

DEMONIC 1091

Chapter 1091 1091. Brute

Noah had improved Night's body whenever he had time. The Pterodactyl would even destroy itself on purpose to force him to forge something new.

Night had been restless in the last three centuries. At first, it had flown across the regions near the tower, hunting every strong creature that it found. Still, it had soon grown bored of fighting rank 5 creatures, leading it to move its focus elsewhere.

The Pterodactyl felt bound to Noah, so it never went too far away from his training areas at the beginning. It tried to fight the powerful creatures under Chasing Demon's quarters when Noah trained with the Seventh Kesier rune, but he stopped it every time.

Night had eventually given up on that task too, only to search for a new opponent.

It looked down on the rank 6 magical beasts in the world, but it never fought them since Noah needed them. The formations in the alliance's domain were technically on its side, so it had to give up on them too.

The lack of worthy opponents put it in a similar situation to Noah, which improved their connection once again. Yet, the Pterodactyl didn't have to cultivate, so it had entire years of free time that it didn't know how to fill.

Its eyes had risen to the sky at some point. That azure environment had a distant ball of fire capable of illuminating the Mortal Lands. The humans called it "Sun", but that was only another shiny opponent for the Pterodactyl.

Noah had to interrupt his meditation once because he felt the connection with Night becoming thin. His consciousness had returned to the material world to discover that his new companion was trying to reach the Sun.

It was needless to say that the effort had almost killed the creature. Still, that had forced Noah to accept the fact that he couldn't leave Night without anything to do while he trained.

He couldn't afford to lose a divine creature's mind due to its selfless crusade against the light. Its last act had even defied its connection with Noah, warning him of the possible repercussions of the creature's boredom.

Noah had solved the issue by giving it an almost impossible task.

The Night-blade Pterodactyls needed an isolated environment completely tainted with their darkness to reproduce. Their species didn't need a partner. The laws that they spread would automatically generate one of their kind once they became dense enough.

Noah had personally cleared a large underground area in one of the central territories that had yet to recover from the winged beasts' invasion. He had reinforced its edges with the Elemental Forging method and had given it to the Pterodactyl.

His task was simple. Night had to destroy every law in the area until it became the perfect breeding ground for its species. An eventual success would provide strong beasts to the Hive, so that was a win-win situation for him.

Night had taken the task seriously, but there was a limit to how much it could do on its own. That let Noah enjoy years of peaceful training without worrying about his reckless companion.

As their connection improved, Night had learnt to sense when Noah came out of his meditations. It had even felt his sense of loss after the last one, which was the reason behind its mocking expression.

Noah stared at the bird-like creature next to him. It was only the shape of a big bird, but he had learnt to recognize its different expressions without needing facial features.

"Someone just lost against a ghost!" Night exclaimed, following its line with deep chirps. It wasn't a small bird anymore, so its cries carried a bit of dignity.

"I won't let a suicidal bird give me lessons on how to win," Noah snorted as he laid on the roof of the tower. The starry sky filled his vision, but the figure of the long-haired man in the inheritance appeared between him and the stars.

That was the will of a god. Noah had just interacted with an existence who had left its inheritance inside the Immortal Lands!

'There is a chance that he didn't expect heroic cultivators to find it,' Noah thought as he closed his eyes.

The eccentric expert had performed that slash in the Immortal Lands, where divine beings walked freely. He might have intended to pass down his inheritance to fellow divine existences, but the fall of the new continent had ruined his plans.

Noah couldn't be sure of that. The Divine Cut was there now, so he would attempt to seize it. However, he accepted inside his mind that he might have to give up on the inheritance if he met a bottleneck.

'He is right,' Noah concluded in his mind. 'I am a brute.'

The understanding obtained in the Divine Cut had shown Noah how limited his martial arts were. He could barely call himself a swordsman. His slashes were only a channel where Noah poured his physical strength.

'I lack grace,' Noah thought. All the sword arts learnt in the past three centuries had brought his sharpness to a new league. He felt that he could cut down Second Prince's defenses with his bare fingers now.

Yet, his core had always remained the same. His strongest slashes relied on his physical strength.

'Do I need to seize all the inheritance?' Noah started to ponder. 'Is this greed that I feel only a side effect of my individuality?'

Questions piled up inside his mind. As his path in the heroic ranks reached the last stages, his road toward the stars became foggy.

Mind and body were fine. They advanced without needing any deep understanding. The problem was Noah's dantian since it depended on his individuality.

"I'll say this once again," Night shouted, "I thought the Sun was closer! At most, you are to blame for building a body with such awful senses!"

Noah reopened his eyes to look at the proud Pterodactyl chirping justifications next to him. He had always envied the easy path of the magical beasts, and his thoughts went on the cultivation journey of the perfect hybrids.

His mind lost itself in his life's many experiences only to understand how unsuited he was for peace. Even his long seclusions in the past had the purpose of preparing him for a new battle.

'I'm truly a brute,' Noah couldn't help but smile at that thought.

Many cultivators would do anything in their power to remain inside their quarters for centuries. Some would even abandon organizations to avoid wasting time in the political environment.

Noah was the opposite. He went from one battle to another in a constant search for a new enlightenment. Since difficulties forced his power to improve, he dived directly into them.

"Night," Noah said at some point, "Why do you want to destroy the light?"

The Pterodactyl felt the seriousness in Noah's words and decided to stop complaining to give an honest answer. "Because it's my enemy. Heaven and Earth made it in this way."

"Are you nothing more than a bunch of instincts even after I gave you a new body?" Noah questioned the creature again.

"I don't know," Night replied and remained silent for a few seconds before continuing. "I know what I am. I know that I hate light. I don't care what or who decided this, but I can only be myself."

Noah felt that some clarity returned in his mind after its words, and he patted the bird's empty head before complimenting it. "You are the smartest Night-blade Pterodactyl of the world."

Night felt delighted to hear that, but it soon recalled something that made it complain once again. "I'm the only Pterodactyl in the world! This complement has no value!"

Noah only heard part of that line. His mental waves had already touched the ancient aura of the Cut, bringing him back in the divine inheritance.

Chapter 1092 1092. Mine

Ghostly swords crossed Noah's mental sphere's borders and gathered above his mental sea to create the eccentric man once again. The latter lifted his long eyebrows to look at Noah before speaking with a disappointed tone. "The brute is here."

Noah smiled, and a pair of short swords formed in his ethereal figure's palms. He didn't even speak before performing his strongest slash toward the expert.

Four additional arms formed on his torso. They all wielded blades and joined the other limbs to slash at the owner of the divine inheritance.

A six-armed dragon shot from Noah's figure and crashed on the mental sea. The internal pressure spiked due to the shockwave released in the impact, but Noah endured the pain without moving his focus from the expert.

Night's words had cleared his doubts. He wanted the divine inheritance, so he would do everything in his power to seize it. The unwillingness of the expert wouldn't matter if Noah could overpower it.

Tall tides formed on the mental sea. The expert and the dispersing six-armed dragon disappeared under the raging brown water, but Noah quickly stabilized his mental energy.

"Why do you even need six arms for this?" Sharp words resounded inside the ethereal space. The expert walked from below the sea, shaking his head in disappointment.

He lifted his forefinger in front of his face and curved it with a quick movement. Noah could barely contain his surprise when he saw a six-bladed cloud flying in his direction.

Noah performed his strongest slash once again. A dragon and a formless cloud clashed mid-air, but the six-armed creature couldn't do anything against the expert's attack.

Terror rose inside Noah, but the cloud didn't harm him when it engulfed his figure. It dispersed before reaching the mental walls.

The expert wasn't trying to hurt him. The sharpness pressing on Noah's mind came from the man's might, which was a feature that it couldn't suppress.

Noah had realized that after the last exchange, and excitement inevitably built up inside him.

The environment of the sea of consciousness was different from the outside world. Most of Noah's power there came from the level of his mind.

Noah didn't have the Demonic Sword's structure as a limit there, and the same went for his spells. He could use slashes that he was too worried to perform in the outside world. Moreover, he had the will of a divine existence as his training partner.

"Purity overcomes brute power," The expert announced. "You have walked the path of the blade by chance. You didn't choose it, and your slashes reflect your lack of commitment."

Noah listened to the expert's words, but his ethereal arms were moving once again. The only limit was his mental walls' sturdiness, so he wanted to show everything he had before meditating on those teachings.

Noah wasn't a hybrid anymore. Many of his spells still carried dragon-like features, but his existence had distanced itself from those creatures.

He could roar and spit flames, but he had a dark star as his core. Magical beasts and hybrids couldn't claim him as part of their kind anymore, so his attacks had to do the same.

Noah's additional arms disappeared, and the two swords fused to form a longer blade. Both his arms wielded its hiltless base as they rose above his head while he focused.

'Destruction can create darkness,' Noah thought as he slashed downward. His blade traced a black line in front of him, but nothing more seemed to come out of it.

The expert opened his palm. An intense shockwave resounded as a black slash landed in his open hand, and sharpness spread everywhere inside the mental sphere.

Noah suffered. His mental walls struggled to remain still when he used his full power, but the training with the Seventh Kesier rune proved itself useful in that situation.

The mental sphere stopped trembling after a few seconds. Even Noah's most potent attack wasn't able to destabilize it for too long!

The expert remained silent as it stared at the slash in his hand. He lifted his eyebrows again to inspect it, and some inaudible words came out of his mouth.

"This is quite better," The expert said. "You might have walked this path for the wrong reasons, but you learnt something along the way. Maybe you aren't hopeless."

Noah didn't speak. That was his strongest attack, something that he could only launch in the ethereal world of his mental sphere. Yet, the expert had easily stopped it.

Also, he was forcing it to remain in his palm. The slash would typically disperse once it released its power, but the expert used some unknown method to keep it intact.

"What is a sword for you?" The expert asked.

"A weapon," Noah gave an honest answer. He knew the deeper meaning behind that question, but Noah didn't want to lie about his mindset.

Since his first time wielding a saber, Noah's mindset had never changed. His individuality might have the shape of a sword, but that didn't stop him from considering himself as a weapon either.

"That's right," The expert replied. "They are tools meant to kill. Their purpose is to give an advantage in battle, cut better, and sever everything in their path. Fingers and nails can't be so effective, and the same goes for teeth and fangs."

The expert eventually let Noah's slash disperse and started to scratch his beard as he walked in circles above the mental sea.

"It's never the blade," The eccentric man continued. "A sharp piece of metal can't have any depth. Cultivators add meanings once they wield swords. They invent martial arts, they create paths, and, sometimes, they become part of them."

The expert gestured to Noah to come closer, and he didn't hesitate to fly toward him. The inheritance's owner started to walk around him at that point, and the same inaudible words as before buzzed as he inspected him.

"You are a sword," The expert eventually concluded, "But you lack purity. You seized everything you could along your path, disrupting your harmony and the path you managed to unlock. It's time to choose."

"Choose what?" Noah asked. He could understand where the expert was going, but he wanted him to say it loudly.

Each of the eccentric man's words carried his sharpness. Noah felt enlightened every time that pressure appeared inside his mind. He would get the expert to talk as much as possible if he couldn't seize the inheritance.

"Your path," The expert replied. "I see a magical beast, a swordsman, a creator, and a destroyer inside you. While some of these paths can live together, others will inevitably suffer as you advance."

Noah sighed. That was a warning that he had already heard multiple times, and he had slowly learnt the reason behind that as he became familiar with the laws.

The laws were simple but powerful truths. They carried the true meanings of certain aspects of the world.

Cultivators would eventually become laws upon reaching the seventh rank, and expressing a simple but powerful meaning was impossible if their individualities were too complicated.

"I won't choose," Noah said, and his words startled the expert. "My ambition is boundless. I will take everything that increases my power and bring it to the Immortal Lands. Accepting limits will be the end of my path."

"What if I say that you can't take my inheritance unless you accept the sword as your only path?" The expert asked, and Noah could sense a tinge of curiosity in his tone.

Cultivators like Noah were rare, but his determination was a common sight in the Immortal Lands. Every divine being was a stubborn and resolved individual, so seeing that feature in a potential heir pleased the expert.

An ethereal sword formed, and Noah's ambition surged as he wielded it with two hands. His sharpness spiked, and the water of his mental sea began to rage as it resonated with his mindset.

"I'll take it anyway," Noah said as roars fused with his human words. "You can increase my power, so I will resort to every trick and asset in my arsenal to make you mine."

Chapter 1093 1093. Sword Sain

The expert smiled when he heard those words. His forefinger rose once again as he spoke in a challenging tone. "Attack right here then. Don't hold back."

Noah's ambition intensified even more. A god was right in front of him. Cutting him down would be the greatest accomplishment even made by a heroic cultivator.

The world around him disappeared as his focus reached its peak. Noah could only see the forefinger. Nothing else mattered in his mind anymore.

A black spot appeared on his ghostly figure's chest. The mark enlarged until it took the shape of a star that engulfed half of his torso in its rotation.

Noah was calling upon the entirety of his individuality to perform that slash. It didn't matter if some of its aspects didn't match swords well. He wanted to pour all his existence into his most potent attack.

His ghostly figure began to morph. A tail and two wings grew from his back. A pair of horns rose from his forehead, and his fingers became long claws.

The environment darkened. Noah's brown mental energy dimmed as his existence invaded that ethereal world. Yet, the expert remained still, waiting for him to launch his final attack.

Noah eventually acted. His sword felt heavy as he lifted it above his head and focused everything he had on his blade. A sense of emptiness pervaded his being as his everything went on the weapon, but Noah had already stopped thinking.

Anger was the last to arrive. The forefinger was only a minute part of the divine will's body, but its power surpassed anything that Noah had ever met.

He felt mocked. The expert believed that one finger was enough to suppress him, so he had to prove him wrong.

Of course, Noah wasn't thinking straight in that situation. It didn't matter how powerful a heroic cultivator was. Gods were in another realm, and even their wills were too powerful for the lower plane's weak experts.

However, Noah used his unreasonable desire to kill a god to push his power even further. His ambition became so intense under that concentration that it made his sturdy mental walls shake uncontrollably.

Noah didn't feel any pain, or, rather, he couldn't sense it in that situation. Only the forefinger existed in his mind. Everything else was inside his ethereal blade.

His sword eventually fell. Noah felt as if he was trying to cut through the hardest material in the world as he swung his blade downward. It was so heavy that bulging veins appeared on his material body outside.

Instants of silence felt like an eternity. Noah's mind remained devoid of any thoughts as he performed the slash that carried all his life.

The ethereal sword touched the tip of the finger, and its blade lost any weight as its power came out of it. Noah's mental faculties returned only sense an immense force flinging him backward and making him slam on his trembling walls.

Minutes of silence went by after the slash and the finger connected. Noah was too confused to understand what was happening around him, and his trembling mind added waves of pain to his condition.

Noah took a while to recover and focus again on the expert. He didn't see any slash when he looked in his direction, but his eccentric figure still stood on top of his mental sea.

The man's finger was in front of him. Noah didn't manage to make it move at all, let alone cut it. Yet, he soon noticed that something was off since the expert had arched his eyebrows.

Noah felt drained, and even the level of his mental sea had reached a critical condition. However, he straightened his position and walked toward the motionless expert who showed a slight smile at that sight.

Noah walked until his eyes were right above the finger. He didn't see anything peculiar, but he felt that something was off.

His focus increased once again. Noah mustered the last bits of his mental energy to inspect the tip of the finger. Laws appeared in his vision, and the structure of the will became somewhat clear at that point.

Noah didn't even dream to understand the expert's law, but he could see that something had happened on the finger's tip. Its structure was still intact, but a minute spot appeared damaged.

"I thought you lacked purity due to your various paths," The expert finally decided to speak. "But there is another side to consider. Are you certain that you don't want to focus solely on the sword?"

"I've decided that long ago," Noah replied weakly. His consciousness had begun to waver in those last seconds. His mental energy was getting too scarce to keep him awake.

The expert sighed before continuing with his teachings. "The path for purity sees the removal of imperfection and foreign elements. Yet, nothing is extraneous to the blade capable of encompassing everything."

Noah's mind broadened as understanding flowed inside him. His consciousness was about to fade, but he used everything he could to keep the connection with the Divine Cut intact.

"The blade of ambition is your sword," The expert said as his words became muffled. "Rather than removing paths, you must bring them to their peak and unite them into a single sword. There can't be existences carrying multiple laws, but those with vast individualities do exist. As for boundless, that will depend on you."

Noah started to see the outside world as the voice of the expert resounded in his dizzy mind. It was day when he awakened, but he soon collapsed on the spot.

The last line of the expert echoed inside him. "You are worthy of my inheritance. From now on, you'll address me as Sword Saint."

Then, Noah's consciousness went dark, and his body slid from the roof of the tower to fall toward the ground.

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Noah awakened in a dark environment. The laws of the darkness element were intense there, but he could sense something familiar inside them.

A bird-like creature rested next to him. Noah could finally recognize where he was when he noticed Night crouched on his side.

That was the environment that he had created for the Pterodactyl. The creature must have taken him there after he fell from the tower.

Night woke up when it saw that its Master had recovered. It stretched a bit before setting off and resuming its mission to turn that area into a breeding ground.

Noah then noticed Snore coiled behind him and the Demonic Sword by his side. His two living assets had come out on their own to protect him while he remained unconscious.

His inscribed notebook had stored a few mental messages. They mostly questioned him about his health, but those close to him knew that Noah had often engaged in reckless training methods to improve his power.

There was even a summary of what had happened while he was unconscious, but nothing was worthy of his attention. He had slept for a little more than two months in the end. Nothing could affect peace in such a short period.

Flying Demon joked on how Night had caught him mid-air when he fell from the tower, and Dreaming Demon wished him the best in terms of health.

Only June's message forced him to answer. Her words proved once again how close the two of them were, and Noah couldn't help but smile when he heard her.

"Did you gain anything good?" June's voice echoed in Noah's mind when he played her message, and he could only answer in one way when he recalled the events inside the ancient aura.

"I gained everything," Noah conveyed as he stood up to return to the surface. He had a meeting with Sword Saint that he didn't want to miss.

Chapter 1094 1094. Spells

"Where is your bestiality?!" Sword Saint exclaimed as he curved his finger to launch a slash. Another slash was coming in his direction, and the two attacks clashed mid-air.

Noah saw his attack losing against the expert's copy. Sword Saint's slash crossed his ethereal figure without doing any harm before dispersing on his mental walls.

That was the training method decided by Sword Saint. Noah had to launch attacks that the expert copied in their purest form. He then also listed the weaknesses of Noah's slash to instruct him.

The idea behind that training was to force Noah to express every aspect of his individuality in his slashes. He had refused to abandon his other paths, so he needed to fuse all of them into his sword.

That was easier than done. Whenever Noah focused on his destruction, he failed to add his creation. Whenever he minded only his sharpness, he forgot about his bestiality.

Sword Saint's attacks couldn't copy Noah's individuality completely. There were some aspects that he could only try to imitate since he lacked understanding in those paths.

The issue was harsher when it came to Noah's beast side. Sword Saint could perform slashes that relied on brute strength, but they didn't come close to Noah's iconic attacks.

Still, Noah didn't have to imitate the expert's attacks. He only needed to learn and take inspiration from them. Everything else was up to him and his ability to push that path forward.

Noah called upon his pride and used all the physical strength that he could imagine to slash toward the immobile opponent. He didn't forget to follow the specific forms learnt during the enlightenments, so his blow had some grace too.

A thick slash flew out of his ethereal sword. Sharpness came out of its shape and broke the water inside the mental sea. Yet, small dark spots formed on its surface after that destruction.

"Better!" Sword Saint exclaimed before curving his forefinger again. A similar thick slash shot from his hand and clashed with the incoming attack before piercing it to fly toward Noah.

The expert's slash dispersed after it crossed Noah's ghostly figure. The same outcome had occurred, but Noah felt his excitement building up anyway.

Noah could feel his existence improving as that training continued. That process forced his individuality to converge into a slash, pushing his being together like never before.

His body had harmonized his many features before, but that process was different. It involved laws, and it was more connected to what Noah expressed rather than focusing on his species.

"What did I do wrong this time?" Noah asked. His slash had lost against an imitation, so he had to improve it.

"Intensity," Sword Saint answered. "You still think before attacking. This affects the power that you can express. Everything must come naturally. This slash must become your starting point once you manage to bring every aspect of your existence out."

Sword Saint meant that Noah needed more training. He had to turn his best slash in his weakest and start improving from that base. The path in front of him was still long, but he had a direction, and the guidance of a divine will now.

Luckily for Noah, the training sessions with the Divine Cut had become shorter after Sword Saint's will materialized. The battles inside his mental sphere lasted as if they were fights in the outside world, so he never spent more than a few days there.

Noah depleted almost all his mental energy in every session anyway, but he could spend more time on his traditional training and many projects after he rested.

There was one particular project that bugged him. No matter how hard he tried, he didn't manage to copy the light element with the dark matter.

It seemed that his higher energy was utterly incapable of reproducing that element. The more he tried to modify it to succeed in his task, the more the dark matter lost power.

Noah had begun to think that it was against his higher energy's nature to become that element. Still, he wasn't ready to give up on the project yet.

After all, he had already thought of a spell that made use of all his copied elements. In theory, its effects would make him ignore most of the limitations brought by his low level among the powerhouses.

Other projects proceeded well instead. Noah had to keep his diagrams in their original state while he focused on meditating next to the Divine Cut, but he had time for them now.

His new state as a rank 6 mage and his incredible body allowed him to go past his spells' original purposes. Noah didn't need to abide by the creators' initial intentions anymore and could push their core ideas on a path that suited him.

Noah could keep many old spells, and he could even recover some of those abandoned in the past. The limitations on their power didn't matter anymore since he rebuilt them in his mind.

That project led to many side projects since he had to treat every spell differently. There were cases where he could even fuse a few of them, but that led to difficulties.

It was hard to fuse two core ideas into a greater one without damaging their intensity. Noah had to test that process many times before understanding that he had to change his approach.

Noah had never learnt how to create diagrams from nothing because his expertise brought him on different paths. Yet, he could use wills to obtain similar effects.

Noah had already done something similar in the past. Translating diagrams into wills so that he could modify them had allowed him to improve many spells during his journey across the heroic ranks.

He didn't do the same when he became a rank 6 mage because of both worlds' many events, but nothing stopped him now.

Moreover, he wanted to improve that procedure too. Noah wasn't satisfied with wills that depleted themselves once "Breath" triggered their effects. He wanted something lasting.

The Will-devouring runes came in his help at that point. With a mixture of strong wills and his three energies, Noah could create runes that replicated spells once fueled with darkness.

They were different from the Kesier runes. Noah had to immerse them inside the mental sea because they needed constant contact with his mental energy.

Those runes were far from perfect, but Noah felt that he was finally learning something he had desired since he was a human cultivator. He was finalizing his method to create spells!

Many runes started to fill the mental sea. Noah added one spell after another to his arsenal. They couldn't express his full power since they didn't involve his body, but his battle style would gain some variety.

There were too many eyes on him now. Every powerhouse had developed countermeasures to his iconic attacks. Improving his abilities wasn't enough. Noah needed more of them to compete in that realm.

That eventually led to the biggest problem. One of Noah's strongest spells was the Demonic Form, but it seemed that all the world had developed countermeasures against its corrosive effects.

Night could exploit it to express its power, but that didn't make his corrosive smoke more useful. Noah had used the spell only to enhance his body and as a form of protection in the last battles.

The Demonic Form was peculiar among spells. It had a strange form that grew according to the number of Kesier runes inside a mental sphere.

That was one of the reasons why Noah had never attempted to modify it. It appeared too complicated for him, and he didn't want to risk ruining his greatest asset.

However, he was in the last stage of the heroic ranks now. His Divine Deduction technique had rank 6 mental energy as a fuel, and his dark star pushed his abilities far beyond their normal limits.

It was time to improve the Demonic Form, and the Black Mark spell seemed perfect for his needs.

Chapter 1095 1095. Roots

Noah studied the roots entangled on the floating Kesier runes for months before feeling confident enough to modify them.

The Divine Deduction technique had never stopped illuminating the insides of his mental sphere in that period. That slowed down his training with Sword Saint a bit, but Noah had never held back when he found a way to improve his power.

The Demonic Form and the Black Mark had similar effects. Noah could already imagine the corrosive smoke carrying poisonous properties on top of its corrosive ability.

Still, he needed to modify the Demonic Form spell's very core if he wanted that to happen. Noah had to fuse the original idea behind the Black Mark spell into the roots, which was an invasive procedure.

Noah didn't focus only on the roots' structure when he studied his spell. He paid particular attention to the laws in their fabric and how they interacted with the Kesier runes.

The more he learnt about that diagram, the more he realized how complex it was. Yet, he understood that certain tricks were behind the creation of spells that didn't have limitations to their power.

The Warp spell, the Shadow Copy spell, the Body-inscription spell, and the Demonic Form all had external factors connected to their diagrams. The last two had quite obvious requirements, while the others only needed stronger mental spheres.

Having more external factors allowed the diagrams to be less complicated. They could have fewer lines since part of their effects depended on things unrelated to their core.

However, the Demonic Form ignored that theory. Its roots acted as if they were a parasite drawing power from the Kesier rune, even if they didn't hurt them in the slightest.

That would typically make any modification more difficult, but it made it easier for Noah. If he could treat the spell as a living being, he could make use of his expertise.

Noah felt as if he wanted to improve the species of the Demonic Form when planning its modifications. The roots weren't an actual lifeform, but that wouldn't matter as long as they behaved like one.

At first, Noah began experimenting with the small bits of roots that tried to cover the Seventh Kesier rune's almost-invisible shape.

Noah was nowhere near the seventh rank, so only the rune's faint shape had begun to form in his mind. The roots wanted to cover that too, but they could only hang from the Sixth rune after failing.

Imbuing wills in the matter was something that Noah had done since his time in the Royal Academy. The Elemental Forging method proved itself exceptionally useful in that situation.

Noah had to break down the Black Mark's spell to its core, translate it into a will, and forge it into the roots. His centuries of training in that inscription method made him confident in succeeding without hurting the spell.

A few failures happened, but Noah only lost part of the superfluous roots in the process. That didn't affect the spell, so he felt at ease in suffering those losses.

A few positive results happened as he became more experienced with the procedure. Still, Noah cut away those forged parts anyway since he wasn't satisfied with their power.

The experiments stretched on for an entire decade. Noah did nothing but training, sparring with Sword Saint, and modifying the Demonic Form in that period.

Then, when he finally obtained satisfying results, he entered the last stage of the experiment.

Noah couldn't allow himself to fail at that point. He was about to modify the core of the Demonic Form spell. Any mistake would damage one of his strongest weapons.

The First Kesier rune had the least number of roots, but the spell's core was there. Every effect and ability of the Demonic Form came from a thick root that gave birth to all the other ones.

Noah reviewed the procedure multiple times before approaching the First Kesier rune. He used the Divine Deduction technique to eliminate every flaw, and even his body reacted in the end.

'I will succeed,' Noah thought when he sensed his dark star spinning faster and improving his mental capabilities.

His determination had triggered one of the best features of his body. His star had reacted to the pressure that Noah felt when approaching the modification.

The thick root occupied Noah's vision. His ghostly figure floated in front of the First Kesier rune and called upon primary energy previously stored in his mind to begin the procedure.

During his experiments, Noah had found out that the dark matter was too heavy to interact with the roots without damaging them. The same went for his darkness, which forced him to use primary energy to perform the forging.

'Soft without lacking intensity,' Noah thought as a rune surged from the depths of his mental sea and reached the cloud of primary energy next to him.

The rune had a peculiar shape. It was a black spot with uneven edges that tried to spread in the environment.

That was the rune created to push the Black Mark spell to the sixth rank. Dark matter made its entire structure, but Noah had to sacrifice it at that time.

The rune fell apart inside the thin cloud of primary energy. Noah pushed the dark matter out of his mental sphere, but he restricted the meaning that it carried inside.

He didn't care about the rune. He could always make another one when he had the time. What interested him was the pure meaning he had managed to translate when he updated his spells.

The core idea of the Black Mark spell remained inside the primary energy. That thin substance initially ignored the influence radiated by that meaning, but it started to bend as Noah's containment continued.

With Noah there, even the volatile primary energy had to acquire special features. After all, he had become able to interact with the laws when he reached the sixth rank. He didn't need to rely on the native's inscription method to control the primary energy anymore.

The Black Mark's core idea became less intense as the procedure continued. The primary energy absorbed it and gained its features, which slowly turned it into the forging material.

When the meaning vanished, Noah approached the thick root and began the inscription. The modified primary energy flowed inside the Demonic Form's core, forever altering its fabric.

The root began to shake as Noah continued to pour primary energy inside it. Its branches became thinner as their core weakened, and some of them directly fell from the runes to disperse in the mental sea.

Noah continued without minding those repercussions. He knew what was happening, so the wilting of the roots didn't scare him.

Little by little, all the branches fell. Only the core root remained on the Kesier rune by the time Noah completed pouring primary energy.

The root shook. It shrunk only to grow larger again in a cycle that continued for minutes. Noah could only watch at that point. The forging was complete. It was up to the diagram to adapt now.

The root's color changed. It was already black, but the addition of that meaning made it even darker. Its edges became difficult to make out since light couldn't illuminate it properly.

The tremors eventually stopped, and the root remained still as if dead. However, it remained attached to the First Kesier rune, which made Noah confident in the procedure's success.

As if answering to Noah's confidence, the root slowly started to enlarge. It was a timid growth initially, but it gained speed as it became used to its new structure.

Multiple branches grew from the central body, and an intricate diagram quickly appeared on the six Kesier runes as the roots covered their surface. They even tried to spread on the Seventh Kesier rune's faint shape, but they failed as their predecessors.

Once the structure stabilized, Noah felt a surge of power filling his mind. Something inside him had already predicted the power of his improved spell, and the result made him feel ecstatic!

Chapter 1096 1096. Return

Improving the Demonic Form put an end to the projects linked to his spells. Noah didn't lack fighting methods now. Actually, he had never been able to use so many abilities at the same time!

Runes with various shapes filled his mental sea, and black roots covered his Kesier runes. His spells were ready for battle, and Noah couldn't wait to test them in the open.

However, the world was still at peace, and Noah had to teleport between the Divine Cut and Chasing Demon's quarters for his training. The Hive had built a proper habitation for him, but he preferred to finalize the matters with Sword Saint before settling there.

As he poured more of himself inside his slashes, Noah's individuality advanced, pushing his dantian toward the peak of the fifth rank. It was only a matter of time before he became a fully-fledged powerhouse.

When he was almost eight hundred and fifty years old, an inevitable change occurred, and the peace in those Mortal Lands finally fell apart.

King Elbas had disappeared for centuries by then. No one believed that he had died in his search for the rank 7 Kesier Ape, but that didn't explain why he had been missing for so long.

The underground world was vast and messy. A sea of magma filled most of it and forced everything inside to move according to its currents.

Noah had been honest during the negotiations with King Elbas. His description of the currents was as accurate as he could make them. The journey toward the Ape God would only take a century, according to his calculations.

The delay in King Elbas' return hinted that something had happened, and the whole world learnt about that when the Royals' leader returned to the surface.

No one noticed anything at the beginning. There wasn't any earthquake or natural calamity to announce that event. Yet, the investigative buildings of the organizations soon saw something peculiar.

The period of peace had made those buildings quite useless. The heroic cultivators overseeing the nations' borders and the sea had to spend centuries observing the complete nothingness.

However, sounds of alarm resounded everywhere once they recorded the image of a crowned cultivator flying together with a tall ape that had six white runes on its fur.

The higher-ups of every organization received messages and came out in the open to witness that event with their eyes.

Noah was cultivating in front of the rank 7 Kesier rune when the message arrived. Dreaming Demon, Chasing Demon, Flying Demon, Elder Julia, and Skully were with him, and they all reacted in the same way at that news.

The six powerhouses teleported on the surface and set off for the eastern coast. Other rank 5 cultivators followed their example, and the teleportation matrices across the new continent shone to no end.

A crowd soon formed in the sky above the eastern coast. A total of ten rank 6 existences stood on the alliance's side and stared at the five Princes and Princesses floating above the sea.

The Empire had sent some troops too. God's Left Hand floated at some distance above the sea together with other cultivators. There was even another powerhouse next to her.

The world's best assets had gathered to witness the return of the strongest powerhouse in those Mortal Lands.

King Elbas' figure became visible at some point. He reappeared from a distant point in the sea and flew slowly toward his underlings. His golden robe shone on its own, and his crown reflected the sunlight, giving off a blinding radiance.

The rank 7 Kesier Ape floated by his side. A golden shield filled with runes surrounded the creature and forced it to fly alongside King Elbas. Still, it didn't restrict its movements inside the separate area.

The golden cage radiated a peak rank 6 aura. Its power was at the limits of the heroic ranks and managed to block the trapped creature's punches.

The Ape was weaker than Noah recalled. Its power had fallen in the quasi-rank 7 stage. Yet, its condition seemed to have improved since the last time. It appeared full of vitality and in a perfect state.

Even the missing piece of fur had reformed. No rune had appeared in that spot, but there were a few white pieces. It was as if the Ape's rank had regressed only to increase again.

Noah knew that such improvement was far from natural. He had left the Ape inside a sea of magma while its world crumbled. That wasn't an environment that could benefit its growth, especially in its weakened state.

King Elbas probably had intervened. The best inscription master of the world knew methods that could restore the Ape to a decent condition.

No one questioned the prowess of the golden cage. The experts didn't know how that item could contain a quasi-rank 7 creature, but the answer to their doubts was in the powerhouse flying next to it.

There was one aspect of King Elbas cultivation's level that shocked all the bystanders. The Royal had left when he was at the peak of the liquid stage, but now his dantian expressed the solid stage's power!

King Elbas had a breakthrough during his journey. He now lacked only one step before becoming a god!

"Father!" The Princes and Princesses shouted as they bowed when King Elbas reached them. The leader nodded at his underlings before inspecting the cultivators of the other organizations.

A lot had changed while he was away. Many cultivators had advanced to the sixth rank, and the Elbas family had lost most of its territories.

Moreover, the Royals had gone through three hundred and fifty years of suppression while the alliance had flourished on their old lands.

Second Prince straightened his position and handed a white orb to his father while keeping his head lowered. The item fell apart when King Elbas touched it, and the white gas that came out of it flew inside the leader's mind.

King Elbas kept his eyes closed for a second before reopening them and showing a wide smile. His gaze then went on the alliance's side as he gave voice to a playful comment. "You sure had fun while I was gone. Well, I expected much already."

The lack of anger in King Elbas' words surprised some of the experts on the scene, but Noah and a few others could understand how he felt.

King Elbas was a powerhouse in the solid stage. He didn't mind those worldly matters at all.

"I'll take back the snowy land and the bushland," King Elbas announced in a peaceful tone. "You can keep the others for now."

His announcement forced the various leaders to send a series of mental messages, but they quickly had to stop their actions since the Royal began to advance again.

King Elbas moved toward the alliance's side. The Princes and Princesses didn't follow him, so he was marching alone toward ten rank 6 experts.

"You!" The Ape cried when it noticed Noah from inside the golden shield. "You damned creature! Destroying my world wasn't enough. You had to send this damned human too!"

Noah ignored the cries of the beast and kept his attention on King Elbas. Yet, the latter didn't like that sudden outburst and waved his hand to activate some restrictions.

Faint chains appeared on the Ape's fur. They came from beneath its skin and suppressed both its physical strength and mental abilities.

The beast collapsed inside the shield. A few shrieks of pain came out of its mouth, but King Elbas' cold words silenced even them. "I told you to use human words."

Chapter 1097 1097. Invasion

King Elbas' actions showed how he had captured the quasi-rank 7 creature both internally and externally. Everyone could now understand how the Ape couldn't break through the golden shield.

The sudden outburst and suppression of the Ape didn't change what was happening. King Elbas was still walking toward the eastern coast, and the allied powerhouses had yet to make their move.

That was probably the best chance to kill King Elbas. He had just returned from a long journey, and his opponent had been a former divine magical beast.

His breakthrough was a problem, but there was a good chance that the Royals' leader was hiding some injuries. Also, he was far away from his domain now, so he couldn't use defensive formations.

Still, killing him would probably free the Ape God, and the Princes and Princesses were nearby. The alliance outnumbered them, but there was a solid stage powerhouse among their opponents.

King Elbas walked in the air showing his usual arrogant smile. It seemed as if he desired for his opponents to make a move. However, no one attacked.

"Let's defend!" Great Elder Diana transmitted through the alliance's inscribed notebooks, and everyone retreated toward the eastern coast.

Even Noah didn't object to that order. He didn't believe for even a second that King Elbas was unprepared. In his mind, he had already accepted that the alliance couldn't do anything to defeat him.

Differences in ranks and stages became harder to cross as the level increased. Both Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana had inscribed items that allowed them to express more power, but that was even more true for King Elbas.

Defeating him might be impossible, but they had no reason to do that. The alliance owned most of the world anyway. They could defend and continue to solidify their superiority.

King Elbas didn't chase those cultivators. He even let those in the fifth rank return toward the nearest teleportation matrices.

He didn't seem to care about anything around him. He had one goal, so he was going to walk toward it slowly.

Elder Julia and Chasing Demon took control of the Copying Technique deployed in the region mentioned by King Elbas. They prepared themselves for his arrival while the other higher-ups of the Hive remained nearby, ready to intervene if needed.

Great Elder Diana and other higher-ups of the Council did the same. They joined the Elders of the Hive in their waiting for King Elbas' arrival.

The Copying Technique activated before the enemy arrived. Countless magical beasts formed on the surface of the snowy plain and arranged themselves in a defensive formation.

Meanwhile, the cultivators living in the recently built domes and structures used teleportation matrices to abandon the area.

The region was about to see a solid stage powerhouse unleashing his power. Even Noah and the others didn't feel confident in surviving that.

The army of magical beasts had hundreds of different specimens that would follow precise roles meant to make use of their innate abilities.

Chasing Demon had become an expert with the Copying Technique. He didn't pick the creature to capture randomly but chose those that would benefit the overall defenses.

It was pointless to trap too many magical beasts. One single creature was enough to create a limitless number of copies, so diversity was better than sheer numbers.

Noah didn't help with the Copying Technique, but he could see that Chasing Demon had done an incredible job. Any expert in the magical beasts' field would praise him for his choices.

There were thousands of magical beasts at the peak of the fourth rank. They all had a water aptitude and specialized in long-range attacks. Their species were among the strongest of their kind too.

A series of peak rank 5 magical beasts stood in front of that army. Other water-type creatures specialized in long-range attacks filled the ground and acted as leaders of the swarm.

Noah recognized various kinds of seahorses, turtles, and giant fishes meant to pressure the incoming powerhouse.

Chasing Demon could avoid summoning so many weaker beasts, but doing that balanced the region's depletion of energy reserves. It was cheaper to have an army of rank 4 creatures than a single one in the sixth rank.

It didn't matter that King Elbas was in the solid stage. The constant assault of so many immortal creatures could probably affect him in the long run.

The fact that Chasing Demon had summoned such an army didn't mean that he didn't create copies of rank 6 creatures. A tall ape stood among the beasts. That was the previous king of the snowy mountain!

Entire organizations would find it challenging to deal with that army. The problem wasn't in the sheer number of troops but because they were virtually immortal!

King Elbas took a few days to arrive. He reached the sky above the snowy plain walking at his slow pace and wearing his arrogant smile. The Ape God was still inside the floating golden shield next to him, and the sight of the army silenced the creature.

Silence fell on the entire region too. The army of beasts went silent while King Elbas inspected the area. A tinge of surprise appeared on his expression, but he shook his head in the end.

King Elbas lifted his arm, and a drop of blood fell from his forefinger. The drop took fire as if descended toward the army, but it was only a small flame when it crashed on the ground.

Intense rumblings spread on the terrain, and crack opened in the entirety of the region. Tall tongues of flames came out of those fissures and enveloped the army of beasts.

The copies couldn't do anything against that attack. The power of a solid stage powerhouse wasn't something that they could oppose.

The once snowy plane transformed into a red environment after King Elbas' attack. Melted rocks and uneven terrain filled the area, and the region's structures became nothing more than fuming debris.

Only the dome stood still, but large cracks spread on its surface. The city under it had become visible too, which showed how much power it had already lost.

The region had become worthless after one attack. The Hive would have to spend decades fixing the damages only to bring it back to a decent state.

Chasing Demon could decide to abandon that territory. The Hive didn't need it. Its value came from the fact that the Elbas family couldn't occupy it.

However, the alliance had the chance to test King Elbas' power at that time, and the Copying Technique had yet to show all its tricks. It didn't hurt to waste some amassed "Breath" to defend it.

The army of beasts reappeared in less than ten seconds. The creatures didn't wait for the powerhouse to attack and launched their innate abilities as soon as they reformed.

The sky changed color. The reddish halo generated by the setting of the Sun disappeared, replaced by a blue radiance.

King Elbas saw the region disappear, replaced by an array of water missiles and currents that carried different properties.

The fabric of the sky fell apart. The air itself trembled until it crumbled under that myriad of attacks. A large passage to the void appeared, but the assault of abilities didn't stop.

The amount of energy depleted to launch those attacks was unfathomable, but even that wasn't enough to suppress the enemy powerhouse. The endless tide of abilities took fire at some point, and the flames spread until they reached the army of beasts, which crumbled under that counter-attack.

Chapter 1098 1098. Fire

The army of beasts suffered a complete defeat once again. One attack from King Elbas was enough to eradicate all the creatures in the region.

The fire that destroyed the beasts covered the ground and ruined its condition even more. Trails of dust then rose among the flames and flew toward the massive opening that had appeared in the sky.

The pulling force of the void was intense, but the world fixed that crack at high speed. No matter how numerous they were, the attacks of weaker creatures couldn't affect the fabric of the sky for too long.

In seconds, King Elbas and the Ape God remained the only figures in the sky. Not even a speck of dust had landed on the powerhouse's robe, which remained clean and tidy as if the last exchanges didn't happen.

A massive figure suddenly appeared behind them, and the temperature in the area dropped by a few degrees once its aura spread in the environment.

The previous king of the snowy mountain was a rank 6 White Ape in the middle tier. Chasing Demon had captured it after the invasion and made it part of the Copying Technique.

The White Ape was the second strongest magical beast trapped under Chasing Demon's quarters. Noah didn't know how the Patriarch had captured it, but the creature could now act as one of the protectors of the Hive.

Ice spread in the sky as the creature pounced at King Elbas. The powerhouse exploded into a fire wave that engulfed the tall white figure and melted the ice that had formed.

King Elbas became visible after his fire disappeared. He appeared clean and unharmed again, but he couldn't relax since a torrent of water-type attacks flew in his direction.

The army of weaker creatures had reformed while King Elbas dealt with the White Ape. They didn't hesitate to launch their innate abilities once their target reappeared, and the blue radiance filled the sky again.

King Elbas used his mental energy to stop those abilities right before they landed on him. Fire then covered their surface and spread toward the attacking beasts, burning them into ashes.

Right after the army crumbled, the White Ape reappeared behind him and tried to land a blow on his back. King Elbas had to explode into a sea of flames to take care of that threat, but he found water-type spells flying toward him again when the fire dispersed.

Chasing Demon and Elder Julia weren't giving King Elbas any time to breathe. They made use of the invincibility of the copies to pressure their opponent and exploit his casting time.

Tens of exchanges repeated themselves in the following hour. Chasing Demon changed the movements of the White Ape and altered the battle tactic from time to time.

The Copying Technique could express its real power with the backing of one of the world's strongest organizations. The Hive didn't lack resources, and the new continent's ground was rich of them too.

The Hive could go on for years. It had prepared for too long and stashed large quantities of fuel for the Copying Technique. It could defend against a single powerhouse as long as the lines of the formation remained intact.

King Elbas' reactions didn't slow down in the slightest under that assault. Instead, he became faster in countering the attacks after every exchange.

The only reason the copies managed to surprise him from time to time was that Chasing Demon often changed battle tactics. He even modified the structure of the army at some point to make the data gathered worthless.

King Elbas appeared suppressed by that defensive measure, but the allied powerhouses didn't dare to feel joyous about that event.

'He is studying the Copying Technique,' Noah thought as he watched King Elbas refusing to change his battle tactic.

The best inscription master in those Mortal Lands had items that could make his life more comfortable in that situation. Even slightly more powerful spells could help him deal with the assault better.

However, King Elbas refused to rely on anything different than his basic flames. He had used his higher energy during his first attack, but he had never called upon that power again.

Noah knew about his curiosity, so he guessed that the Royal had become interested in the Copying Technique. Losing some face to study more about its functioning was a trade that King Elbas was more than willing to make.

The atmosphere on the defending side was far tenser. The Hive was using its strongest defensive method, but that couldn't even force King Elbas to fight seriously.

Great Elder Diana sent message after message during the battle. She was instructing the inscription masters of the Council on King Elbas' habits and abilities in the hope that they could develop something able to counter him.

King Elbas eventually grew bored of that situation, and he stretched his arm again to throw two drops of blood toward the ground.

The drops took fire as they fell, becoming fiery arrows that pierced the broken surface and spread a sea of fire in the underground world.

The region crumbled after his attack. The ground fell downward, and the cracks already in place spread when deeper ones appeared.

The army of beasts became pale after that attack, and many of them stopped moving. Only the strongest creatures continued to launch abilities, but they weren't even worthy of consideration without the immense numerical advantage.

King Elbas shook his head and started to descend toward the ground as the spells nearing him took fire. His descent appeared undisturbed, but Chasing Demon soon proved him wrong.

The Patriarch of the Hive knew what King Elbas had tried to do with his last attack. He wanted to destroy the lines of the Copying Technique to take care of the threats' core.

Chasing Demon had played along. He commanded most of the army to remain still until King Elbas exposed himself. That moment luckily arrived soon.

The tide of beasts suddenly began to move again, and the White Ape reformed only to pounce at King Elbas from behind his back. Attacks came out of the creatures, and the area became blue again.

King Elbas snorted at that sight. That simple scheme wouldn't hurt him even if he decided to rely on weaker protective methods, but he felt pissed that Chasing Demon had managed to trick him.

That didn't only make him lose face. It also showed that he didn't understand the Copying Technique, let alone where its lines were.

A drop of blood came out of King Elbas' forehead, and a fiery shield formed once it took fire. The protection blocked the incoming attack and enlarged until it covered the entire region.

The ground didn't suffer from that attack, but the copied beasts in the area burnt when they touched the fire.

The army started to reform again, but King Elbas didn't want to waste any more time there. Three drops of blood came out of his hand, and a red halo filled the environment once they fell on the ground.

The entire area suddenly took fire. The whole region became a burning mess, and the superficial layers of the ground became ashes as King Elbas tried to reach the core of the Copying Technique.

Any human structure in the region disappeared, and entire pieces of ground vanished under the merciless fire. The flames continued to burn for a whole minute, and King Elbas dispersed them only once he found traces of the shining lines.

Chapter 1099 1099. Ancestor

The lines of the Copying Technique shone on King Elbas' face and illuminated the night. The Royal had successfully uncovered the inscription generating the endless tide of magical beasts, and he inspected it with great interest.

Noah quickly sent a message to Chasing Demon. The Patriarch was aware of King Elbas' curiosity, but Noah wanted to make sure that he knew how dedicated the Royal was as a researcher.

"Don't worry," Chasing Demon replied through a mental message, "I'm just getting started."

The lines of the formation shone more brightly after Chasing Demon sent that message. The army formed again, and the White Ape was among the creatures, staring at the powerhouse accompanied by the golden cage.

King Elbas was ready to activate some defensive method, but the magical beasts didn't attack. They stood on the charred ground, watching the powerhouse inspecting them with an interested gaze.

A second rank 6 aura appeared among the army at some point. A human figure flew above the beasts and landed on the Ape's shoulder before joining the creatures in their stare.

That figure didn't need presentations. He was the tall man with red hair and dark eyes who had started a war for the sake of his destruction.

King Elbas' eyebrows arched at that sight. Ravaging Demon looked down on him in an incredibly realistic manner. Even his centers of power matched his old cultivation level.

"I expected something similar when you captured his remaining consciousness," King Elbas announced, conscious that the experts in the distance would hear him. "However, this goes beyond my wildest expectations. You managed to replicate a powerhouse!"

King Elbas resembled a kid who had just discovered a new toy, but he expressed his excitement with a grace fit of his status.

The arrogance in his expression became less intense as he learnt about creations that he couldn't imitate. Still, his curiosity replaced that feeling, and his eyes began to shine with a golden light.

King Elbas rarely showed that aspect of his individuality in the open. It would be too easy to exploit his uncontrollable curiosity toward any form of inscription otherwise.

Yet, he now stood at the peak of the heroic ranks. There was virtually nothing in a lower plane that could threaten him. Only Shandal's return might force him to hold back, but the God of the Empire had no interest in suppressing such a promising expert.

Ravaging Demon didn't wear his iconic smile, but he lifted his hand to prepare his spell. King Elbas saw a scarlet flame appearing in his palm before a blue radiance filled his vision.

The tide of weaker beasts launched attacks that quickly took fire as the Royal counter-attacked. The White Ape created ice platforms in the air to run away from the flames, and Ravaging Demon remained on its shoulder as he waited for his moment.

Once the fire dispersed, the White Ape leaped from the platform to fall toward King Elbas. Ice surrounded its figure and transformed it into a massive spear that crashed on the powerhouse.

Ravaging Demon had jumped off the Ape when the ice began to cover it. He waited until the second wave of flame melted the spear and killed the beast inside it before flying toward King Elbas and triggering his attack.

A sea of flames spread on the region. A pure sense of destruction invaded the battlefield and fought the fire still lingering on the ground.

The rank 6 copies had both performed suicidal attacks. Chasing Demon knew that the Copying Technique alone couldn't defeat King Elbas, but he wanted to see if the Royal had a limit or showed flaws in his battle style.

King Elbas became visible once Ravaging Demon's flames dispersed. His robe was still clean, and he had suffered no injuries. Even that last assault had proven itself useless against him.

The copies reformed and resumed their endless assault. The Copying Technique managed to keep King Elbas busy for two more hours before deciding that it was time to move on.

The Royals poured four drops of blood on the shining lines under him, and fire spread in the region's underground world. A large chunk of the Copying Technique fell apart during the attack, but some inscriptions remained in place.

The region wasn't as lucky. It had already become a mess of scorching fissures and melted rocks due to the past exchanges, but now it crumbled downward since it had lost most of its underground area.

The terrain caved in. Some of the melted rocks began to flow across the new cracks, creating dense dark-red rivers.

The structure of the region remained unstable even after all the boulders and chunks of terrain settled. No more copies appeared around King Elbas, but he could sense traces of "Breath" gathering at some distance from him.

King Elbas wanted to follow those traces to reach another core of the Copying Technique, but three figures started to form after he walked for some time.

Ravaging Demon reappeared, and the White Ape reformed too. The third figure took more time to form, but it eventually became material in the shape of a giant snake.

Noah almost couldn't believe his eyes. The third beast that had appeared was a Flying Snake quite similar to the last ancestor of the other world!

Moreover, it radiated faint mental waves and carried traces of a dantian. Chasing Demon had summoned a creature killed by the Worldwide Heaven Tribulation!

"Do you like it?" Thirty-seven's voice resounded in Noah's mind when the Flying Snake formed completely. The automaton used a private channel to talk with him, so no one could hear their conversation.

"Did you use the ashes of the ancestor?" Noah asked. He had given the bucket to the automaton long ago, but he had almost forgotten about it.

The remains of the rank 6 creature had lost all their power. Heaven and Earth had been thorough in their destruction, so Noah didn't expect the automaton to do much with its ashes.

"They have been a pain to restore into a useful form," Thirty-seven replied. "I have treated them with the most nurturing materials for over a century to recover a small part of their original power. Then, I used the theory of the Body-inscription spell to create a drawing that resembled the original creature."

Noah was speechless. He remembered that the ashes didn't carry the slightest trace of the ancestor. They were nothing more than a common material, but the automaton claimed that he had partially restored them.

That went beyond Noah's comprehension. Thirty-seven's accomplishment resembled a resurrection rather than a restoration. He had also managed to put those results into use, which made them even more valuable.

"The creature isn't exactly alive," Thirty-seven continued, "But there are loopholes in the Copying Technique. Since it can replicate almost everything, you only need to give it the right inputs to create what you desire."

Noah guessed that the automaton was excited to see his creation finally joining a battle. He couldn't explain while Thirty-seven was so polite and expansive with him otherwise.

The Flying Snake radiated an aura at the peak of the middle tier, but it had a dantian near the peak of the liquid stage. When it came to its cultivation level, it was as strong as Great Elder Diana.

The Snake was a hybrid too, so it could rely on its physical strength. Noah didn't believe that the Council's Matriarch would lose in a direct fight against the creature, but that didn't diminish its value.

King Elbas didn't show any fear in front of the three rank 6 copies. His cultivation level was still far above theirs, but the constant assault of the Copying Technique was about to affect him.

He was only one cultivator. Even his immense power had limits, and Chasing Demon was doing his best to see how strong the Royal was.

Chapter 1100 1100. Spear

A violent battle unfolded on the melted and destroyed region that had once been a white and pure land.

King Elbas never expressed his real power during the battle, but the three rank 6 copies were slowly forcing his hand. Moreover, the army of weaker creatures reappeared from time to time and made him change his battle style.

The last attack with higher energy had destroyed part of the Copying Technique, but that was the domain of the Hive. Chasing Demon had covered entire regions with his inscriptions, so he only needed to summon the copies a bit farther away.

King Elbas' life was never in danger. The only capable of injuring him was the Flying Snake, but the creature never touched him.

It didn't matter what tactic Chasing Demon deployed. King Elbas only needed to explode into a raging inferno to destroy anything coming at him.

That was a sheer difference in power that numbers couldn't overcome. It was why armies had no chances against powerful beings and the proof that a higher cultivation level was above a swarm of ants.

However, the immortality of the copies made the situation quite tricky. King Elbas never managed to advance since his opponents always kept him busy with attacks that he had to block.

The situation would be different if King Elbas were a hybrid. A creature with a body capable of blocking those attacks could fly freely across that land and reach its goal in one sprint.

Yet, cultivators couldn't take that many attacks head-on. Their bodies were too frail, even in front of weaker beings.

King Elbas felt once again forced to unleash his higher energy after the three copies stopped his advance for more than three hours. Five drops of blood fell from his fingers and unleashed a raging fire that burned every shining line in sight.

The Royal began to advance again at that point, but Ravaging Demon, the White Ape, and the Flying Snake reappeared near the region's borders and pounced at him again.

All the experts watching the battle in the distance could feel King Elbas' annoyance. The Copying Technique might be unable to defeat him, but the expert couldn't eradicate it either.

There was no actual countermeasure once the inscriptions activated. Divine Demon had created the perfect defensive method, and his disciple was managing it with great ability.

A slight change occurred in King Elbas. He didn't suffer any injury, his robe was still tidy and shining, and his power didn't waver in the slightest. Yet, his complexion became slightly paler. The change was so subtle that many experts failed to notice it, but that event couldn't escape the eyes of the Hive's powerhouses.

The Copying Technique had affected King Elbas! Even solid stage powerhouses had to take the defensive method seriously!

It was needless to say that the Hive's power skyrocketed in the eyes of its enemies and allies. After all, the Copying Technique didn't show its real power since the Coral Archipelago's independence.

Many had forgotten how dangerous those inscriptions could be. Some powerhouses even wondered whether they had limits to their power.

The answer to that question was a clear "no". The Copying Technique only needed "Breath" and trapped creatures. Anything else came from the ability of the existence in charge of it.

The small organization that had managed to escape the three leading forces' control just a few centuries ago had become the most protected domain in the entire world. Those that still had grudges against the Hive could only give up on their vengeful plans at that sight.

Only an existence at the peak of the heroic ranks could attempt to seize something from the Hive. King Elbas was the sole power in the world that could succeed in that task without external help.

Even he had to accept his limits at some point. The copies were nowhere near his level, but their immortality was slowly getting to his nerves. Only his curiosity toward the inscription method kept him calm.

Still, King Elbas was losing face in front of the entire world to satisfy his curiosity. His grand and glorious return had turned into a messy battle where he couldn't come out as the winner with his base power.

It was with a bit of unwillingness that King Elbas decided to take the threat more seriously. A crimson spear appeared in his hand, and the air around the weapon burned when it touched its aura.

The world went silent when a weapon at the peak of the sixth rank made its appearance. Its power seemed to surpass what the heroic ranks could express, and Noah could sense the higher energy brimming inside its structure.

The spear's shape was quite simple. It only had one long blade on its tip, and its shaft was metallic. Yet, Noah knew how King Elbas created his higher energy, so he could see past those polished materials.

His dark star spun faster as his attention went on the spear. He could sense King Elbas in its fabric, and his expertise in the Elemental Forging method made him understand part of its core materials.

The sharp head felt like bones in his mind, and a faint smell of blood came out of the shaft. Other precious materials had fused with its structure, but Noah could confirm that King Elbas had used his body tissues as core materials.

That was what Noah had done many times in the past. Discovering that the two of them shared that type of creative process made him feel strange.

King Elbas didn't act. He kept his spear pointed at the ground and waited for his opponents' reaction. The truth was that he didn't want to attack with his inscribed weapon. He had already destroyed the region beyond recognition, so he tried to avoid making it more worthless.

Yet, the Patriarch of the Hive was a demon. He had chosen to waste an immense quantity of energy for the sole purpose of keeping the Royal at bay.

It didn't matter that the Hive had no hope of defending that territory. Chasing Demon had to show the price of attacking his domain, which turned out to be the region itself.

The Hive didn't need that land, but Chasing Demon would rather see it fall apart than ending in the hands of his enemies. If he couldn't have it, then no one could.

Nine figures appeared at that time on the charred land. Three copies of each rank 6 protector took form on the region's broken and burning surface and prepared their last suicidal attack.

King Elbas shook his head and let the spear fall. He didn't even throw it. His hand opened, and the powerful inscribed weapon began its descent.

Fire covered the spear as it fell downward. The copies didn't care about the weapon and unleashed everything they had on the cultivator flying above them.

Nevertheless, before their attacks or themselves could reach their opponent, the world turned red, reducing them into nothingness.

Some of the experts that were too close to the battle had to retreat once that scarlet radiance filled the environment. The spear had suddenly released its power, and everything in its range had fallen apart under its scorching pressure.

Then, when the weapon touched the ground, a massive fire rose and filled the entirety of the region. The flames even stopped at its borders and remained still as if they were a fiery defensive wall.