

Chapter 2161

Training is Over

The elites of Sky Palace, the Dragon, the Destroyed, the Buddha, and the Demon were still waiting outside of Metal World. Two months had elapsed by now, and they had yet to see any of their Marquises return. As each new day passed without any sign of their students, their moods became darker and darker. They were finally beginning to settle on the painful acceptance that their people might never come back.

“Some... something is coming out of Metal World...” murmured a Dragon that had been keenly watching Metal World.

As he spoke, everyone else began to react, as well. The elites that were waiting outside of the planet inched closer, staring intently at the magnetic storms that shrouded the surface of Metal World.

Someone emerged from the clouds. One... two... and then there were more. The dots emerging from the clouds continued to grow until they resolved into familiar faces.

“Dragon Eight! It’s Dragon Eight!” a Dragon King screamed.

The elites of the other races reacted the same way when their people emerged from the storm.

But as the last of them came through the clouds, the Sky Palace elders looked more ecstatic than ever, while a gradual glumness crept into the hearts of the others.

This was because there were more Sky Palace students than the students of all the other races combined. The Sky Palace team was entirely intact, but the same couldn’t be said of the others. The other groups were in a sorry state, and even the survivors had sustained grievous injuries.

Han Sen took Yuya with him to debrief the Sky Palace elders on what had transpired. The elders were delighted to see one hundred students all accounted for, only a little worse for wear. One elder was so exuberantly happy with the results, he said, “Good! Well done, you guys. There is no need for you to say anything more. You should go home and take a well-earned rest.”

Yes.” Han Sen, Yuya, and the others were ready to leave alongside the elders.

But suddenly, they found themselves surrounded on all sides by the Dragon, the Destroyed, the Buddha, and the Demon. They positioned themselves threateningly around the Sky Palace group, clearly not intending to let them leave.

“What is this?” The leader of the Sky Palace elites, Green Crane Elder, looked at them darkly. The Sky Palace members prepared to fight.

A King of the Destroyed looked at Han Sen and all the others and said angrily, "All these races entered Metal World, and they were obliterated. But you haven't lost a single soul. Have you performed a trick to harm our Marquises?"

It was understandable why the Destroyed King was so angry. Every race except the Destroyed had a few Marquises return. They had lost their entire team. They were confused and angry, and they desperately wanted to know more about what had transpired on Metal World.

The other races weren't filled with the same rage as the Destroyed, but they had still lost a great many people. They were still feeling that loss, and they didn't want Han Sen and the others to leave so casually.

With everyone there to stop Sky Palace from leaving, this was the perfect opportunity to find out what had happened. Once the Sky made it back to their home, negotiating with them would become much more difficult.

So, right then and there, all the elites were going to demand some answers. If this was going to happen, it had to happen now.

Green Crane Elder chuckled after hearing the Destroyed King. "Your people are weak. How is the demise of your people our business?"

The Destroyed King laughed grimly and asked, "Are you saying all these races are not as strong as you? Even if that were true, there is no way all our own died of mere circumstance, whereas not a single one of yours was brought grievous harm. If you do not explain the reasons for this, we Destroyed—and the others—will not be allowing you to walk away from here."

They were obviously hoping for the Dragon to support them. The Destroyed couldn't stop Green Crane Elder on their own.

"Explanation? Sky Palace doesn't owe an explanation to anyone for anything," Green Crane Elder grunted.

He had already instructed Han Sen and the others not to speak because he had suspected something like this might happen. Green Crane Elder actually thought the same thing that the other elites did; the Sky Palace Marquises must have done something to the other teams. Otherwise, how could they have returned without losing a single member, while the other teams were in such disarray?

Destroyed King bared his teeth and growled, "Don't use the influence of Sky Palace to scare us. The Sky are strong, yes, but none of us here are weak. If you do not give me an explanation, none of you will be permitted to leave."

"Mister Green Crane, why do you not clarify this situation before you leave?" one of the Buddha Kings asked tonelessly.

The Dragon King spoke as well. "If the Sky Palace students weren't responsible for any of this, what harm can there be in staying for a little while and providing us with an explanation?"

Green Crane Elder frowned, and he started to say something. But before he could speak, Dragon Eight, Kahn, and the others that had still been making their way up from Metal World arrived. They all moved to their respective Kings and spoke quietly with them.

Aside from the Destroyed, when the other races heard of what happened, their expressions grew even darker.

Moments ago, they all had their weapons raised at Sky Palace, but now, their hostility had turned to the Destroyed.

“Destroyed, it looks like you all are the ones who need to explaining yourselves.” A Dragon King looked at the Destroyed with icy eyes.

The other races were giving them severely unfriendly looks. The Destroyed were confused, as they suddenly had no idea what was going on.

Green Crane Elder asked Han Sen and Yuya to explain what had happened. After he heard it all, he was left in shock.

His mouth hung wide. He was not shocked that the Destroyed had betrayed and ambushed the other races, but he was shocked to hear that Han Sen had fought off all those xenogeneics alone and saved everyone in the process.

Every Marquise that had gone there was supposed to be an elite, especially the likes of Dragon Eight, Dragon Nine, and Kahn. Despite their impressive powers, they were unable to fend off the xenogeneics. Han Sen, on the other hand, had beaten those same xenogeneics by himself. It was a very scary thing to think about.

“Invincible” was the perfect term for someone like Han Sen.

Although the Dragon and the others couldn’t believe Han Sen was that strong, there were many Marquises there to verify the story. Their own people had no reason to exaggerate Han Sen’s power in the tale, so they had no choice but to believe the story.

After this, Han Sen was being talked about everywhere. Whoever heard the story knew now that Sky Palace was the home of two very prestigious individuals. One was Lone Bamboo, and the other was Han Sen.

Because the deified Metal Beast still lived on the planet, everyone gave up on the idea of claiming Metal World for themselves. And as for how they all planned on dealing with the Destroyed, Han Sen did not know.

Because Han Sen brought all of the Sky Palace members back alive, he was rewarded by Sky Palace. But none of that actually mattered to Han Sen. The deal between Yisha and Sky Palace was for Han Sen to reach Marquise status. Now that Han Sen was a Marquise, his studies with them were over. He now had to return to Narrow Moon.

After all, he was not a true heir of Sky Palace. Sky Palace could not offer the resources he needed to get him up to Duke.

Chapter 2162 Ocean Monumen

Before Han Sen went back to Narrow Moon, he had some things to wrap up in Sky Palace. Half a month after his returning from Metal World, Han Sen finished all his outstanding business issues and went to meet with the Sky Palace leader.

“Go. Leave your name upon the ocean monument. Wherever you go, remember you have Sky Palace to call a home,” said the Sky Palace leader.

The ocean monument was very large, so it had room for many names.

Sky Palace had many famous members that were recorded there. When their practice ended in Sky Palace, they were permitted to leave their names upon the ocean monument. That way, people would forever know that they had been members of Sky Palace, and they had lived in that amazing place.

Yisha had left her name on the ocean monument, and now it was time for Han Sen to add his. This was always the last act a person would perform as a student of Sky Palace.

When Han Sen went to the ocean monument, many Sky also went to watch. The people of Sky Palace had a lot of mixed emotions upon seeing Han Sen journey to the monument to leave his name behind.

Han Sen was a very smart and unique person. Sky Palace was home to many geniuses, but he was the only one that could equal Lone Bamboo. Not everyone had that level of honor or talent.

A lot of people thought it was regrettable that Han Sen was so good. He had so much more difficulty gaining rank than others did, and everyone could see that.

With his difficulty in leveling up, it was hard to say if he would ever reach King class. It would be a shame if he never made it that far.

Others, however, found that thought pleasant. They were happy that Han Sen had great difficulty when it came to leveling up, and they hoped that becoming a Duke took him as long as possible.

The ocean monument was a floating island that hung amidst the clouds of Sky Palace. The entire island was a single mountain. Standing ten thousand meters tall, the black mountain was an intimidating sight. It hung in the air like a sword perforating the sky.

The mountain was a piece of history, as its entire surface was scrawled with a great many markings. People had left their names, swordmarks, carvings, and even paintings on its rocky slopes.

Sky Palace did not restrict what a departing student could leave behind on the monument. Before they left, they could draw or leave anything they wished as a lasting testament to their legacy in Sky Palace. It was something for people to remember them by.

But leaving behind a name on the ocean monument was a very hard thing to do.

The mountain's name came from the material it was made from: ocean stone. Like a vast ocean that hid a little of everything within its depths, ocean stone could absorb the properties of many elements. Using power upon an ocean stone didn't have much effect, because the stone quickly grew a natural resistance to whatever power was used against it. Leaving their name behind would be a headache for an ordinary Marquise.

Many travelers had left swordmarks on the mountain's surface because they lacked the power to leave their whole name upon it. So, a mark would be left instead of their name.

There were many elites that were able to leave their entire name upon the ocean stone, of course. Some of the greatest were even able to carve a poem into the stone.

There were some even greater exceptions, too. The peak of the mountain was once as sharp as a needle, but four meters of the peak had been sliced off. It was Yisha who had done that, when the time came for her own departure. It was proof she had been a student of Sky Palace, at one point in time.

That part of the stone was later brought to Narrow Moon by Yisha herself. On Planet Blade, she placed the thick stump of mountain carefully in her garden. She called it "my little ocean mountain."

Han Sen observed the ocean monument before him, and he thought he should bring a souvenir home for himself, since Yisha had done the same.

"Should I take the peak back with me?" Han Sen stroked his jaw as he eyed the peak.

Yisha had already cut off the sharpest point of the peak. The base of her cut was now a flat top that was around eight meters wide. With the toughness of the ocean stone, cutting it would be a difficult task.

When Yisha left, she left as a Duke. But right now, Han Sen was only a Marquise. He was very weak compared to Yisha, and even if he used Six Break Skies, he'd only be able to remove a little.

The thought crossed his mind that taking more would make him look bad. He was there to leave behind a memory. He was there to give, and not to steal something like a thief. Han Sen thought of himself as a civilized man, so he wasn't going to do something so crude.

But also, he felt as if it would be wrong to leave without really using his talents.

Even if he was unable to remove the peak like Yisha had, he thought he should at least return with a small stone. Ocean stones were very expensive, and they made for sturdy construction materials in high-end houses.

The rooms that were built from ocean stone could not be penetrated by a thief. Even a King class burglar would also need to exert all their strength to open one. And surely they could be used in other ways as

well. A training room and punching bag made from ocean stone would be absolutely perfect for him, he figured.

Han Sen's mind circled the idea of a training room again and again. With some memory foam, it would be perfect. When he needed to train geno arts or practice with his friends, he would not have to be afraid of destroying his base.

"It is just a shame I'm only a lowly Marquise. I'm too weak. If I was a King, I could cut the mountain in half and take it back with me. Sky Palace has a lot of resources, and even this mountain is just a monument. I'm sure they'd be okay with me taking half of it. But it is a shame I am too weak for that. I'll probably only end up with a piece large enough to replace one of the tiles on my bathroom floor," Han Sen thought.

"Whatever. I guess I'll just have to take one piece as a souvenir. It's better than nothing, I suppose." Han Sen went on to think, "And even if I do only end up getting a piece, I should at least try and get as much as I am able to. I only have one chance at this, after all."

Han Sen fell deep into thought, and his eyes suddenly squinted. The black pupils of his eyes became purple, before segmenting into four. Four different petals manifested, blooming to cover his irises.

Han Sen was looking at the ocean mountain, wondering where it would be best for him to strike.

The Sky Palace leader watched Han Sen, and as he did, his throat constricted. When Yisha left, she had stared at the mountain with the same intensity that Han Sen was currently using.

"Fortunately... fortunately he is going as a Marquise. If he left as a Duke like Yisha, I am afraid a big chunk of the ocean mountain would be gone. This way it will only be a small piece, so that's okay... It'll be fine..." the Sky Palace leader reassured himself.

Chapter 2163 The Secret of the Ocean Stones

Han Sen looked at the ocean mountain with his right eye. Under the effects of the Purple Eye Butterfly beast soul, the history of the ocean mountain played across his right eye like a movie.

Deified beast souls were truly wondrous. It was impossible to fully imagine what using one was like if you never had. In the flashback Han Sen was watching, he saw a ten-thousand-meter-tall chunk of rock forming from a smaller rock. The stone was divided into skin-like layers, which were peeled away one by one.

Han Sen did not know much about geography, but he knew that stones were not usually formed that way. But the Purple Eye Butterfly beast soul could not have been giving him incorrect information. Whatever the eye showed him was the truth.

"Weird. Are ocean stones not really stones? Are they actually plants, perhaps?" Han Sen wondered. But he didn't think that could be right, either; they looked nothing like any plants that Han Sen had ever

seen. Ocean stones were obviously rock, and if they were alive, then they had to be some kind of living stone.

Han Sen's mind flicked back to the theory of living stones that Left Crazy had given him a long time ago, but he thought the situation he was dealing with right now was different.

Because ocean stones took forever to form, it took a long time for the video to play all the way back to the stone's origin.

In the center of the ocean stone, there was a very, very small stone bug that looked rather like a silkworm. That stone bug was living inside a sea of lava as if it was a calm ocean. Its body rolled slowly through the lava until it decided to emerge.

The lava on its body slowly hardened to become a shell of stone. Then, that stony shell would mix with the discharge of the bug's body. Slowly, over time, the stone began to transform. It became black and shiny like a piece of black jade.

When the stone was completely black, the stone bug leaped back into the lava, then rolled and swam through it again.

The stone bug kept repeating this process over and over, as more and more stone began to build atop it. As time passed, the rock grew bigger and bigger.

The body was initially only the size of a finger, and after a great many years, it became a big stone.

The stone shell eventually became too heavy for the stone bug to move by itself. It didn't have the strength to climb out of the lava, and its body just sank inside it.

As time passed, the seas of lava kept creating stone layers over it. The stone bug didn't stop releasing its substance, mixing with every new layer of stone it was crusted in. And after billions of years went by, it became an ocean stone the size of a mountain.

The whole flashback shocked Han Sen. He couldn't have imagined a little life like that could literally make mountains. It shone a new light of appreciation upon the miracle of life. Life really was truly amazing.

This discovery also made Han Sen a lot more curious. He did not know what the creature was, but that stone bug had the power to turn molten lava into an ocean stone.

"I wonder if that bug is still living inside the ocean stone. If it is living, I wonder what it eats to survive?" Han Sen thought to himself.

Han Sen had no way of determining this, though. The mountain was too thick, and he couldn't sense a life force in the center of the mountain.

The chunk of ocean stone would be flawless. It wouldn't have stress-cracks like an ordinary mountain.

Even if the outside was cracked, though, the creature inside wouldn't care. Unless an attacker was stronger than the ocean stone, they wouldn't be able to cut it open.

Luckily, the analysis provided by the Purple Eye Butterfly had given Han Sen an abundance of useful information.

While Han Sen watched the flashback that showed the creation of the stone, he noticed something rather interesting.

Although the stone that the little stone bug created looked flawless, Han Sen noticed a small hole approximately where the forehead of the stone bug should have been. The hole was so small that Han Sen barely noticed it.

Han Sen ran the flashback in reverse and found a small pore on the stone bug's forehead.

"Do stone bugs need to breathe? If so, what is it breathing in? Oxygen or something, like a normal creature?" Han Sen thought.

He didn't understand, but he was pretty sure that no matter how many layers were added to the stone, that little hole would run through every one of them.

But through all the ages the mountain had existed, no one else had noticed that microscopic hole.

If Han Sen hadn't used his Purple Eye Butterfly to look into the past, even with his Dongxuan Aura, he wouldn't have paid any attention to the hole even if he did manage to spot it.

But now that Han Sen had found it, he wanted to know more. He thought about it, and then he walked towards the ocean mountain.

"Finally, he's moving. I wonder what Han Sen is going to leave upon the ocean monument. Just his name, I wonder?"

"I don't think he will leave behind just his name. For someone like him, leaving his name would be practically lazy. Perhaps he will leave behind a poem or a drawing. Something like that would be more fitting of his identity."

"Yeah, but what sort of poem or drawing? Have you forgotten that Han Sen uses weapons? I think he is going to leave behind a knifemark. Think about it. If Teacher Han Sen left behind a deep knifemark with the sensations of his skills, then we could study it, and our students might become better at knifeskills. Wouldn't that be a nice thing?"

"You are right. But if that is the case, then leaving behind a swordmind might be even better."

Thousand Feather Crane, the Yun sisters, and First Day Buddha watched Han Sen silently approach the ocean mountain.

"What will Han Sen leave behind?" Yun Suyi asked under her breath.

She knew nothing would ever happen between her and Han Sen, but seeing Han Sen leaving, she still felt profoundly upset.

“Han Sen has never seemed to seek fame. He will probably just leave his name or a simple knifemark behind,” Thousand Feather Crane said.

“That is possible. Han Sen is good at everything, so why is he always so withdrawn and lonely?” Yun Sushang said while nodding.

As everyone discussed this matter, Han Sen used his red cloud to head to the top of the mountain. Not long after, he reached its peak.

The move surprised a lot of Sky Palace’s elders because when Yisha left, she had done the exact same thing.

Chapter 2164 Knife Spikes the Ocean

“He isn’t going to copy Knife Queen and remove a part of the peak for himself, is he?” asked the black-masked woman. She stood next to the Sky Palace leader, her head tilted slightly to the side.

“Hm. I bet both of them will do the same thing,” the Sky Palace leader grumbled, thinking that was exactly what Han Sen was going to do.

The masked woman laughed and said, “Han Sen is strong, but he has only just become a Marquise. Knife Queen was a Duke when she left, so his attempt will be considerably weaker. And even Knife Queen was only able to cut off a small part of the peak. Now that the peak is seven or eight meters thick, even if Han Sen strikes with all of his strength, he will only be able to knock off a small chunk of the stone. Don’t worry so much.”

“Sky Palace has much of this resource. Even if I gave him as much as he could take, how much would that really be? This is like an ant taking a swing at a tree. Let him,” the Sky Palace leader asserted confidently.

The Sky Palace leader couldn’t do anything to stop Han Sen from taking whatever he wished to, because it was a tradition for departing students to leave their name on the ocean mountain or take a chunk of the ocean stone as a souvenir. Han Sen wasn’t the only student who sought to do such a thing.

And Sky Palace had no shortage of ocean stones, anyway. If they did not have so much of the resource, they wouldn’t have used one as their ocean monument.

And most students, even the best of elites, could only take the tiny bits of stone that crumbled from their carvings on the wall. Yisha was the only one who had ever managed to slice off the entire peak. No one else had ever been able to do as she had.

Everyone was now looking at Han Sen, as Han Sen remained standing on his red cloud before the peak. He looked down on the mountaintop, but he didn’t step down onto it.

Han Sen used his Dongxuan Aura, and the ocean stone became a sequence structure in the eye of his mind. He found that small hole.

“It’s here.” Han Sen’s heart jumped. He landed atop the peak and brought out his Ghost Teeth Knife.

Han Sen smiled. “Since taking a small piece of the ocean stone would be pointless, let’s see if the bug within is still alive.”

Han Sen was interested in learning more about the creature that had made the ocean stone, so he had given up on the idea of cutting the ocean stone itself. He drew his Ghost Teeth Knife and channeled power into its tip.

Bao’er was still sitting atop Han Sen’s shoulder, and she observed his knife curiously. Then, she looked at the ocean stone. She seemed to understand something.

But no one else understood what Han Sen intended to do when he drew his knife like that.

“Is Teacher Han going to carve some words into the mountain’s peak? The peak is good, yes, but no one will be able to see it up there.”

“It cannot simply be writing, surely. People leave words on the wall, but they never do it on the flat surface up top. If he writes his name up there, anyone ventures up top will end up stepping on his name. Han Sen is so smart, so I’m sure he wouldn’t be that stupid.”[Read more chapter on vipnovel.com](#)

“If he isn’t going to write something, then what is the point going up there?”

Everyone was confused, unable to guess what Han Sen was planning. Even the masked woman next to the Sky Palace leader frowned. “What is he doing? If he wants to cut the ocean stone, that isn’t good a position to do it from. The angle is all wrong for cutting.”

The Sky Palace leader frowned as he looked at Han Sen. Something seemed amiss. Han Sen was just a Marquise, so there was no way he could make a cut all the way down into the stone from that angle.

Yun Suyi and the others looked at Han Sen with curiosity. They didn’t know what he was going to do, either.

Han Sen gripped his Ghost Teeth Knife tighter and tighter.

Han Sen had learned to gather up power from the Dragon, and he had honed his ability to make very small knife silks. So, he prepared to fire them. He directed the knife silks to shoot down into that incredibly small hole. If that stone bug was still alive, it’d react if the knife silks came into contact with it.

Of course, Han Sen did not plan on killing it. He was just trying to get a sense of where the stone bug was. If the silks touched the bug, it was sure to move. It wouldn’t be killed. Han Sen was confident in his control of the knife silks.

But the ocean mountain was ten thousand meters tall. Even if the stone bug was dead in the center, it would be thousands of meters away. Not just any Marquise could send a knife silk that far.

Han Sen was skilled with both Moon and Yin Yang Blast. If he hadn't been, sending it that far would have been impossible.

But Han Sen wasn't extremely confident, so he sent all his focus into his work. He threw Ghost Teeth Knife into the ocean stone to leave his mark. That was to be his memory.

Everyone watched as Han Sen stood atop the peak, both of his hands gripping Ghost Teeth Knife tightly. The knife was pointed down, and a strange black and purple knifelight was glowing across its blade. It was like there was a demon roaring from the knife.

Han Sen's power was raging through him. He used all his strength, channeling everything he had into his hands as the tip of the knife rammed down into the small hole.

Katcha!

Power surged down, and Ghost Teeth Knife slid into the stone, sinking up to the hilt.

Han Sen kneeled there, with his hands still gripping the handle. He maintained his position and did not pull out. He was still.

Everyone was shocked. The knife remained handle deep in the stone. A normal Marquise would have no chance of stabbing a knife into that stone. Even getting the knife a few inches deep would have been impossible.

That knife was fiercely strong, but given Han Sen's reputation, it was still less than what the observers had expected of him. The Sky Palace students thought Han Sen would do something impressive with the knife in his hand. They thought he would draw or write something, but Han Sen did not move.

Normal people couldn't see what was actually happening, though. Han Sen's strike sent the knife silks down into the hole, and they were traveling deep into the mountain now.

This was a unique technique, and making the silks smaller than that hole was a very demanding task.

As the knife silks continued down into the hole, he knew he couldn't risk allowing them to touch the stone. If that happened, the power would come to an immediate standstill.

Directing the silks flawlessly down thousands of meters of narrow tube was something very few in the entire universe could do.

Plus, the hole had formed naturally, not cut with a laser. It wasn't perfectly straight. If the knife silks touched the crooks in the hole, it'd be game over. Without Han Sen's ability to sense things and his amazing control on the silks, he'd never have been able to send them where he wanted to.

2165 Knife Cuts Ocean Mountain

Han Sen continued to grip the handle of the knife as he knelt, motionless. He was frozen; controlling the knife silk took every ounce of his concentration.

If he did not focus on the knife silks, they would hit the mountain instead of traveling the thousands of meters he needed them to.

Han Sen's refusal to move made people rather confused, though. The Sky Palace leader eventually seemed to notice something, and his eyes went a little wide. "What is that kid doing?"

Many of the Sky Palace students wanted to know the same thing. They fervently discussed his behavior between themselves.

This cannot be over, surely. He only left one mark?"

"I thought this would be exciting, but he just left behind a single mark. What profound meaning will that have? Why didn't he choose to draw something instead?"

"Yeah! I've been waiting for this for so long!"

All the students were disappointed. After all, the ocean mountain was a way for departing students to show off their power. The students thought they would see something truly remarkable, but it appeared to be over after a single hit.

Katcha!

As the Sky Palace students continued to talk with each other, a crisp noise sounded from that mountain. It was as if a stone had cracked.

Everyone immediately went quiet. They looked towards the ocean mountain, where they saw Han Sen in that same position. He was kneeling and holding the knife handle, and he didn't appear to have moved at all.

The ocean mountain seemed to be fine, too, which rather disappointed the students. They had initially believed the noise to be the sound of Han Sen's knife moving.

Katcha!

Another noise came, and again it sounded like stone being broken. This time, everyone heard the sound, and they were able to tell that it was coming from the point Han Sen had plunged his knife into. Everyone looked over there.

But most of the observers didn't have good enough eyesight. Han Sen was a great distance away, so it was difficult for them to discern much.

But the Sky Palace leader, the masked woman, and Yun Changkong saw there were two small cracks near where the mountain and the handle of the blade were now connected.

That crack extended from the point in which the knife had been driven through the stone. It was as thin as a single strand of hair, and it couldn't have been more than ten centimeters long. It wasn't particularly eye-catching, but its presence made their faces grow pale.

In a jade city, Yu Shanxin suddenly stood up from feeding his dog Old Wang. He walked over to the city's tower, and from its top, he stared at the ocean mountain's peak strangely.

On Dream Island, the Dream Beast had been sleeping. But now, from the bushes, he opened his dreamy eyes and looked over to ocean mountain's peak, as well.

"What is it? Why is there the sound of a rock cracking?"

"I think Han Sen must have cracked a little of the rock around him. That should be expected, given that this is Han Sen. Of course he can crack the ocean stone with his level of power."

Katcha! Katcha!

As everyone resumed their discussion, the breaking noise returned. It grew louder and louder each time it was heard, and the frequency of the booms increased. It made everyone stop breathing. They all looked towards the peak, keenly curious about whatever was happening.

Katcha! Katcha!

That breaking noise was getting louder and louder. Some of the students with strong eyesight could now see the crack that extended from his knife. It was spreading.

"It is no wonder; this is Teacher Han. He has very strong Teeth powers. He can even break ocean stones."

"Yes, that is a powerful ability. I knew Han Sen wouldn't just do one simple strike. He is going to leave a visible crack across the mountain."

"It is such an incredible ripping power. There will surely be a Teeth knifemind left behind, and we can go see it when Han Sen is done. The people that practice with knives are certainly in luck."

Katcha!

The breaking noises were getting stronger, and it was as if the mountain was being repeatedly rocked by thunder. The noises were so loud that they made people's ears hurt, but it was more of a shock to their hearts than their ears.

Everyone stared at the peak of ocean mountain in awe. From where Han Sen had inserted his Ghost Teeth Knife, the crack had spread ten meters down either side of the mountain, dividing it in two.

The scariest thing was that the crack was now extending all the way down the mountain, accelerating as it went. Even Han Sen was sliding down with it.

Katcha!

With a sound like cannons going off, the giant mountain was split in half. The crack had been devastating.

Everyone was frozen by what they saw. The sight of Han Sen hanging in the air, still clutching his Ghost Teeth Knife, was mesmerizing. The giant mountain was cut in half beneath his knife, while he slid down effortlessly with it.

The Sky Palace leader, the masked woman, and all the elders were frozen. They stared blankly as the ocean mountain crumbled.

“Ho... ho... holy shit... Are my eyes working correctly? Han Sen cut down ocean mountain...” A student thought his eyes were going to pop out of their sockets. It was a struggle to even speak.

“I must be sleeping. This has to be a dream! This could never happen to ocean mountain.”

“I must be dreaming... I must be dreaming... Old Wu, slap me... Wake me up...”

POW!

“Ouch! You really f*cking hit me!”

All of the elders came forward, racing to the sides of the broken mountain. They used their scary powers to grab hold of the mountain that was now in free fall.

Ocean mountain had always floated in the air because it was perfectly balanced. Now that it had been cut in half, it had lost that balance. And so, it slipped and fell.

The elders reached out with their powers to grab the mountain, but because of the qualities of ocean stone, they couldn't get a good grip on it.

The crippled mountain continued falling with a crescendo of noise, and there was little that the Kings could do to stop it. There was no way they could hold even half of it.

Han Sen did not expect one strike would have such dramatic effects. He swore he had only sent his knife silks down that little hole. When they came into contact with the bug, Han Sen realized the bug was still alive, and so he pulled back. He had no clue this was going to transpire.

Boom!

The two ocean mountains fell, and as they toppled through the clouds, the clouds rose and spilled everywhere like a tsunami. The rush of clouds washed over many floating islands. Animals were scattering everywhere in fear, while items were blown about everywhere. Sky Palace had been swiftly thrust into chaos.

Fortunately, the clouds were not harmful. They tossed around light items, but they didn't injure anyone.

“This... is cheating...” Many students awoke from their daze, and they all stared at Han Sen in bewilderment.

The Sky Palace leader actually looked furious. “That b*stard... Toss him out of Sky Palace! I never want to see him ever again...”

2166 Returning to Narrow-Moon

Han Sen sat on a ship departing Sky Palace, bound for Narrow Moon. He hadn't been allowed to take half of the ocean mountain with him, but the Sky Palace leader permitted him to keep a bunch of ocean stones.

Han Sen would usually take a public passenger ship, but on this day, he was riding a cargo ship. Loading it with ocean stones took a while, and the people of Sky Palace who passed by couldn't help but stare at the bounty.

Students usually took items and gear with them when they left Sky Palace, but they had never before seen a student embark on a cargo ship fully stocked with ocean stones.

The stones weren't close to half of the mountain Han Sen had sundered, but it was more than enough masonry to build an entirely new base. Because of that, Han Sen was quite satisfied.

The story of Han Sen destroying the ocean mountain quickly spread to each and every corner of Sky Palace. The Sky Palace leader and the elders quickly came to investigate what had happened, and they supposedly learned that the ocean mountain already had a crack. The incredible results weren't because of Han Sen's raw strength. Instead, Han Sen had taken advantage of an existing fault.

Even so, the tale of Han Sen sundering the entirety of ocean mountain was a popular one. It was a frequently discussed topic, and it would soon become a legend.

Many years later, when students departed Sky Palace, they would leave their names or a mark of their presence by scrawling them onto half of a floating mountain. It was easy to imagine them asking what had happened to make it like so.

The Sky Palace people would sound very proud when answering, telling the newbies how someone had once managed to cut the ocean mountain in half.

Han Sen and that half of an ocean mountain became something for the history books of Sky Palace.

Han Sen knew ocean mountain hadn't been previously cracked, though. It split open because of the stone bug residing within.

But when Han Sen was breaking the ocean mountain, the situation had been too messy for him to get a look at it, and as a result, he hadn't actually seen the stone bug with his own eyes. And although he tried to use his Dongxuan Aura to find where it had gotten to, it had vanished. It was nowhere to be found.

“I wonder what the level of that strange creature was. Perhaps it was deified?” As Han Sen thought about this, Bao’er suddenly summoned her little gourd.

Han Sen thought that was odd. Bao’er rarely summoned her gourd willy-nilly, and he hadn’t a clue why she had summoned it now, all of a sudden.

Amidst Han Sen’s confusion, Bao’er shook her gourd. She slapped its bottom, and when she did, something fell out of it and landed on the table.

Han Sen saw it, and when he did, he was both surprised and happy. A stone bug that looked an awful lot like a silkworm flopped out of the gourd. It was the one that had resided inside ocean mountain.

“No wonder I was unable to see the stone bug. Bao’er had taken it.” Han Sen watched Bao’er curiously poke the body of the stone bug.

The stone bug raised its body, but it did not have any limbs, and Bao’er’s fingers kept it constantly moving. It couldn’t resist the push of her fingers.

That was unexpected.

That stone bug had produced the stone mountain, but despite that, it did not seem to be all that powerful. By the looks of things, it did not even have the strength of a Baron.

“Planet Eclipse has an active volcano. Maybe I can throw this thing into it, and see if it can generate more ocean stones,” Han Sen thought to himself.

Bao’er was still playing with the stone bug. While she did, Han Sen went to find more information on ocean stones and the stone bugs that produced them.

The biggest place that stored ocean stones was Purgatory Rock Sea. It was a strange xenogeneic space that was composed almost entirely of lava. Sometimes islands would appear in the midst of the lava, and those islands were composed of ocean stones.

But Purgatory Rock Sea had many fire xenogeneics to contend with, too. Many of the xenogeneics were King class, and some were even deified. Going there in pursuit of ocean stones was a dangerous job. The death rate for those that went there was very high.

Ordinary people would only be able to find bits of pre-shattered ocean stones. Only deified elites could bring back a whole mountain’s worth, like the one Sky Palace had possessed.

Han Sen was able to learn much about the ocean stones, but surprisingly, he was unable to learn anything about the stone bugs. It seemed as if no one knew how ocean stones were created. No one had seen one of those stone bugs before.

Han Sen had a look at the ocean stone bug. After Bao’er annoyed it for a while, it stopped moving and played dead. It realized that the more it resisted, the happier Bao’er would become.

After it decided to stop moving, Bao’er’s interest in the creature quickly disappeared.

Han Sen observed the stone bug closely. Its body was like grey rock. It felt warm to the touch, and that was it.

Its life force was not very strong, so Han Sen was unsure how it had managed to break the ocean mountain as it had.

Han Sen let Bao'er put the stone bug back in the gourd. He was going to experiment more with it once he visited the volcano. If he took the critter to an environment like that, something might happen.

The ship was guarded by a number of Sky Palace's elites. Han Sen was delivered back to Narrow Moon safely, with the ship packed to the gills with ocean stones.

On a primal planet covered with many cruel creatures, a man stood holding a knife. All the creatures that went by him were killed. No bones were left after their death, as the knife consumed them whole.

That knife was strange. It was made from bone and shaped like some creature's spine. The knife was serrated like teeth, and it was around two meters long. But when the man swung it, it killed any cruel creature that it came against, and all of the beast's flesh would be absorbed into that bone knife. The blade appeared more and more bloody as the creatures died.

The man that gripped that bone knife looked a little strange, as well. His head had three faces like a Destroyed. But he only had one pair of arms, and those three faces looked very different from a Destroyed.

The average Destroyed had one bird head in the center, with the faces of a man and woman on either side. But this man's three faces all looked like men. The center face was emotionless. The left one looked like a ghost, and the right one looked handsome.

The man kept killing, his expressions never looking bored or annoyed. Countless lives were harvested by his bone knife, but his emotions did not change once.

While the man was killing, his beautiful face looked up to the sky. A ship breached the atmosphere and came down to land near him.

A robot departed the ship and walked in front of the man.

"Barr, someone is willing to offer you a high sum to kill Knife Queen's student. Will you accept this contract?" The robot made some electronic noises.

"You know the rules." The man named Barr continued to kill as he spoke. He cut a creature in half with his bone knife right then and there. The teeth-life blade went on to munch on the body, and eventually the knife swallowed it up.

The bone knife looked even stronger after that. Its red color had grown even darker.

"This video should be sufficient. I assure you that this target is worth your time." The robot proceeded to display a video of Han Sen.

Barr watched it, and he was attracted by what he saw. A short time later, his eyes flashed and he said, "I will accept this task."

2167 Rebate Alpha

Han Sen returned to Narrow Moon, where he was kept busy for the next few days. When all that was sorted out, he went back to Planet Eclipse.

The base was as he had left it, with Zero, Han Ling'er, Little Angel, and Yisha looking after the place. Consequently, Planet Eclipse was doing fine on the whole, as well.

While Han Sen had been gone, Zero, Little Angel, and Han Ling'er were able to level up to Marquise. That was largely due to the abundance of rich resources Planet Eclipse offered.

There were many xenogeneics on Planet Eclipse, but the highest ranked were only Dukes. And there weren't many of those around. It'd be difficult for them to become Dukes themselves with so few xenogeneics to hunt.

"I only have Planet Eclipse. It has proven more than enough for early development, but if I want to go any further, this planet isn't going to be enough." Han Sen was troubled, thinking of the limitations posed by the finite resources.

It wasn't just Han Sen that needed resources. Everyone else did, too. And if there weren't any more resources available, he couldn't bring anyone else from the sanctuary.

But most of the planets in the geno universe were taken by someone or other, and the relationships between the factions were very complex. When someone claimed a territory, they could draw the attention of many factions.

Going to the barren system wouldn't be easy, either. Anyone who wasn't escorted by powerful elites could be attacked by the scary creatures of such a place.

Even if he successfully claimed a place there, it could be taken away by force if he didn't have the protection of a big faction.

Han Sen was in an awkward position, right about now. He couldn't get a hold of any more resources, and the resources available to him on Planet Eclipse were not enough.

Han Sen mulled over this for a while, but he failed to come up with a viable solution.

Han Sen leaned back from his computer and rubbed his head. Seeing the ocean stone bug playing with Bao'er, Han Sen suddenly remembered that he had wanted to experiment with it.

He took the stone bug and Bao'er to a nearby volcano.

The ocean stone bug's attack power was practically non-existent. Keeping it with him would be pointless, so when Han Sen entered the volcanic zone, he set the bug down near the lava.

The stone bug saw the lava, and when it did, its eyes brightened as it immediately rolled forward.

Splash!

The stone bug fell into the lava, and not long after, it was covered in a layer of lava. After a while, the lava cooled and turned into stone.

When the stone turned black, the stone bug rolled into the lava again. It kept repeating this until it was a plump ball that was around the size of a hand.

Han Sen wasn't in the mood to watch much longer, though. At that speed, God knew how long it might take the bug to create another ocean mountain.

"I'll wait until it grows bigger before taking the ocean stone." Han Sen left the stone bug there and returned to the base with Bao'er.

When he arrived at the base, Han Sen was shocked to find Yisha sitting in the plaza. All the creatures were there waiting on either side of the plaza as if a queen was visiting.

"My Queen." Han Sen bowed. His mind raced through possible explanations for why she had come to visit him on Planet Eclipse.

Yisha looked at Bao'er, who was holding Han Sen's hand, and stood up. "Take a walk with me. I want to see how much you have learned over the past few years."

Han Sen thought to himself, "I haven't been around here for the past two years. You know Planet Eclipse better than I do, so it's not like you need to inspect what I've done with the place."

Han Sen might have thought those things, but he would never dare to speak them out loud. He led her on a short tour of the base and its surroundings.

They approached Mirror Lake, and while Han Sen was describing that place to her, Yisha suddenly interrupted him. "Han Sen, have you heard stories of the Rebate Alpha?"

"I have only heard a little," Han Sen answered after a brief moment of thought. He wasn't interested in the Rebate, and so he hadn't spent much time exploring their history.

But during his time in Narrow Moon, he had indeed heard some stories about the Rebate Alpha. After all, an alpha was the pride and identity of any race.

Yisha kept walking, and she said, "The Rebate are a higher race, but compared to the long stretch of history, we are also a fairly new race. We cannot compete with the older high races. It was incredible luck that we gained an alpha such as that, who was able to lead us to where we are today. Do you not know about her history?"

"I have heard she possessed the blood of an even more ancient race," Han Sen answered.

Yisha laughed. "That's just the story that other races tell. Over time, we have come to start believing it ourselves." After a pause, Yisha went on to say, "Our alpha was a slave. Our race used to be a primal society, and we couldn't even get off a single planet. We didn't know anything about fighting or practicing geno arts. Then, a higher race descended on our planet and took us away to be slaves. Sometime after, our alpha started to travel around the galaxy, collecting skills and strength. After many great trials and difficulties, we were able to light the lantern and become one of the higher races that many cannot help but envy. But do you know what she did, then?"

"She must have been really talented. And she accomplished all that through her own efforts?" Han Sen thought a little boot-licking on his part would be appropriate here.

Yisha smiled and said, "Back then, the Rebate were just another race. And our alpha was just an ordinary being, as well. When she started practicing, she only had geno armor. And then, she managed to claim a xenogenic fruit that let her ascend and become a Baron. This kind of talent is very common in the universe. There are probably millions of people like this out there."

"If that is the case, then your alpha must have been a very patient person. She had more intelligence and patience than ordinary people," Han Sen told her.

Yisha shook her head. "She might have been smart, but she was not fond of suffering. She liked to sleep, and she liked long baths. She created Teeth power because she was lazy. She liked to finish things with one hit, without needing to attack again."

Han Sen did not know what to say, because the Rebate Alpha was now being portrayed as a very normal woman. But for a normal woman like that to have escaped a slave planet and led her race to light a lantern... That was incredible.

"Are you curious why our alpha gained such talent with that personality? How such a lazy person managed to raise her race up to loftier heights and bring the Rebate into the geno hall?" Yisha smiled at Han Sen.

"I am curious," Han Sen answered honestly.

Yisha's expression looked conflicted. "My Alpha didn't get that far on her methods and talents alone. She depended on the Extreme King."

Chapter 2168 Cold Palace Guardian

"Extreme King? One of the top three lanterns in the geno hall? That Extreme King?" When Han Sen heard the name, he was surprised.

He thought Narrow Moon depended on Sky Palace for protection, but hearing her say this, that didn't seem quite so likely.

Yisha nodded and said, "It was the Extreme King that first landed on Planet Rebate and took us as slaves. Our alpha was raised by a famous member of the Extreme King, and so that is how she garnered so many resources and achieved what she did."

Han Sen's face kept changing. Sky Palace, Dragon, and the Destroyed were in the top ten. The Demon and the Buddha were in the top one hundred.

But the truly powerful races were the top three of the geno hall. The top three were stronger than any other race. Not even Sky Palace, in all their might, could challenge them.

In the geno universe, most of everything was split between those top three races. All of the factions were sub-factions of the three of them, in some capacity.

Extreme King was the third, but right now, they were the best-known race in the entire universe.

The first two races were quite mysterious. They were almost never seen, and no one knew where they lived. One of them was a complete loner race that never allied with anyone else and kept to themselves. They never allowed outsiders into their midst, and they never accepted new members. Someone might occasionally be allowed to work with them, but that was exceedingly rare.

Big factions like Sky Palace were connected with the first race. It was called Very High, but Very High was also very mysterious. It was rare to see their people, and very few could actually interact with them.

There were rumors about the Buddha having an association of some kind with the Very High, but so far, that was just a myth. No one knew any of the specifics.

The likes of the Dragon and the Destroyed were more connected to the second race. They were called Ancient God.

Yisha and Sky Palace's relationship was a close one. Han Sen had thought the Rebate belonged to Sky Palace, so it was odd to find that they were connected to Extreme King.

Yisha nodded and said, "Right now, the Rebate are considered one of the higher races. We have many things, but we still need the support that a race like Extreme King can provide."

After pausing, Yisha went on to say, "I wanted to tell you this because I need you to know how important resources are.

Especially since you are practicing The Story of Genes. For someone like you, resources are more important than ever." Thank you for telling me this." Han Sen gave Yisha a slight bow to show his respect.

He knew Yisha wouldn't randomly tell him all this. She must have had some plan that involved acquiring resources. Otherwise, she wouldn't have come here. It wasn't as if he needed any bedtime stories, after all.

“In about a month, I will be going to the Extreme King,” Yisha coldly said.

Han Sen was shocked. “Seriously? When will you get back?”

Yisha did not answer. She just looked over the glittering surface of Mirror Lake and said, “Everything I have achieved will be for naught if I do not become deified. If I don’t ascend, it won’t matter if I come back at all. I’ll be there for as long as it takes, and I will do whatever I can. As long as the road remains open for you, you may continue on your way.”

After that, Yisha turned around and left. She ignored Han Sen, and after taking a few steps, she disappeared from Planet Eclipse.

Han Sen frowned. Yisha hadn’t actually told him all that much, but Han Sen got the gist of what she meant.

Her trip would be very dangerous, and there was every chance she could die whilst on the way. It was a risk she would take for the chance to become deified.

Yisha’s presence had made Han Sen feel very secure during his stay in Narrow Moon. While she was around, nobody would dare to lay a finger on him. The stuff that belonged to him, remained with him. And he frequently had the opportunity to take the things of others.

But it was difficult to determine how things would go for him with Yisha being absent. If Yisha achieved the breakthrough she needed with the Extreme King, that would be wonderful. If she couldn’t, and the news found Han Sen, things would take a turn for the worse with him, as well.

Yisha had come to Planet Eclipse to tell him all this because there was a choice he would have to make. He needed to let go. If he didn’t, he’d die.

“You need to lose something to gain something. That is what she meant. Is she leaving me with everything of hers in Narrow Moon?” Han Sen was suddenly overjoyed.

With Yisha’s reputation, she was sure to have an abundance of wealth in Narrow Moon. If he was able to take over all of her things, leveling up to King would not be all that difficult.

But Han Sen was Yisha’s student. According to the rules of the Rebate, he wasn’t qualified to take over her legacy and wealth. And most of Yisha’s resources belonged to the Rebate. If she died, those resources would be taken back by the Rebate and redistributed. Not many things there actually belonged to her. He might have been the next best thing to an heir that she had, but that would matter little.

Han Sen didn’t even know if he could take control of her personal resources. After all, if she died, the Rebate would not want her legacy to fall into the hands of an outsider.

Things were never that simple, of course. And before Yisha went to the Extreme King, she established plans for Narrow Moon in her absence. But Han Sen was not given any of her resources, so he had little say in what happened to them.

It wasn't as if Yisha left him with nothing, however. What Yisha had given him actually left Han Sen somewhat confused.

"Cold Palace Guardian..." Han Sen mumbled, staring at the white jade tablet in his hands, and he looked confused.

The white jade tablet was about the size of a man's hand, and it seemed to have been sculpted from ice. The words "Cold Palace Guardian" were written across it in red letters.

Han Sen knew it had to be an identity card of sorts. Yisha had also left him a note explaining the item; it was something he would need to access someplace called Cold Palace.

"Cold Palace... Is that a place for used boytoys?" Han Sen considered that possibility, while his mind brought up images of men dressed in skimpy clothes with faces full of makeup. He thought of them sitting around the house, wiping away their tears. Han Sen started to feel uncomfortable.

"Ahem... That cannot be it, surely. I have never heard of Yisha playing with men before. I will have to go and take a look at Cold Palace for myself." Han Sen shook his head, trying to shake off the strange scenes he had just envisioned.

Cold Palace was on Yisha's planet, so Han Sen packed up his things and went to Planet Blade.

Han Sen would have liked to bring Bao'er, but Yisha's note stated that only the person holding the tablet would be permitted access. Any other creature would be killed on sight.

That made Han Sen very curious about what Cold Palace actually was. Why would Yisha want him to become a Cold Palace Guardian?

Chapter 2169 Cold Palace

"Knife Queen is allowing Han Sen to become a Cold Palace Guardian. That will obviously help him gain the profits he wants." Night River King's icy voice filled an office in Full Moon.

"Knife Queen is the Cold Palace Guardian. She has been summoned to the Extreme King. It is only expected that her student should take her place," Black Moon King responded evenly.

"Only the best of the Rebate has been given the mantle of a Cold Palace Guardian. If Knife Queen is no longer able to do it, another King should be selected to replace her. A Marquise like Han Sen should be out of the question." Night River King looked at their boss, Moon Wheel King. "Mister Moon Wheel, do you think we should select a King to replace Han Sen in Cold Palace?"

Moon Wheel King quietly said, "Right now, Knife is still in charge of its guardianship. It would be poor form to overrule her decision now."

“Why shouldn’t we? The guardian should be a King. Han Sen is just a Marquise. What if something happens? To safeguard the future of our entire race, no one of low rank should take that responsibility,” Night River King said.

“That does make sense,” Shadow King said.

Flower King did not say anything. He had receded into thought, and that was where he remained.

Black Moon King laughed coldly. “Night River, you are in too much of a rush. Han Sen is temporarily filling in for Knife Queen. If you force a change now, and she returns, how will you explain the switch?”

“I am Night River. I am not scared of anyone. I only focus on what’s best for the Rebate. Even if Knife was here right now, I’d be trumpeting the same thing.” Night River King boasted.

“Really? Then why did you not object when Knife first made the suggestion?” Black Moon King bared his teeth in a grin. “You really think Knife will never return from those chaotic systems? Is that why you are talking so boldly right now?”

Do not forget that there is every chance she will not be killed. If she returns, she will return deified. And if she returns deified and sees that you have again mistreated her student, you know what her fiery personality will spur her to do. You will be well and truly doomed.”

“I only care about the matters themselves, not the people involved. Black Moon King, do not speak to me so condescendingly.” Night River King continued to argue, but he sounded a lot weaker now.

“If Han Sen is Knife’s replacement, the least we can do is let him try. If he does a bad job, then one of you can swap with him. What do you think?” Moon Wheel King looked at Flower King and the others.

Flower King smiled and said, “I don’t have an opinion. If Han Sen fails as a guardian, I’m not letting it be my fault.”

“Good,” Shadow King said.

Black Moon King did not have an opinion, either.

Night River King looked gloomy, but he didn’t say anything.

Two days after Yisha left, Han Sen arrived on Planet Blade. Snowbird Duke was in charge of the place with Yisha absent, and she had been instructed to serve him.

When Han Sen saw Snowbird Duke, he was shocked. Snowbird Duke looked almost exactly like Icebird Duke, right down to her cold expression.

Icebird Duke was still locked up in Purgatory Heaven where Han Sen had left her. He kept her there to prevent his identity from being leaked and to stop the secrets surrounding Purgatory Heaven from getting out. So, he had no choice but to leave her imprisoned.

Seeing Snowbird Duke standing before him now was very strange.

Snowbird Duke was very sensitive to such emotions, and she immediately noticed Han Sen's discomfiture. But she misunderstood what was making him uncomfortable. "Stop wondering. Icebird Duke is my little sister."

"I see. That is why you two look so similar." Han Sen then went on to ask, "How come I've never seen you before?"

"Before Knife Queen accepted you as a student, I was sent away for work. I returned only a little while ago, so of course we haven't met." Snowbird Duke didn't seem too interested in talking with Han Sen. She simply stood up and said, "Follow me. Queen told me to escort you to Cold Palace."

Han Sen, noticing her brusqueness, did not respond. He simply followed Snowbird Duke to the backdoor of Cold Palace.

"Cold Palace is not in the palace?" Han Sen asked.

"No," Snowbird Duke answered emotionlessly.

The question had been rhetorical. Han Sen sighed and continued following Snowbird Duke until they reached a mountain behind the palace.

Han Sen was wondering where Cold Palace was when Snowbird Duke stopped just short of the mountain slopes.

"That is where you need to go. I do not have permission, so my guidance must stop here." Snowbird Duke pointed up the mountain to a waterfall. Nestled beside it was a small stone house. It looked to have been built from rocks, and it was surprisingly short, probably two meters tall at its highest point.

Looking at the stone door, it seemed that Han Sen would have to bend double just to avoid bumping his head.

The old stone house made Han Sen confused, though. "Is that Cold Palace?"

Han Sen thought that this little shack surely couldn't be the palace he was supposed to guard, but there was a sign over the door frame that read Cold Palace.

"Queen said that you must come here on the first and fifteenth of the month to guard the entrance of Cold Palace. You must protect it for a whole twenty-four hours. Aside from those times, you may do whatever you please. But do not be tardy when you are expected to guard here." After that, Snowbird Duke turned and left.

Han Sen had no choice but to hike up to the waterfall alone. The waterfall was pretty, and it was very wide. It felt as if an entire galaxy was descending from the space high above. The sound of surging water was deafeningly loud, but despite that, it carried the wonderful fragrance of trimmed grass.

When he neared the stone house, however, Han Sen noticed the temperature drop. It didn't affect him, but it did seem fitting for the title of Cold Palace. It was a sharp contrast to the humidity and heat of the rest of Planet Blade.

Han Sen looked at the stone house, but he did not see anything too strange about it. Aside from the lower temperature, it looked like a fairly ordinary house. It looked old and rarely-visited, but other than that, it was unremarkable.

"Why was a stone house like this built here with not even a fence around it? What could it contain that's actually worth protecting?" Han Sen wondered.

But today was neither the first day nor the fifteenth, so there was no point in him being there. He looked back over the way he had come to memorize it, then turned to leave.

But just as Han Sen was about to walk back down the mountain, his heart jumped. His body tensed as he looked down the mountain path.

Someone was coming up that path, and while he seemed to be meandering along, the power he carried was like a tsunami. Every step he took felt intimidating. It felt like the ground was rumbling beneath him.

2170 You Passed

Han Sen squinted his eyes. That scary presence carried enough overwhelming force to sunder the sturdiest stone. It rolled over the region like a wave.

The man was approaching, and he was terrifying. Han Sen felt as if the sky itself had changed color. The man's presence battered him over and over, like a ceaseless tide.

"Who are you?" Han Sen stood and squinted, peering at the oncoming form. The wind was tugging his clothes back, making them ripple in the gusts.

But Han Sen stood strong. He held his position as if that power did not exist, at all.

The person walked onwards without saying a word. And with every step the form took, it sounded like rocks were being broken underfoot.

Dong!

A very light footstep then took its place, reverberating through Han Sen's ear. But it had the impact of an explosion inside Han Sen's head. It made Han Sen squint his eyes even harder.

Dong! Dong! Dong! Dong!

The shadow approached, closer and closer. The footsteps were like a chain of explosions, going off inside Han Sen's head, one after the next. And along with all that, the person's presence was becoming scarier was every step.

Han Sen looked at the body, and he noticed that they were both of a similar height. But in Han Sen's eyes, the person seemed greater than him. He got the sense that the other person was a god that towered over him, making him feel small and insignificant in comparison.

Han Sen knew that this had to be an illusion. But even so, if this person could use their powers to such a degree, it was unlikely that an ordinary person could fight against it.

"Since when does an elite like this exist within the race of the Rebate?" Han Sen was confused by this presence.

The body and its presence were scary, to say the least. But its life force certainly wasn't King class. It was a Duke, at the most. Still, Han Sen couldn't think of anyone else across the entirety of Narrow Moon that carried an aura such as that, especially as a Duke.

The person continued approaching, but try as they might to subdue Han Sen with fear, the attempt failed. Han Sen did not move. The person eventually stopped walking at a distance of ten steps away from Han Sen. She stood where she was and just looked at him.

Now Han Sen could tell that the person was actually a woman. She was clad in black armor and also a helmet. Her face would have been revealed, had it not been for the face mask she wore. The features of her face were covered, save for the beautiful golden eyes that gleamed from her mask. But it was evident how fit the woman was based on the curves that the armor revealed.

She was as tall as Han Sen, and so her long legs were very attractive.

But Han Sen's gaze wasn't drawn to her eyes or her legs. He was actually looking at her left hand.

Her right hand was covered in a black gauntlet, revealing only the length of her fingers. Her left hand, however, was bare. The skin of her hands was pure white, her fingers were slender, and her delicate nails were like crystal gemstones.

But Han Sen was not merely admiring the prettiness of it. He looked there because of the power that swirled in her palm. It was a power he could not accurately describe.

With no shocking godlight or scary flames, the hand suddenly closed into an elegant fist and shot toward Han Sen. Han Sen's eyes locked onto the fist that was headed his way.

And as the fist traveled to Han Sen, he quivered. He did not shudder in fear, though; his twitch was him activating all the power inside him.

Han Sen's body gave that single shiver, and all of his power surged up, ready to be unleashed.

The pressure he felt from that incoming punch prompted Han Sen to gather up all the power he could. Standing before the black-armored woman, he felt a grave sense of danger.

Han Sen had no intention of dodging, though. When the punch was swung, it felt as if the entirety of that pocket of space was filled up by it. That fist was everywhere, and it seemed as if there was no place for him to run to, even if he wanted to do so.

Naturally, Han Sen was not actually planning to hide. He clenched his right hand into a fist, filled it with the gathered power of his trembling body, then sent a return punch at the woman.

The fires that carried the fist were very demonic. They were tinged with scary Teeth powers, and they came right at the woman's fist.

The fists came against each other, and the power inside Han Sen's fist shattered. The jade fist had collided with Han Sen's own with tremendous force.

Boom!

Han Sen felt the unstoppable powers coming from that jade fist. It was like a supernova, and the unleashed force hurled Han Sen away.

Han Sen used his legs to cleave a trench through the stones and the earth, trying to stabilize himself. But the power that sent him flying was too great. He tore through the ground for a few hundred meters before crashing into a stone wall that exploded on impact.

And while the wall might have been destroyed, Han Sen was still standing. His right hand was injured, and his bones were cracked, though.

"Who are you?" Han Sen asked the woman again.

The woman's fist was so strange. It felt like something entirely indestructible. Even someone as strong as Han Sen could not withstand the force it unleashed.

And after Han Sen had taken that punch, he knew for certain that the frightening, black-armored woman was actually a Marquise just like he was.

That surprised Han Sen more than anything. With this power she wielded, there was every possibility that she was even stronger than Lone Bamboo. That scary punching power was a testament to that.

Han Sen thought he might have to retaliate with Break Six Skies. That could be the only way to combat her fist effectively.

"You can withstand my Extreme King Final Punch? It is no wonder you are regarded as being as good as Lone Bamboo. You have passed." The woman's golden eyes peered at Han Sen. Her voice was icy, but also very seductive. "I will give you a chance to join the knights."

"You are of the Extreme King?" Han Sen looked at the woman while he spoke.

Yes," the woman answered.

"Did you come all the way over here just to cause me trouble?" Han Sen asked.

The woman replied in a toneless voice, "I was here to deliver a recruitment paper for Yisha. I was going to leave, but I heard that you were in the vicinity. So, I came to take a look at the individual who is said to be as strong as Lone Bamboo himself. You have most certainly passed, and so, I extend you an invitation to join the knights."

"I'm sorry, but I've made no plans to abandon Narrow Moon." Han Sen was on high alert as he spoke. He was prepared for the possibility that the woman might attack again.

But the woman wasn't planning to. When Han Sen declined, she turned around and left.

Han Sen watched her fit body as she walked away, her long blonde hair rippling behind her. But the sight was tinged with sorrow, as if to tell Han Sen that he had no idea what he had just missed out on.

"What an arrogant woman," Han Sen thought to himself.