand into his pocket and lifted his chin slightly, calm as deep, unmoving water.

He had endured worse. Once, the Flame Witch, Evelyn, had led six Arbitrators to encircle him and attempt to finish him off. Compared to that, today's lineup was even more intimidating.

"The Arbitration Office has tried to kill me again and again, yet I'm still here.

"And you three think you'll succeed?"

His tone was flat, with a faint glimmer of amusement flickering in his eyes.

From the moment he stepped onto the Aorinth Peaks, he had already sensed three terrifying presences lurking within the eastern forests. Since they didn't act, he hadn't bothered, either.

He just didn't expect them to walk right up to him.

"Jeff, you really don't understand how the Arbitration Office works."

Reefus, standing in front, let out a cold sneer.

"The Supreme Arbiters once intended to draw you into our ranks. They wanted to mold you into the next Supreme Arbiter. That's the only reason we held back. That's why you're still alive.

"But now, the Sixteen Supreme Arbiters are done waiting.

"Today is the day you fall."

As his voice faded, a cyclone burst out of him. Violent force slammed downward, cracking the ground open. The other two Chief Arbitrators narrowed their eyes, their palms tightening-stone walls around them exploded into rubble.

Three Chief Arbitrators unleashed their power at once, killing intent surging like a rising storm.

"Jeff, you're impressive-I won't deny that. In a one-on-one fight, I wouldn't be your opponent. But you've made far too many enemies."

Halia bared her teeth in a cold grin, mockery curling her lips.

She'd clashed with Leander once and experienced that terrifying, bottomless

strength firsthand. She knew she couldn't face him alone. Even at full strength, she wouldn't bet on winning.

But with three Chief Arbitrators here, it felt like heaven itself was stepping in.

If they managed to kill Leander, she would finally have the chance to claim a large share of the relic hidden within the Aorinth Peaks.

The crowd fell instantly silent. Not a soul dared to breathe loudly. Once the three Chief Arbitrators appeared, no one else mattered anymore. All they could do was stare at Leander in stunned disbelief.

A battle of this level was far beyond anything they could meddle in.

"Is that so?"

Leander's smile was faint, battle spirit slowly igniting behind his eyes. For original chapters go to find~novel~net

"Then what are you waiting for?"

He opened his hands slightly, a wicked smirk tugging at his mouth.

"Jeff, you've slaughtered our elites and even defeated the Son of Judgment. Today, I'll witness that fabled martial path of yours myself."

The man beside Reefus-his golden hair whipping in the wind, eyes gleaming— stepped into the air. With a single stride, he crossed more than a hundred feet. Radiance burst from his palm, condensing into a spear of pure light.

This man was Jeframon Draxton. Once a servant of the Westeria church, he later awakened the power of light-the ability to forge spears of gathered radiance. In the Westeria martial world, they called him the "Saintblade Spear."

He gripped the luminous weapon as if it were a long spear, then hurled it straight from the sky.

A sharp hiss slashed through the air.

The spear streaked across the heavens with a deafening roar, a torrent of holy light tearing downward toward Leander.

Even before it reached its target, the violent gale it stirred crushed downward. Several nearby Transcendent Realm martial masters stumbled back uncontrollably under the pressure.

Seth and the Armored Duo felt their hearts drop. Before them, Leander remained unmoving, the tip of the spear aimed directly at his crown.

"Tch."

Leander sneered, revealing his white teeth, and struck with the speed of lightning.
Clang!

Steel met flesh—or maybe something stronger. The sharp ring of metal echoed through the hall.

Everyone spun toward the sound, stunned. The beam of holy light recoiled, collapsing back into a spear that slammed into Jefframon's grip.

Yet Leander didn't flinch. A single speck of holy light lingered on his knuckles, fading slowly.

That power is overwhelming!

Jefframon's hands shook around the spear, a surge of awe involuntarily escaping him.

Reefus and the blonde woman who had stood still until now narrowed their eyes, tension hardening their expressions. They had only heard rumors of Leander's strength—but now after seeing him strike back the Saintblade Spear in a single hit, there was no room for doubt.

"Do you think parlor tricks like that can kill me?"

Leander flicked the spear aside, his lips curving into a faint, cold smile as his gaze locked on Jefframon.

Jefframon's eyes narrowed, his body tensing on instinct—but before he could react, a jade-white fist collided with his face.

He crossed his forearms to block, but Leander's punch slammed against him with brutal force.

"D*mn it!"

Jefframon crashed to the floor, his feet gouging two trenches half a foot deep as he skidded over a hundred feet.

One strike from Leander had sent a Chief Arbitrator flying. The hall seemed to reel from the impact.

"Jeff, today is your death day!"

The blonde woman moved at last.

Her name was Orianna. Like

Jeframmon, she had trained in the Westeria Church, mastering countless occult arts under the previous high priest. When the church fell silent, she joined the

Arbitration Office and rose to Chief

Arbitrator purely through her

strength.

Cold fury sparked in Orianna's eyes. She lifted a pale hand and shaped it into a radiant seal.

"Skybreaker Seal!"

She thrust both palms forward. The sigil swelled instantly, like a mountain poised to crush Leander.

Leander's expression remained flat. A single finger tapped the space beneath the seal.

A deep hum vibrated through the hall.

A wave pulsed from his fingertip. The seal trembled, then, three inches above his head, exploded into a cascade of light.

"So this is all a Chief Arbitrator can do?"

Leander shattered the seal and slammed his foot to the ground. In a blur, he surged forward, his fist aimed straight at Orianna.

Orianna sensed it and pivoted backward, narrowly evading.

She moved fast. Leander moved faster. In mere seconds, he closed the distance, his fist rocketing toward her chest.

The punch was simple, yet it carried the sheer force of his physical might.

She hadn't anticipated such speed. By the time she reacted, it was too late to block completely she drew her innate vitality inward, forming three layers of shimmering light to cushion the blow. '

Leander's fist struck. Her energy shields shredded like paper.

Three layers gone-reduced to one. A heartbeat later, even the final shield crumbled before the onlookers' eyes.

His fist drove through, poised to strike Orianna—but her gaze turned icy, a trace of mockery flickering in her eyes.

"What?"

Leander's eyes narrowed. Just as his fist was about to land, a ring of sun-and-moon light quietly formed before her.

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Chapter 458

Leander's fist collided with the halo of light, but it was like striking a mass of cotton -his power vanished the moment it made contact.

Murder flared in Orianna's eyes. Seizing the chance, she formed a hand seal and thrust her palm forward. A razor-edged sigil of light shot out, stamping squarely onto Leander's chest.

He was hurled backward, flying dozens of feet through the air. When he finally came to a stop, a clear oval mark burned into his chest was visible. A ring of fabric had been completely incinerated.

Even though his body was strong enough to crush two Transcendent Realm experts in seconds, a pale white line was now etched into his chest. That was the true measure of Orianna's strike.

Hovering in the air, he patted his chest and lifted his gaze toward Reefus. The aura around Reefus flickered as he pinched a hand seal, his halo blazing overhead. His eyes burned into Leander like molten coals.

"Jeff, do you really think this is a one-on-one fight? You're facing the three of us." Reefus sneered, shifting his hand seals. The circular halo above his head detached and transformed into a half-moon blade of light.

Swish!

He swung downward with one hand. Leander's eyes narrowed.

The enormous half-moon air blade cut through the air, ignoring resistance as if it tunneled through space itself, and struck straight toward Leander's chest.

Scrape!

The blade materialized instantly as Reefus flicked his hand. It came so fast that by the time Leander sensed it, it was already slashing across him. Follow current novels on

Leander was blasted backward dozens of feet. Each step he took in midair sent out a shockwave of force. After seven steps, he managed to stabilize.

His shirt split down the center, revealing pale, resilient skin. Across his chest was a fresh white line the result of Reefus' cut.

"Mindweave blade?"

Leander's eyes narrowed in genuine surprise. The strike had arrived before Reefus even finished forming the thought. It had emerged from nowhere, too fast to counter.

Anyone capable of that had to be a spiritual strength powerhouse-stronger, sharper, more focused than Fergus, the Son of Judgment. Reefus' command over spiritual strength was flawless, bordering on unnatural.

Leander could sense it. Reefus had reached the Origin Realm—and not just any point in it. He was at the absolute peak. One more step, and he would surpass Origin Realm into something even more terrifying.

At that level, the gap between them was still significant. Spiritually, Leander was two tiers below Reefus.

"Jeff, how does that feel?"

Reefus radiated pure confidence.

Born in Azhara, heir to ancient rites, Reefus forged his path through ritual and law. He had climbed into the Transcendent Realm through sheer cultivation. His spiritual

strength and precision were unmatched—a one-in-a-million prodigy.

With the aid of the Sixteen Supreme Arbiters, he shed his old self and rebuilt, glimpsing the King Phase using spiritual strength alone. He was, simply put, a monster.

Reefus mocked Leander—but secretly, he was stunned. Every thought he had could shape lethal strikes. One thought, one kill.

He had expected his previous attack to incapacitate Leander. Instead, it had left only a white line across his chest. Leander remained composed, his aura deep and steady.

"If we're going to kill him, stop holding back. Give it everything you've got."

Jeframmon leapt into the air, still furious after being blasted back by Leander's punch.

He roared, jabbing his Saintblade Spear into the void.

Crack!

A thick bolt of lightning tore through the night sky, striking directly at Leander.

Jeframmon wasn't just a Martial Practitioner—he was a metahuman, born to command lightning. He could summon it within a radius, a power comparable to the House of Exorcists' thunder arts.

The bolt hit Leander squarely. His clothes burst apart, exposing his upper body as wild arcs of current danced over his skin. The strike hurled him more than thirty feet back.

Before he could recover, a figure ghosted in behind him—Orianna.

Her sultry gaze sharpened into predatory focus. Two blazing shockwaves erupted from her eyes.

Leander spun to punch, but the twin blasts struck with even greater force, driving him backward through the air. Explosions thundered continuously, as though half the sky had ignited.

Hum!

The air quivered. As the tremors from the shockwaves faded, a massive, mountain-sized palm print fell from the sky. Simultaneously, eight more devastating strikes hammered down.

Boom!

A sonic explosion shredded the clouds. A small mushroom cloud rose, its rippling shockwaves crashing down on the peaks below. The entire Aorinth Peaks trembled, as if the world itself were collapsing.

"So that's a Chief Arbitrator of the Arbitration Office?"

Faces drained of color. Eyes lifted skyward. Every onlooker felt their bones shake with fear.

Leander had always been a nightmare in motion, his pressure so suffocating that looking up was impossible Now, confronted with three Chief Arbitrators acting in perfect unison, he couldn't even land a single strike.

Amid the stunned silence, a figure plummeted from the clouds like a falling star-Leander.

Thud!

The mountainside gave way, forming a crater dozens of feet wide. Leander disappeared into it.

Seth and the Armored Duo froze, hands trembling, paralyzed by sheer terror.

The three Chief Arbitrators had crushed every shred of pride the Shadow Division once held. They ground it into dust.

When the power gap is this extreme, titles and rank become meaningless. Even a king would vanish at their whim.

Halia's lips curved in a triumphant smile.

"Jeff's undeniably strong," she said. "But when this many top-tier experts strike at once, how can he possibly survive?"

The Chief Arbitrators spun halos,

whipped up flames, struck with the Saintblade Spear, and filled the battlefield with suffocating spiritual pressure. Leander could only endure the onslaught. Even defending was a struggle. In this setup, he stood no chance.

"No wonder the Dragon Emperor of Astria had to hide for decades when the Arbitration Office boxed him in. Their depth and power are endless."

Masters across the field exhaled heavily, fear of the world's strongest dark syndicate settling deep into their bones.

"Seems the so-called Undefeated of Astria is all hype and no substance.

"He's nowhere near the Dragon Emperor's level."

High above, Jeframon slung the Saintblade Spear over his back and glowered downward.

"Hmph! With the three of us together, who could possibly stand a chance?"

Reefus chuckled coldly, every word dripping with pride.

Orianna folded her arms, her expression icy. Even she felt the kill order on Leander bordered on excessive.

While the three exchanged words, the cry of a sword split the sky. Aorinth Peaks quaked from its roots.

A blade of blue light erupted from the wasteland, shooting skyward like it aimed to cleave the world in two!

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Chapter 459

A streak of blue light erupted from the ruins, making all three of them jump in alarm.

Jeframon froze, eyes narrowing. "What's happening?"

Before he could react, another blast rippled across the ground. The pit that Leander had smashed open suddenly erupted, and a figure shot upward, piercing the sky. Two eyes glimmered with searing light—it was Leander.

His skin remained flawless, like polished jade. The white mark on his chest had nearly disappeared. Not a single wound marred his body.

"How is that even possible?"

The three Chief Arbitrators paled, shaken to their very core.

Every strike they had just landed had hit Leander directly—yet he remained completely unharmed.

"Well, your coordination wasn't bad. Timing was tight, aim was precise," Leander said, tilting his head and wagging a finger.

"Shame your power still wasn't enough."

Seeing Leander entirely unscathed, Jeframon's disbelief hardened into rage. He stepped forward, the light of his spear blazing in his eyes as he prepared another thrust.

Reefus' gaze flared in response, and a blade of force began forming before him.

Swoosh!

A massive half-moon blade of force coalesced, arcing toward Leander's chest.

Crack!

A hand shot out, seizing the edge of the blade.

Crack!

Leander's jade-clear hand clenched. Five fingers closed, and the half-moon blade shattered effortlessly.

"What?"

Reefus' expression twisted in disbelief. Before, Leander hadn't even reacted to his strikes, yet now he had destroyed one with a single hand.

As shock washed over him, Leander's cold gaze swept over the three of them.

"Earlier, I faced all three of you at once. Now it's your turn to take one strike from me."

His words barely fell before he flicked his palm.

A gleam of sword light cut through the air, sending a spray of blood into the night. Reefus stiffened, staring at his flank in disbelief.

Next to him, Jeframon's right arm was severed clean at the shoulder, the blood erupting like a fountain. The cut was impossibly smooth—his arm had been obliterated in an instant.

"Oh no!"

Reefus and Orianna recoiled in alarm as sword force surged toward them. They leapt back at full speed.

A blade of blue light slashed diagonally through the night. It moved with no thunderous roar, appearing almost casual-but it cut like it could sever anything. Even the clouds split apart. Space itself seemed to rend.

A small ridge, tens of feet across, was sliced through in a single stroke.

"This..."

Reefus and Orianna exchanged a glance, hearts pounding. Had they been even a fraction slower, they would have lost an arm or leg, their combat effectiveness crippled.

Swoosh!

Snow sprayed into the night. Jeframon stared at his right shoulder, still unable to process it fully. In a single instant, his arm was gone. When Leander had unleashed that strike, Jeframon had felt a lethal chill and twisted away instinctively-otherwise, the blade would have claimed his head.

"How's that possible?"

Observers from the International Combat Units went pale, Halia most of all.

Moments ago, Leander had been buried under the combined assault of the three Chief Arbitrators,

seemingly powerless to retaliation et

Now, with a single casual move, he had severed Jeframon's arm Leander had struck her the same way earlier, she might have faced the same fate-or died instantly.

"Dodging my Origin Realm is something to brag about," Leander said, a faint smile on his lips. This was one of his hidden trump cards the Originblade.

The Originblade harnessed divine perception to wield the sword. It unleashed an invisible sword intent capable of killing without leaving a trace. Even Infernal Crown Transcendents could be cut down three or four at a time.

Its power depended on spiritual strength. With Leander's current spiritual strength, he could only use it once or twice. That was why he employed it so rarely.

With the three Chief Arbitrators joining forces today, Leander realized that beyond relying on his Devourer Form, he needed a devastating move to prove his true strength and send a clear warning to the Arbitration Office.

Once the Originblade emerged, bloodshed was inevitable. His intention had been to kill Jeframmon with that blade. Yet, Jeframmon had once served as a messenger for the Church. The instant Leander struck,

Jeframmon sensed it and evaded the

fatal edge.

Otherwise, that blade would have crushed him—or ended his life outright.

Shraaaa!

In that instant, powerful gusts tore

through the darkness. Figures

appeared across the hills

surrounding Aorinth Peaks, one after another. They

were top Martial

Practitioners, some from within the borders, others from beyond. Even the weakest among them had

reached Martial Sovereign level. Shockwaves had drawn them all here.

Seeing Leander in the sky alongside the three Chief Arbitrators, their expressions hardened simultaneously.

"Those... those are the three Chief Arbitrators of the Arbitration Office. And that guy... Is that Jeff Ashcroft?"

Shock filled their gaze. Few had glimpsed Leander's true face, but judging from his age and aura, they could tell who he really was.

"Unbelievable—the three Chief Arbitrators all at once, and they're targeting Jeff?"

Whispers spread quickly through the crowd.

"Three Chief Arbitrators, countless powerhouses from the International Combat Units list, and the unbeatable Iron Sovereign from Astria. This might be the largest clash since the Arbitration Office laid siege to the Dragon Emperor."

These masters, normally rulers in their own realms, paused in awe, their eyes reflecting respect.

Win or lose, witnessing this fight was an invaluable lesson. A battle at this scale could illuminate the path for anyone watching.

"Jeff, you severed my arm. I'll drag you to hell with me!"

Snapping from his daze, Jeframon's eyes blazed with fury. He gripped his light spear with one hand, transforming it into a long, deadly weapon.

Just as he lunged, a thunderous voice cut through the air.

"Jeframon, retreat!"

Jeframon glanced back. Reefus' eyes glowed with a divine, icy light.

The halo above Reefus' head split into two-one a blazing sun, the other a bright moon. The Sun-and-Moon Halo hovered high, casting its sacred light across half the sky.

The moment Reefus advanced, Jeframon halted and, alongside Orianna, was forced to retreat, eyes sharp with caution. This strike was no trivial threat; even they had to respect its range.

"Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel!"

Reefus' gaze turned glacial. He lifted his palm and pressed downward.

The Sun-and-Moon Halo compressed into a colossal disk, sweeping sideways before slamming down toward Leander, blotting out the sky with its radiance. The massive disk enveloped him entirely. Leander's expression remained unreadable. As it descended, he thrust his right hand upward. New novel chapters are published on

Smack!

His palm drove through the divine light, hitting the disk squarely from beneath.

The glowing disk, dozens of feet across, ground to a halt in midair. Leander held it firmly; it could not drop another inch.

"An attack like this is amateur level, at best."

Leander caught the disk effortlessly and smirked, his voice dripping with disdain.

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Leander snatched the glowing disc with a single hand. Stardust flared in his eyes as the sky above twisted and churned.

Reefus' eyes narrowed sharply. His Sun-and-Moon Halo, born of immense providence, fused with the Church's faith, and honed by the rhythm of day, night, and stars, radiated power.

He had never expected Leander to confront it directly.

Shock flickered across his features but vanished almost instantly. A cold smile curved his lips.

"Jeff, don't get arrogant. Do you really think the Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel is just this?"

The words left his mouth as his hands traced a new sigil.

"Detonate!"

The Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel had two layers of offense-Suppress first, then Explode.

Its core brimmed with concentrated holy light. When unleashed, the force would annihilate everything in its path. Even an Infernal Crown Transcendent at peak strength would be torn apart if hit head-on. Anyone nearby-even those above Infernal Crown Transcendent-would face a severe risk of death.

Leander's palm remained pressed against the disc. If the Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel detonated now, he would be engulfed in the blast instantly.

"What?"

Reefus muttered the command "Detonate," yet the Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel remained inert. Confusion sharpened his gaze. Somehow, he had lost control.

"I told you your attacks aren't even worth the effort."

A faint smile curved Leander's lips as he thrust forward, his power surging through him.

The massive disc whipped backward, accelerating faster than before, hurtling toward the three Chief Arbitrators.

"What?"

All three paled. No one had anticipated the Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel-cast by Reefus, a master of top-tier spiritual strength-being seized and turned against them. The source of this content is

"Hmph!"

Jeftamon, wielding his light spear, snorted coldly. He jabbed repeatedly, thirty-six thrusts in a single second. Each spear strike, a lethal burst of force, erupted in sparks as it hammered the Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel's surface.

The Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel merely trembled and surged forward again, barely affected.

Orianna readied herself to strike in tandem, preparing to block it. But Reefus intercepted Leander's next move.

"This isn't good-retreat!"

He barked, lunging backward. The others reacted a heartbeat later, attempting to withdraw but they were too slow.

"Detonate."

Leander breathed the command and pulled his palm back. Before the three could escape, the Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel shattered.

Boom!

A tidal wave of holy light roared across the sky, radiating outward. The shockwave ripped through the air, shaking everything nearby.

The three Chief Arbitrators were caught in its force. Each groaned, blasted back dozens of yards.

The holy light rolled across the heavens for a full minute before gradually fading. When they looked up again, their expressions had changed.

All three-beings beyond Infernal Crown Transcendent—had blood at the corners of their mouths. Jeframon, the eldest and closest to the explosion, was drenched in red along one side. He had taken the brunt of the blast.

On the ground, astonished gasps spread like wildfire. Moments ago, many considered Leander on the defensive. Now disbelief shone in every eye.

Halia, the Flame Goddess, stared unblinkingly at Leander, her eyes aflame. A chill of fear crept over her.

"With a single strike, he wounds all three Chief Arbitrators. Just how strong is he?"

A shiver coursed through her body. Her expression shifted once more.

"Don't tell me he hasn't even gone all out yet?"

If the crowd was shocked, Reefus and his companions were even more unsettled.

Among Jeframon, Reefus, and

Orianna, their ranks and statuses

were on equal footing. None would

normally yield to the others in everyday life. Yet all of them understood the reality. In an actual fight, Reefus was the strongest of the three.

Within the Arbitration Office's twenty-four Chief Arbitrators, he held a solid place in the middle tier.

His Sacred Sun-Moon Wheel was incomprehensibly fearsome. Yet Leander caught it effortlessly, spun it around, and inflicted injuries on aft three in an instant. Nothing about this aligned with their expectations.

"This is his true power."

Jeframon, the light spear, was the youngest among them—only eighty years old- and already a Chief Arbitrator.

He had always considered himself a prodigy, unmatched across the world. Only now did he finally glimpse what a true freak of nature looked like.

"The three Chief Arbitrators together are hardly impressive."

Leander shook his head. He had long been curious about the Arbitration Office's second-tier combat strength, and seeing it now left him underwhelmed.

Their cultivation barely surpassed Fergus by a few notches. They had broken past Infernal Crown Transcendent, yes, but they hadn't stepped into the next realm and therefore posed no real threat to him.

The only reason he had allowed himself to be restrained earlier was to study the techniques of the three Chief Arbitrators. There was no way they could have ever cornered him otherwise.

"Jeff, you're insufferably arrogant!"

Orianna felt the wound burning within her, and fury flared in her eyes. In nearly a century, she had never been injured—until this moment.

She pressed her palms together. A radiant sphere of holy light blossomed between them.

"Sacred Radiance Echo Wave!"

The massive pillar of holy light condensed between her hands before sweeping sideways, firing straight at Leander.

"Thunderstrike Fist!"

Jefframon, the most battered of the three, let out a roar. His muscles bulged, and his clothes shredded, revealing a torso of coiled steel.

Even with one arm gone, his aura split the sky, screaming of blood and battle. He stepped forward. Lightning danced across his fist as he punched through the air, thunder arging wildly around him. The forGE of his strike surged forward, the air itself vibrating with raw power.

Even the King of Thunder-ranked eighth among the International Combat Units—seemed like a child in comparison. A thunder dragon tore across the sky.

"That's all you've got?"

Leander's lip curled with contempt. He reached out with his left hand and caught the holy pillar mid-flight.

Simultaneously, his right fist slammed forward. Solid Primordial Energy detonated. The punch tore through the lightning-wrapped attack and surged toward the distant horizon.

"Urgh!"

Jeframón spat blood as his organs were shredded, his defensive power obliterated in a single strike.

Orianna's lips bled as well—the holy pillar she had unleashed was reduced to fragments in Leander's grip.

"Watch out!"

Reefus' voice barked from afar. Orianna blinked, confused, turning her head-only to find Leander, who had been a hundred yards away just moments ago, now at her side.

"You're first."

Leander's eyes were ice-cold. His palm flattened into a blade and stabbed directly for her heart.

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