

DEMONIC 1151

Chapter 1151 1151. Exchanges

Second Princess tried to lead Noah toward a negotiation, but he didn't care about that. He had decided to take charge of the invasion, so he had to do it in his way.

The fire covered the giant as countless shining lines filled the environment. The sky above Divine Market city lit up, and the golden light that the inscriptions radiated overcame the natural illumination of the sunlight.

"I suggest you rethink your decision," Second Princess said as the aura of the inscriptions spread in the region.

Noah could sense many defensive methods with power in the sixth rank, but his feelings didn't change. His instincts told him that he didn't have to fear those defenses, so he could unleash his prowess without any restraint.

Dense dark smoke came out of Noah's figure and filled the entire area. Noah's higher energy spread to create the dark world, and the light radiated by the inscriptions dimmed under its influence.

Noah had learnt more about his dark world during his period of training. That technique created a personal domain that he could use to perform any task.

He had completed the evolution of the Demonic Sword inside the dark world. His success rate improved there, and he had an almost endless amount of dark matter in that environment.

The restrictions applied by the dark world were even more beneficial in a fight. Noah was against a powerhouse who was weaker than him, so his suppression would work far better.

The inscriptions were the only problem. Noah could kill Second Princess in a few exchanges without defensive formations, but she was too smart to leave her protections.

The Royal had learnt about the events inside the void through rumors spread by spies hidden in the various organizations. Forces as big as the Elbas family usually filtered those pieces of information due to their lack of honesty.

However, the matter concerning King Elbas' mission had involved only powerhouses, so there was a limit to the amount of data that the spies could understand.

They didn't know the details about Noah's prowess, and they didn't believe that he had enough power to break the formations anyway.

Noah had already attempted and failed in that, so the Royals didn't think that a simple breakthrough could give him too much power.

Of course, they were wrong. Improving the Demonic Sword had been enough to put Noah's power on par with other existences in the liquid stage. Noah could now do whatever he wanted. There were only a few people who were still willing to face him.

Noah crouched when he saw that the battle drew near. His Demonic Sword went backward as its aura fended off the pressure that came in their direction.

"You are a fool," Second Princess concluded before retreating even further.

Noah didn't hesitate, and he didn't even speak with the Royal. A massive surge of power gathered on his figure, and the world's fabric bent under the might released by his aura.

Second Princess wore a broad smile on her face, but her expression froze when she sensed the aura accumulated during the attack's preparation.

Noah lunged forward, and a large hole appeared on the vast array of defensive formations. The giant in the distance crumbled too, but Noah didn't feel satisfied.

A series of white beams and armored humanoid puppets shot in his direction after the formations suffered that damage. Large ethereal arrows followed that counterattack, and a series of massive red whip followed those defensive methods.

Noah watched the array of attacks coming in his direction and lifted his blade. The Demonic Sword didn't suffer any damage during his last blow, and his dantian still had plenty of darkness left afterward.

The Demonic Sword began to tremble after it rose to reach his chest. Noah tilted its sharp tip slowly, and countless mirror images of the living weapon appeared around its main body as his blade descended.

The methods of the defensive formations were various and powerful. Second Princess had every reason to feel safe inside her area. Yet, Noah's technique appeared stronger than she had expected.

Noah's slash launched countless slashes that carried the power of the sixth rank. The defenses flying toward him crumbled under Sword Saint's technique, and no golden light ever hit him.

The slash had an unclear shape. Different attacks flew together with the massive black line that shot out of the Demonic Sword.

Fainter slashes accompanied the black line and created an array of sword arts that clashed with the defensive formations. One attack was enough to face all the blows launched by the inscriptions.

The slash cut the armored puppets and the beams in half. Its power allowed it to pierce the golden halo too, and some of its effects reached the defensive formations.

The shining lines above the buildings of Divine Market city trembled when Noah's slash hit them. The black line was thick and dense, and normal defensive methods couldn't deal with its power.

The defenses fell apart as Noah placed the Demonic Sword on his shoulder. The golden halo was already fixing those inscribed lines, so it was pointless to press the offensive further for now.

Analyzing the defenses of the area had the priority. Noah's attacks would be more focused on the flaws of the array only after he found them.

Second Princess had remained in a safe spot when the slash arrived. Its unclear form was a spectacle that a few experts could understand, and she wasn't one of them.

Noah's slash went straight, but many seemingly ethereal cuts appeared around it and created an attack that the defensive formations had a hard time blocking.

It wasn't as strong as the lunge, but it carried an innate boundlessness that she couldn't face no matter how she approached the attack. One slash appeared to contain every sword art in the entire world, but some of its ethereal images were too faint to inflict the desired damage.

The formations almost reformed by the time Noah decided to raise his sword again and prepare himself for the next attack.

Noah didn't have any specific method to defeat the formations. There were too many defenses, but his attacks could pierce them and defeat any counterattack that came in his direction.

His only option was to pressure the defensive formations as much as he could before calling the other Elders for help. Still, that was his last resort since he wanted to complete the task alone.

Seizing one of the most protected places on the new continent by himself would improve his status and make the Hive even more dangerous in the minds of every other force.

King Elbas' absence and Chasing Demon's death had left an empty spot that everyone wanted to fill. Rebels and smaller organizations couldn't wait for any of the forces in charge of the world to commit mistakes and allow them to become the new Coral Archipelago.

However, Noah intended to show that the Hive was on a completely different level to scare away any spy or expert who had doubts about its power. Chasing Demon wouldn't be able to see that, but every cultivator would know that the Hive had reached those heights with him as its leader.

"I'm not the Demon Prince of the Hive anymore," Noah said as his blade began to vibrate. "I'm Defying Demon, the best cultivator in history."

"It doesn't matter who you are," Second Princess replied as she stepped forward to fly among the golden halo fixing the formations. "You are only a powerhouse, and these defenses have a high-endless source of energy. You need an army of rank 6 cultivators to overcome them."

Noah didn't answer. The time for words was over, and he had already conveyed what he wanted the world to hear. Now he only needed to attack the defensive formations until he eradicated them.

Chapter 1152 1152. Training area

The Demonic Sword released intense vibration that spread among the dark world's fabric. The dark matter inside the blade made Noah's new technique resonate with the weapon's intentions.

Noah had fused his higher energy inside the Demonic Sword after it reached the sixth rank. The process didn't only make the weapon longer and sturdier. It even added a few effects that he had yet to show to the world.

Sword Saint's techniques were incredible. The power that they could express surpassed the natural limitations of a cultivator's rank and relied on the true meaning of the divine entity's law to unleash their might.

However, Noah's law was different. He had yet to give it a proper form and true meaning, but he knew that he couldn't rely on Sword Saint's attacks to grow.

Noah used Sword Saint's techniques because their raw power was immense, but he had to reach that point with his arts if he wanted to push his expertise forward.

That meant using all his assets to give birth to new personal techniques. It was the same hindrance that he had to overcome when he infused his spells with his physical might. He only had to do the same with the dark world now.

"I like this scene," Night commented from inside Noah's space-ring.

Noah's dark world enveloped the array of defensive formations and suppressed the golden halo that they radiated.

The tremors that ran through the dark matter pushed the light backward, and some inscribed lines shattered due to the pressure that accompanied the expanding dark world.

Darkness was suppressing light. The Pterodactyl couldn't be happier when it watched that scene.

Noah ignored Night. There was only one goal in his mind. He had to solidify Chasing Demon's legacy to make his sacrifice even more meaningful.

The dark matter began to churn and gather around the Demonic Sword as the tremors continued. Second Princess felt a chill running down her spine as she saw the whole cloud empowering Noah's weapon.

It was as if the Demonic Sword had fused with Noah's world. The Royal took a few steps back as the golden light around her dimmed, and she waved her hand to trigger the formations' offensive again.

The fiery giant reformed and walked in front of the shining lines. White beams shot out of the cores that filled the formations, and armored puppets formed among the light and stepped forward to create an army around the titan.

Large ethereal arrows flew out of buildings that resonated with the formations, and massive red whips made their way through the dark matter to reach Noah.

The defensive formations revealed their full power and focused everything they had on Noah, who limited himself to raising his Demonic Sword above his head.

The gales of dark matter blew around the living weapon and made its blade disappear inside the dark world. Second Princess knew that Noah still wielded it, but she couldn't see what he was preparing.

The vibrations intensified as the attacks flew forward. The arrows, the whips, and the white beams fell apart under the suppression of the dark world, but the giant managed to reach Noah's position.

Many armored puppets detonated when they crumbled, but their explosions paved the way for the other constructs.

The dark world couldn't suppress so many attacks simultaneously, but the giant and the puppet's movements felt sluggish inside the dense tides of Noah's higher energy.

The giant slammed its fists toward Noah, but the dark world opened at that point. A three hundred meters long blade became visible as Noah tilted his wrist.

A massive amount of dark matter descended together with the Demonic Sword as Noah performed his slash. The blade appeared heavy, but it completed its attack in less than an instant.

The giant and the army of puppets disappeared as the dark matter carried by the blade engulfed them. Second Princess suddenly couldn't see anything since the gales of higher energy completely suppressed the formations' light.

When the golden light returned to illuminate the area around her, she saw a spectacle that left her speechless.

The formations' attacks were nowhere to be seen. Noah's slash had destroyed them, but that didn't surprise the Royal too much. He had done the same in the past exchange in the end.

However, her eyes remained fixed on the buildings' shining lines under the Elbas family's control. A massive opening had appeared right at their center, and some of the structures had crumbled during the attack.

Noah's attack had destroyed the formation's effects, pierced the inscriptions, and fallen on the buildings behind the defenses. Its energy had ended right before touching the ground.

Second Princess couldn't suppress her surprise as she fixed her eyes on Noah. Her gaze carried a faint trace of fear. The last attack would have landed on her if the formations didn't deviate its trajectory.

"Is this the best you can gather in one slash?" Noah asked the Demonic Sword as he held it in front of his face.

The blade roared a few answers, and Noah nodded before lifting the weapon above his head again.

Second Princess couldn't believe her eyes when she saw dark matter gathering around the Demonic Sword again. Seeing Noah talking with the blade was peculiar, but the fact that he could launch that attack left her completely speechless.

Countless inscribed items came out of her space-ring. Runes, shields, disposable weapons, and armor sets flew to fuse with the defensive formations to improve their abilities.

It was now clear that Noah could inflict heavy damages on that part of Divine Market city even if he couldn't eradicate the defensive formations.

His lunge and strange slash dispersed right after clashing with the shining lines, but that last attack contained too much energy to lose power so soon.

Second Princess even tried to send a few messages through her inscribed notebook, but Noah's dark world blocked every connection with the outside. The Royal was alone and isolated in that area.

"The Royal family has the best inscription masters in the world!" Second Princess shouted when she saw the tall blade descending again and carrying even more dark matter with it. "We will rebuild everything that you destroy in no time! Your efforts are pointless!"

Noah didn't answer. There was no point conversing with the Royal after the situation had reached that stage. Moreover, he had already set his mind.

That place had to fall in the Hive's hands. The Elbas family had to leave the new continent. He didn't care about anything else at that moment.

The blade fell, and another massive fissure opened among the formations. Second Princess' reinforcements prevented the attack from reaching the buildings behind the defenses, but they didn't manage to block it completely.

Dark matter flowed inside the fissure, but the healing golden light soon fended it off and started the restoration of the shining lines.

Second Princess activated more inscribed items at that point, and she even went on the ground to use communication methods that the dark world couldn't stop.

She needed reinforcements. That place had the best defenses in the entire new continent, but Noah brought them to their limits on his own.

Second Princess did her best to reinforce the formations and plan eventual improvements, but she stopped her tracks when she saw Noah lifting his sword again.

She didn't even have the time to do anything before the blade fell downward, carrying even more dark matter with it.

Many of the new defenses that she had deployed fell apart during the attack. The golden light found another massive fissure to fix when it didn't even finish rebuilding the previous one.

Second Princess remained still as the golden light filled her vision. She had already done everything she could, but that wasn't enough to stop Noah.

Her mouth opened when she saw Noah raising his sword again. The dark world churned even more as massive quantities of the dark matter gathered around the blade.

His expression barely seemed focused on the defensive formations. Second Princess felt that he was giving more importance to perfecting his slash rather than conquering that territory.

It was as if Noah had turned one of the most protected regions in the new continent into his training area.

Chapter 1153 1153. Determination

Divine Market city had remained mostly peaceful even after the alliance started its first invasion. Yet, a black cloud now hovered around the buildings belonging to the Elbas family.

The citizens had seen Noah arriving there and covering the area with his black smoke. That scene had initially made them panic, but they soon noticed that no shockwave came out of the cloud.

No sound echoed from there either, so the weaker cultivators didn't know what was happening inside the cloud. Only experts near the peak of the fifth rank or on the powerhouses' level knew about the reasons behind Noah's actions.

Second Princess didn't lose her cool. Noah had displayed an incredible prowess, but he was only one expert. His power went way above his cultivation level, but he had an entire array of formations against him.

The formations weren't simple defenses either. The Royals had made them for eventual new invasions, and they had amassed reserves of energy to make the inscriptions last for years.

Even if Noah could destroy many of them with his attacks, the region wouldn't fall in his hands anytime soon.

Noah was aware of that fact, but his drive went past what Second Princess could imagine. His unshakable determination had always been one of the main factors behind his growth, and now he had set his eyes on Divine Market city.

Second Princess witnessed how driven Noah was in that period. She had initially thought that he would give up after a few weeks, but a year passed by, and Noah was still assaulting the formations on his own.

Noah was relentless. He slashed continuously every other day and spent the rest of the time cultivating right in front of the formations.

If Second Princess decided to attack him while he trained, Noah summoned Snore and let it handle the defensive formations.

His stash of dark matter was virtually infinite, and Elders from the Hive entered the cloud every month to refill his space-ring with provision. The black hole in his chest would turn any energy he absorbed into nutrients anyway.

Noah even improved as his assault continued. He would treat his attack on the defensive formations as proper training for his sword arts, and Second Princess had to witness his growth.

Sword Saint's slashes represented the peak of the divine will's path, so Noah didn't improve much on them. His experience with blades couldn't match that mighty existence, and only centuries spent slashing would make Noah able to perform those attacks correctly.

On the other hand, Noah's martial arts improved by leaps and bounds. The Demonic Sword became more used to its new form as it kept on releasing slashes that relied on the dark world.

It also unlocked new abilities. The Demonic Sword already had a ductile structure, but fusing with the dark matter allowed it to transform into dense smoke if the situation required it.

On a structural level, the Demonic Sword had become almost indestructible. The dark matter reinforced and refilled eventual internal damages caused by excessive stress or pressure, so the blade never reached a critical condition.

The same went with Snore. Noah had yet to improve his Blood Companion, but the creature had reached incredible levels on its own when the dark matter evolved.

Its previous abilities had grown exponentially, and its elemental attacks resonated inside the dark world, becoming stronger and able to cover a larger area.

There were some drawbacks to Noah's driven assault. He never left the dark world, so he couldn't fly toward Chasing Demon's old quarters to train with the Seventh Kesier Rune.

Night complained too. Noah had yet to build a new body after the creature sacrificed its old one to defeat First Prince and First Princess.

Still, its protests came from its excitement. The Pterodactyl had seen how powerful Noah's dark matter had become, and it couldn't wait to obtain a body made of it.

The citizens became used to the dark cloud covering a third of Divine Market city after a year, but many weaker cultivators chose to leave anyway.

Their worries came from other cultivators' reports from the Royals' faction who had left the city already. Their description and stories of the events inside the cloud were enough to scare anyone away from the area.

The buildings inside the cloud had become deserted since Noah's attacks would land on them from time to time. Third Prince had even come there to assess the situation once, but there was nothing that he could do to help his sister.

The two Royals were too weak to join the efforts of the defensive formations. Noah was way above their level, so they could only allocate as many resources as possible and hope that he would eventually get tired.

Noah disappointed them. It didn't matter how many new defenses appeared inside the formations nor how time-consuming his attack was. He remained there, slashing madly with his Demonic Sword and making that region virtually uninhabitable for any expert.

Of course, the Elbas family wasn't willing to let go of that region. With most of their stronger assets gone or missing, the Royals needed to refill its ranks with new talents.

The Divine Stele was one of the best training areas in the new continent. Losing access to it would only worsen the already awful situation in which the Elbas family was.

Noah's assault didn't stop after the first year. He kept the dark world active even after two more years had passed, and the Royals could only grow more desperate about the situation.

The assault didn't inflict much structural damage. Noah's slashes would reach the buildings from time to time, but those structures' value wasn't high.

However, the siege depleted an immense amount of energy, and it also stopped most activities in that part of the city. The cultivators who would benefit the most from the Divine Stele couldn't walk on its streets because Noah was a constant threat.

The exchange of resources with the other factions wasn't possible, and the Royals didn't have anything to bargain to make Noah stop.

The dimensional portal wasn't even an issue anymore since King Elbas was out of the political scene. Only he could close it at will, so no one could affect it now that he was gone.

The Royals' desperation reached its peak after ten years spent in those conditions.

Noah had learnt to know the defensive formations so well that he managed to make his slashes land on the ground quite often. The power of his attacks had also increased, so that part of Divine Market city became even more unlivable.

Second Princess and Third Prince did their best to keep that land, but the resources spent were a heavy blow to the Elbas family's economy.

The region didn't produce anything and only consumed resources. Training cultivators was always an investment, but the Royals couldn't do that either in those conditions.

The situation was even worse since the Hive and the Council had severed every trade with the Elbas family. The Royals felt lucky that they still had territories in the other world in that political environment.

When Noah's assault entered its twentieth year, the Royals knew that they had to make a decision. Their options were quite limited, but they tried everything before going for the approach they had tried to avoid.

At first, Second Princess tried to contact other powerhouses of both Hive and Council, but she received no reply. Her focus then went on trying to negotiate an alliance with the Shandal Empire, but God's Left Hand limited herself to refuse them.

With the whole world ignoring them, the Royals had to give up on their claims over Divine Market city and relocate most resources and formations in the Royal Academy.

The event happened silently. One day the formations activated, and the other day they didn't shine anymore.

Noah had never managed to eradicate the defenses, but his relentless assault had driven the Elbas family away.

Chapter 1154 1154. Rare

Even if the Elbas family left Divine Market city silently, the repercussions that the event had on the world were quite loud.

Noah had singlehandedly driven away what everyone thought to be one of the world's strongest organizations from a divine resource. That alone spoke for how the Royals' power had fallen after the mission at the center of the plane.

The experts gave Noah credit, but he wouldn't have succeeded if the Elbas family had been at its previous peak. It didn't matter how amazing he was. His cultivation level wasn't high enough to take on a major organization on his own.

Noah's achievement announced to the world that the Elbas family could lose, but only the Council could benefit from that discovery. The Shandal Empire had gained access to the new continent again, but it was in no condition to start a war.

Great Elder Diana saw the outcome of Noah's assault as the signal that the Elbas family's defenses couldn't endure a proper attack for long. The alliance could finally get rid of that organization once and for all.

Noah retreated to his quarters after his twenty years long solitary battle ended. He had ignored many friends and projects after returning from the separate reality, and it was time to give them some of his time.

"Is your mourning over?" June asked when she saw Noah entering his underground quarters. She had begun to cultivate there while he sieged Divine Market city, and her cultivation level had slowly neared the peak of the fifth rank.

Noah could see that it would take her one century or so to become a powerhouse, and the reports of the Hive told him that other experts were in a similar state.

Daniel had continued to progress steadily. His position inside the Hive had long since solidified. He was now in charge of a few factions inside the organization.

He had become the lead alchemist of the Hive, and he even had a few loyal apprentices. Elder Julia would also send him to meetings with the Council too since his character suited those events.

Elder Justin had reached the solid stage and was progressing nicely. The news of Chasing Demon's death had pushed him to enter a long period of seclusion, and he intended to come out only after he became a powerhouse.

Elder Colleen and Elder Ingrid were in a similar situation, even if their level was still around the solid stage's halfway mark. Many other Elders had also advanced through the stages of the fifth rank, which gave the Hive positive prospects.

Noah knew that cultivators couldn't just train to reach the sixth rank. Many of those promising experts would remain stuck near the peak of the fifth rank for a long time and possibly forever.

Stepping on the path to become a law wasn't something that everyone could do. A single flaw in their individuality could ruin their future as cultivators and stop their advancements forever.

Ravaging Demon was the best example to describe the harshness of the cultivation journey. His talent was immense, and his drive boundless. However, he founded his existence on a flawed core, which forced him to resort to the Royal Pool to advance.

"I think part of Chasing Demon wanted to die," Noah replied while nearing his lover. "Maybe he has never been completely alive after Charming Demon's death."

June was cultivating on a praying mat, but she interrupted her training to pull Noah down with her. She then made him sit so that she could use his lap to lay her head.

"We have outlived old monsters," June commented as she closed her eyes to immerse herself in Noah's scent. "We have become them. I recalled only recently that we are more than nine hundred years old."

"Who counts anymore," Noah replied while caressing her hair. His gaze moved through the large training hall, and he couldn't help but compare it to the small room that he had when he was still inside Balvan Mansion.

Most of the people that he had met in his life were dead, and only a few of them had died of old age. Noah had even killed many of them through his journey. Still, he could now stand among those at the peak of the heroic ranks.

The mountains of corpses had become tall enough to make him peek at the divine ranks. Noah felt close to the end of his journey in the lower plane, but he knew that there was still an abyss between him and the Immortal Lands.

"Do you think that King Elbas is dead?" June asked and broke the peaceful silence that had fallen between the couple.

"No," Noah replied honestly, "He will probably reappear in a millennium or so, flaunting how awesome he is. If I have to rely on my instincts to judge, I can't imagine him dying in a lower plane."

"You don't even know where you sent him," June complained in a teasing tone, "But you are sure that he will reach the Immortal Lands. Should I be jealous?"

Noah smiled, but his expression turned serious when he reviewed King Elbas' prowess. His answer made June wear a stern face too. "We gave him the greatest struggle of his life. I can't imagine how powerful he will be after he overcomes it."

"Do you fear him?" June asked.

"Of course," Noah replied as if it was the most obvious thing in the world. "The Hive already has a contingency plan ready in the eventuality that he returns as a divine entity. We have the same for Shandal and every other threat that we can't face."

"Which is?" June questioned him.

"Hide until you are strong enough to face them," Noah gave another honest answer.

The Hive's greatest advantage was Divine Architect's separate dimension since it could become the best hideout during a crisis that it couldn't face.

Noah didn't like to hide any more than other experts on his level, but there were threats that even entire organizations couldn't face. It was pointless to engage in a battle that he couldn't win if he had a way out of it.

The couple chatted for a while before resuming their normal lifestyle. Noah and June still lived together, but their cultivation sessions lasted for entire weeks, and they had many projects to handle.

The best they could do as a couple was to set specific days every few months that they had to spend together. That didn't interfere with their training and gave them breaks from an otherwise dull schedule.

Noah could finally focus on improving his Companions in that period. The alliance had begun to pressure the Elbas family's domain, but he had already done his part. He would join the battle only after he completed all his projects.

Improving Snore turned out to be relatively easy. The Blood Companion had an innate connection with the dark world since it had acted as a catalyst for Noah's elemental attacks.

The Demonic Sword had evolved and fused with the dark matter easily because it was a mirror of Noah's existence. Still, Snore accepted the improvements because the dark world was its natural environment.

Undoing and reassembling the Blood Companion core's structure was extremely easy inside the dark world. Noah barely had to make any effort to replace body parts that didn't suit its new power anymore.

That saved Noah a lot of time, especially when it came to the testing phase. He only had to forge organs that could empower Snore's elemental attacks.

Instead, Night's improvements took longer to make. Noah had promised the Pterodactyl its final body, but that meant creating a proper living being where he would put the creature's consciousness.

It also meant that Noah had to make it able to grow. Night was different from Snore. It wanted to be its own existence that didn't need Noah to improve.

Noah had to do all of that while improving the Pterodactyl's innate ability. His tests in the past had given him plenty of data, and his conclusions led him to use the rarest material in his space-ring.

Noah had managed to retrieve some pieces of Royal Metal from the landmass in the yellow sea, and they appeared to be perfect for Night's species.

Chapter 1155 1155. Improvements

The Royal Metal was quite peculiar as a material. It changed its shape according to the individuality poured inside it, and it crumbled once it obtained a complete meaning.

It was also incredibly sturdy. Noah recalled how no one in the group of experts had managed to seize shards of the metal from the black landmass. The pieces in his possession came from one of the giant's attacks.

Night's innate ability made it transform into darkness whenever it attacked. Its structure interacted with laws during its assaults, and the task required its strange body to work correctly.

Noah found replicating that ability quite hard. He had succeeded after many tests, but he always felt that he couldn't quite express Night's true potential with the previous bodies.

The dark matter did its best in aiding Night's innate skills, but the Royal Metal could bring those abilities to a superior level. The only problem was the self-destructive behavior of the material.

For the first time in his life, Noah had to mess with the laws inside materials for the forgings.

The Royal Metal didn't bend or break, but Noah didn't need to modify its shape. His focus was on its fabric, and he spent months identifying the laws that triggered the unwanted effects.

Flawed raw laws made that material. Their goal was to search for meanings, and Noah had every intention to satisfy their wish, but he wanted to remove their annoying after-effect.

Identifying his targets didn't give Noah the ability to remove them. He didn't have the power to cut through the Royal Metal, so he couldn't cut away those laws either.

Yet, he knew a particular creature with spectacular piercing abilities, which could improve the final product if it spread its darkness inside the Royal Metal.

"You want to create a series of bodies that I have to destroy to get the final one?" Night asked when Noah told it about his plan.

The Night-blade Pterodactyls were spectacular when it came to affecting laws. Night had managed to destroy formations' cores while ignoring every defense when it was only a small bird. It could do the same for the Royal Metal with the right body.

The Pterodactyl was nothing more than a huge empty head, but it analyzed the black spikes that Noah had laid on the ground with great interest.

Noah didn't need to point out the exact laws that it had to cut away. His mental connection with the creature was enough to give it a target. The only problem was whether Night could pierce the metal.

"I will need twenty bodies to complete the task," Night eventually said. "I've never seen this material before. I will destroy part of me every time I enter its fabric."

"What are you willing to do for the perfect body?" Noah asked while wearing a smirk, and Night didn't hesitate anymore.

The two of them began a long project that saw Noah building good bodies only for the Pterodactyl to destroy them whenever it attacked the spikes.

Noah didn't deplete precious materials since Night's bodies only required dark matter. Still, he couldn't hold back on their qualities since the creature wouldn't be able to cross the metal otherwise.

The project consumed a lot of time, but Noah soon optimized the forging process with the dark world. Night also attacked while inside it to improve its piercing ability.

Night managed to remove the last of the unwanted laws from the spikes after destroying sixteen bodies that had the power of the sixth rank.

Experts would go crazy if they heard those numbers, but Noah had long since stopped considering rank 6 resources important. Only top-tier resources and divine items could interest him.

The black spikes fell apart after Night attacked their fabric. They became a thin sand-like material that carried a faint trace of the Pterodactyl's aura.

Noah felt delighted with that outcome, and he began the construction for Night's final body immediately.

To make Night able to grow, Noah had to infuse part of the dark matter with meanings retrieved from its consciousness. The Pterodactyl didn't follow other magical beasts' normal anatomy, so he had to use specific instincts to make his higher energy behave as if it was Night's original body.

The process took a long time since Noah had to wait for Night's consciousness to recover after he forged a part of dark matter. He had applied the theory of the Will-consuming runes on the Pterodactyl.

Then, he forged the sand-like material with the infused dark matter to create a ten meters tall body that had wings capable of covering a fourteen meters large area.

Of course, the body carried the characteristics of the Night-blade Pterodactyls. It only had edges and didn't have any organs. Still, the Royal Metal had fused with its fabric, so it wasn't only dark matter anymore.

Noah ultimately fused Night's consciousness with its new body, and the creature soon tested its abilities.

"It feels strangely comfortable," Night commented after it flew for a while. It had even gone in its breeding area to test its innate ability, and the results left it quite amazed.

"I don't feel any resistance when I attack," Night said in an excited tone. "I can transform faster, and I feel lighter even if I can sense that the body is heavier. I can even feed on the darkness that I create!"

Night couldn't contain its excitement, but Noah limited himself to flag another project as completed. With all his companions taken care of, there were only a few things left to finish.

The runes immersed in his mental sea were useful assets that Noah had to pair with martial arts to make them suitable for his species. He also had to complete Sword Saint's training, but he wasn't sure that it had an end.

The strange diagram that he had retrieved from Shandal's separate dimension had yet to react to his energies, so Noah didn't spend much time analyzing it.

Instead, the other reward became far more tempting now that his body was about to reach the middle tier.

Noah suppressed the faint hunger that had appeared in that period and focused on pushing his body and dantian toward the next level.

It was better to rely on the winged creature's remains when his body's requirements reached levels that he couldn't satisfy with the world's resources.

His dantian didn't have the same problems, and it advanced in the liquid stage a few years before he hit the one thousand years mark. Noah had spent only a bit more than a century in the gaseous stage, but the raw laws had benefited his growth in ways that surprised even him.

Advancing in the liquid stage didn't make his dark matter change. The dark hole in his chest became able to amass more energy and purify nutrients better, but its functions remained the same.

The sudden breakthrough made Noah the strongest expert in the Hive, and the other powerhouses in the organization pressed him to hold an official ceremony to announce the event.

The Demons and Elder Julia wanted him to take the role of Patriarch even if he wouldn't handle any political matter. They only wanted Noah to become the face of the Hive.

Noah didn't mind that task. His job would be to defend the Hive and deal with other significant problems, which were almost non-existent in that period of peace.

He would have to make decisions regarding worldwide events, but his mindset was perfect for an organization like the Hive.

In his mind, Noah had already accepted that role, but he wanted to complete another task before appearing in public to announce that event.

His body was at the peak of the lower tier, but it required valuable resources to breakthrough. Noah didn't want to use the winged beast now, but there were powerful creatures in the world that could provide what he needed.

Chapter 1156 1156. Fog Demon

Noah had taken note of the rank 6 magical beasts that he found during his many adventures. He had always known that his body would require them at some point, and that moment had arrived.

Even when his battle prowess had reached the powerhouse's level, he had decided to ignore those creatures since many of them weren't in the lower tier.

Still, Noah was on a completely different level now. He firmly believed that magical beasts in the middle tier wouldn't be a problem with his current prowess, and he wanted to test himself anyway.

Moreover, the world didn't offer him many incentives. The alliance had resumed its assault on the Elbas family's domain, but he had nothing to gain out of it.

Without King Elbas, the Royals weren't enemies worthy of his time. Yet, Noah loathed spending centuries secluded in his quarters, so a hunting session was the perfect adventure for the current period.

Noah had two worlds as hunting areas, and both of them had a sea with their fair share of powerful creatures. However, tracking those magical beasts would take him a while, so he preferred to take care of those inhabiting the landmasses first.

The new continent's fauna was a mess due to the many changes in the political borders and the constant expansion of the leading organizations.

Many rank 6 magical beasts that Noah had found in the past were either dead or held prisoner inside formations. Even the king of the snowy mountain had fallen prey to the Copying Technique.

Noah had always known that the seas were more reliable hunting areas, but he wanted to take care of the landmasses first. He immediately thought about the two peculiar danger zones in the old continent once he made his mind.

According to the reports accumulated through the years, the mystical fog and the mountain chain that divided the old continent into three areas hid rank 6 creatures.

Noah had found one of them inside the mystical fog when he searched for the remains of the Demon Sects, so he was quite sure that even the mountain chain had a creature on that level too.

'The mystical fog first then,' Noah thought as he left his quarters to fly toward the old continent.

The last time he traveled there, Noah had required an emblem that stated his peaceful intentions. Yet, the old political borders didn't exist anymore, and his cultivation level was so high that he didn't require any permit to fly in countries outside of the Hive's domain.

The Shandal Empire couldn't object to anything he did, and the Council would even organize events to welcome him properly if it knew about his arrival.

Noah reached the old continent and entered the mystical fog without contacting nor warning anyone. Only June knew that he had left and why.

The environment inside the mystical fog didn't change in those years. That danger zone had resisted the war against the Shandal Empire, and the powerful beings that inhabited it had remained the same.

The Fog Demons were still the overlord of the area. Sparse packs of hyena-type and wolf-type magical beasts occupied the peripheral regions, but they mostly served as food for the rulers.

Noah ignored every creature in the fifth rank and flew directly toward the old continent's eastern coast. He had found the rank 6 magical beast in that area during his last exploration, and beings on that level rarely moved from their lairs.

Just as Noah had predicted, he sensed the presence of a creature in the sixth rank when he neared the spot that once featured the entrance to Divine Architect's separate dimension.

Noah didn't have the time to analyze the beast in his last exploration, but he could recognize its species even before entering its range now.

It was a Fog Demon that had taken the shape of a giant Three-headed Hyena. A few weaker creatures belonging to that species patrolled the lair, but they couldn't even notice Noah nearing them.

Noah knew the right approach to hunt Fog Demons. They relied on the fog around them to launch attacks and build protections, so hunters would usually try to get rid of it before launching a surprise attack.

The Fog Demons' actual bodies were weak, and they barely met other creatures' standards on the same level. Yet, they were quite threatening in a foggy environment.

Noah wanted to test himself, so he didn't rely on his knowledge in the magical beasts' field to face his opponent. Instead, he descended toward the lair while letting his aura run wild in the environment.

The pressure that he generated startled the weaker beasts that began to roar in his direction. There was mostly fear in their minds, but they couldn't leave their leader alone.

The rank 6 Fog Demon raised its foggy heads to stare at Noah. It had been a long time since someone had challenged it, but its instincts didn't become dull in that long period of peace.

Noah unfolded his consciousness, and sharp mental waves covered the area, unleashing a wave of destruction that the old continent's ground couldn't endure.

Noah's mental waves resembled massive blades that fell on the area, creating large cracks on the frail terrain and killing some of the unfortunate weaker creatures that had happened to touch his consciousness.

The Fog Demon roared in anger, but Noah could recognize how the cry was only an imitation of the Three-headed Hydras' voice. Still, the creature revealed its real power when it accepted Noah's challenge.

'Middle tier,' Noah thought as the Demonic Sword came out of his space-ring to fly in his hand.

The Fog Demon didn't wait for Noah to attack. Part of the fog around the beast solidified to create a series of spikes that flew toward him.

Noah sprinted forward, leaving only a human-shaped crack in his previous position. By the time the storm of spikes reached that spot, he had arrived next to his opponent.

The Fog Demon noticed Noah only when it was too late. He had already completed his slash when the three heads turned toward him.

A tall black line landed on the foggy body of the creature and dug deep inside it. The slash even cut the ground on the sides that cracked and shattered under the might unleashed.

A surprised expression appeared on Noah's face when he saw that his attack didn't reach the other side of the foggy body. He expected such defenses from other beasts' actual skin and muscles, but he didn't think that the Fog Demons' innate ability could be so strong.

The rank 6 specimen's control of the fog had allowed it to create an armor capable of withstanding Noah's casual slashes. That achievement wasn't something that Noah could underestimate.

The Fog Demon threw its heads toward Noah. He could dodge the attack easily, but he decided to face it with his bare body.

Noah let go of the Demonic Sword and punched at one of the heads while using his free hand to stop the other one. His knee rose to land a blow on the third one.

The fog that made the heads shattered under Noah's blows, but he found his limbs stuck inside that dense gas once they dug through its surface.

Spikes then grew from the foggy body and tried to impale the restrained Noah, but the Demonic Sword slashed at the heads to free him of those restrictions. He suddenly roared too, and a starry sky spread in the area.

The Fog Demon could endure Noah's blows because its body was on a higher level, but the black flames destroyed many layers of its foggy armor and pushed it back by a few hundred meters.

Chapter 1157 1157. Carried away

'Its body is only a channel for its innate ability,' Noah thought as the Demonic Sword flew back in his hand.

Generally speaking, his body had long since surpassed the standards of magical beasts and hybrids. His physical strength was far superior to those creatures, and it allowed him to deal with stronger beings at times.

The Fog Demons had a weak body, but they focused all their power on their innate ability. Since Noah's opponent was in the middle tier, his physical strength and casual slashes didn't manage to eradicate its foggy armor.

'I should take this a bit more seriously,' Noah concluded, and a series of saber-shaped runes came out of his palm before surrounding his figure.

Noah knew that the fastest way to deal with the creature was to summon the dark world and rely on his strongest slash. Still, he had other abilities that he didn't test in a proper battle yet.

The black fire kept on burning, but the beasts' armor enlarged as more fog gathered inside it. The gas also became denser, and the flames couldn't pierce it anymore after that.

The beast molded the fog around it to create a series of giant Hyenas that ran toward Noah. They were fast, but Noah slashed a few times with the Demonic Sword to launch multiple black lines that divided the copies in half.

He then sprinted forward, and the array of saber-shaped runes shot in front of him to create a rotating drill that vibrated together with his living weapon.

The primary energy that had gathered in the battlefield flowed inside them and improved their power. Noah's new sabers were in the liquid stage of the sixth rank, but they grew further as his destruction nourished their form.

The Fog Demon tried everything to stop his charge. It launched other Hyenas copies, spikes, and it even created dense walls. However, the array of sabers pierced everything and made Noah reach his opponent in a blink.

The beast roared as its armor exploded outward. That condensed gas destroyed the saber-shaped runes that had lost a lot of their power during the charge, but it wasn't enough to fling Noah away.

Noah almost placed a knee on the ground as he stopped right under the two meters long ant that had come out of the fog and focused his momentum on the Demonic Sword. Then, he performed an upward slash that reached the creature.

His blade touched the creature and dug in its exoskeleton before severing it in half. The Fog Demon couldn't do anything against Noah's direct blow. His physical strength alone was enough to pierce its natural armor!

Noah's sharpness and the power contained inside the Demonic Sword did the rest. The blade had yet to reach the middle tier, but it could express might far superior to its level when Noah wielded it.

The ant didn't die after Noah cut its body in half. It screeched, and all the fog in the area flowed toward its position, creating a wild storm that made Noah lose track of his opponent.

The gales continued to blow until the sunlight illuminated the destroyed bottom of the mystical fog. The beast had accumulated so much fog that the sun managed to shine on that region.

Noah expanded his consciousness to search for his opponent, and he found it in a spot among gales that converged mid-air. His first instinct was to attack, but he remained still when he saw the new form taken by the Fog Demon.

A humanoid giant grew from the converging gales. That new foggy armor wielded a blade with one hand, and it had facial features that vaguely resembled Noah.

The Fog Demon had tried to imitate Noah since he was the strongest opponent that it had ever faced. As an expert in the magical beasts' field, Noah couldn't help but be interested in that creature and its innate ability.

The giant raised its blade and slashed toward Noah. Its lower body dispersed into the fog as the weapon descended, and another storm spread through the environment.

The ground broke as the storm spread. Numerous debris and large boulders flew in every direction, but Noah let those coming toward him crash on his body as he kept his eyes on the descending sword.

A smile had appeared on his face when he saw the attack. He felt as if a magical beast was challenging him on sword arts!

Noah crouched as he drew the Demonic Sword backward. If the creature wanted to fight with blades, he would show it a proper technique.

His aura surged as the sharpness radiated by his existence gathered on his blade. His eyes moved toward a spot inside the giant's chest as he prepared one of his strongest attacks.

Noah unleashed Sword Saint's lunge before the foggy blade could hit him, and a chasm opened as his sharpness flew toward the giant.

The foggy blade fell apart as Noah's lunge pierced its base and created a large hole in the giant's chest. A second of silence followed the exchange, but the fog gathered by the innate ability soon dispersed.

A small and maimed corpse fell on the ground as the fog filled the area again.

Noah walked toward the Fog Demon's remains and scratched his head when he saw the poor state in which it had ended. Only a small part of its body had remained intact. Everything else had disappeared in the might of the lunge.

'I got carried away,' Noah thought as he collected the small remains of the beast together with the half body that he had severed before.

'I need to use more spells the next time,' Noah thought while reviewing the battle. 'The saber-shaped runes are good. I should test the other ability now.'

His hunt had only begun. The Fog Demon had one of the weakest bodies among the world's various species, so Noah had never taken that challenge seriously.

It had been enough for him to use one of his strongest attacks to deal with the threat. For a magical beast that supposedly was on his level, its actual prowess had been quite disappointing.

Noah knew that the labels of the cultivators couldn't describe his prowess accurately. There was nothing about him that matched the standards of the power system of the world.

His body was in the lower tier, but it was an evolution of the hybrid status. His physical prowess and healing properties were off the charts, and the black hole could enhance all his innate skills.

His dantian was at the beginning of the liquid stage, but it didn't contain "Breath". Noah had severed every connection he had with Heaven and Earth's system and used only energies that suited his individuality to improve.

His mind was above both dantian and body in terms of progression inside the sixth rank, but it didn't have the azure mental sea like other cultivators.

Noah's mental energy was dark-brown, and it carried features of both magical beasts and humans. His mind didn't have limits connected to species, and it could express more pressure than others on the same level.

In the end, Noah had a black hole in his chest. His fourth center of power improved his functions and gave him access to various new abilities that culminated with his dark world.

In the liquid stage, powerhouses could face rank 6 magical beasts in the middle tier, so Noah was entirely at ease in those hunts. The difficulties would come when he found creatures that neared the tier's peak, but part of him wished to see some of them.

It wasn't only a matter of nutrients. Noah wanted to fight. He desired to face struggles that forced him to advance on his path, and his only hope now was in the rank 6 magical beasts in the two worlds.

'Next is the mountain chain,' Noah thought before flying away from the mystical forest.

He left behind a destroyed environment and earthquakes that spread until the inhabited regions on both Papral nation and central territories. Still, those were the natural after-effects of a battle between rank 6 beings.

Chapter 1158 1158. Tes

Noah didn't eat what was left of the Fog Demon immediately. His body was already at the peak of the lower tier, so he wanted to trigger the breakthrough only when he had enough nutrients to complete it.

The requirements in terms of energy for his body were unclear. After all, he had relied on the stuffed winged beast to push himself in the sixth rank.

Noah didn't believe the requirements would be as harsh as before, but he still wanted to prepare a few complete corpses for him to eat before taking a step in the middle tier.

Reaching the mountain chain on the other side of the old continent took him only a few days. Most of the central regions were under the alliance's control, so there were many teleportation matrices in the area.

The mountain chain didn't change either. Wolf-like and ape-like creatures filled its regions, but the fauna's average level was relatively low for someone who had experienced life in the new continent.

A few packs led by rank 5 specimens ruled over large areas, but they were nothing more than kings of ants compared to the mighty fauna of the new continent.

Noah didn't bother with the weaker beasts and went looking directly for a target that suited his needs. Anything under the sixth rank wasn't worth his time.

The search for a rank 6 magical beast took longer at that time. Noah almost believed that the mountain chain didn't have a specimen on that level at some point. Yet, he eventually found a strange-looking mountain that radiated an ancient aura.

The aura was faint, almost unnoticeable. Noah risked to miss it since he had inspected those regions from his spot high in the sky.

His instincts told him that something was there, but he couldn't quite understand the nature of the threat when it was in that state. The only thing he could do was to force a response to investigate further.

Noah launched a casual slash toward the mountain, but his black line didn't create any fissure in that rocky surface. The structure didn't even tremble after the impact.

'Is it an armor?' Noah thought before the answer appeared in his vision.

The mountain began to shake, and large boulders fell on the ground. An intense aura spread in the environment and made every pack of weaker beasts run in fear.

Roars echoed in the sky, and Noah could understand only part of those confused cries. The magical beasts announced that the king of the mountains had awakened, and it was ready to unleash its anger.

'Middle tier,' Noah evaluated when he sensed that aura. 'It's stronger than the Fog Demon. This thing is past the halfway mark of the tier.'

Some excitement built up inside Noah as the features of the beast became clear. A massive tail separated from the mountain and cracked on the ground. A pair of atrophied wings unfolded only for large boulders to fall from their surface.

A draconic roar spread in the area as a large reptilian head became visible among the falling rocks. Noah couldn't help but smile when a forty meters long dragon separated itself from the mountain and expressed its anger toward him.

'This species should be extinct,' Noah thought while he let the dragon recover from its long sleep.

That creature was a Mountain Dragon. It was different from other beasts of a similar kind since most of its tissues were hard rocks rather than flesh and bones.

That didn't allow Mountain Dragons to spit fire, but it gave them a superior defense, which was among the best in the magical beasts' world.

That species had an innate ability too. Mountain Dragons could release intense shockwaves by moving specific body parts, and they maximized those effects when they used their tail or wings.

However, the Mountain Dragon's wings that had appeared in front of Noah were relatively small compared to the rest of its body. That species didn't have large wings, but they were too small.

Noah guessed that the beast had entered a long period of hibernation. Its initial intention had probably been to limit its energy consumption while absorbing "Breath" from the mountain chain.

However, it was hard for magical beasts that didn't have an innate predisposition for long periods of hibernation to wake up. Many would enter it to wait for the arrival of new fauna and die in their sleep.

Mountain Dragons were also among the biggest dragon-type magical beasts, and their bodies were quite powerful even without their incredible defenses.

They had only two significant weaknesses. Their body healed slowly, and they often required an environment filled with rocks to replace certain destroyed parts. Also, they were quite slow compared to other flying creatures.

The dragon released a few long roars, but it didn't attack. It was more intelligent than the Fog Demon, and it could understand that Noah wasn't as simple as he looked.

Moreover, it felt something familiar in him. His scent made him appear as one of its kind, even if he had the shape of a human.

The dragon growled, and Noah's eyes lit up when he understood the meaning behind that cry. The creature had stated that the mountain chain was its hunting area.

Noah released a growl to reply to the dragon. There wasn't an exact way to translate his cries into human words. He had only told the creature that he had come to kill it.

The dragon roared in anger, and it slammed its massive legs on the mountain that had been its home for a long time. Cracks appeared on its surface and spread on the ground as it released part of its physical might.

Yet, its show of strength only made Noah more excited. His consciousness had already spread, and his aura gave birth to primary energy that amassed in the sky.

Black smoke started to come out of Noah's figure. The fuming armor formed in a few seconds, and a dark cloud engulfed the mountain peaks with its corrosive properties.

The dragon sensed the black smoke trying to consume its rocky skin and grew restless. It began to roar, but its cries carried a deep tone at that time, and intense shockwaves spread from them.

Part of the cloud shattered when the shockwaves expanded through the corrosive smoke, but Noah was busy focusing on something else.

Noah had stretched two of his claw-like fingers and had pointed them at the dragon's head while holding his wrist with his other hand. That gesture didn't appear to have any meaning, but a rune inside his mental sphere had reached the mental walls and was activating its effects.

The shockwaves continued to spread since the dragon never stopped roaring. Its tail also began to crack in Noah's direction, but the creature was too rusty after its period of sleep.

The attacks released by the tail missed Noah by a few hundred meters. The smoke on the areas of impact disappeared, but he didn't care. There were only him and the left eye of the creature in the world.

The dragon adjusted its aim as it tested its tail a few more times, but Noah had completed his spell at that point. A black line formed between his fingers and the beast's eye, and Noah slashed his hand upward when that happened.

The Mountain Dragon didn't understand anything at first, but pain soon spread from its head. When its attention finally went on its left eye, it saw that a long cut had appeared there.

Noah had taken away the eye and cut through a thick layer of skin. The improved version of his Dark Ray spell had managed to hurt a creature that had the best defenses among magical beasts. He could consider his test a success.

Chapter 1159 1159. Instability

One of Noah's greatest weaknesses had always been his lack of long-range abilities.

His mental attacks had been easy to counter once the world learnt about them, and his slashes could never pierce the enemy's defenses when launched from far away.

The dark world had fixed that weakness, but a cultivator had to remain inside it for Noah to apply the restrictions and launch his strongest attacks.

Night was another powerful asset that perfectly paired his dark clouds, but Noah didn't want to rely only on such massive techniques to express an essential part of his prowess.

Snore had taken care of the long-range side of his offensive, and the latest improvements had made it a great asset to use in that field.

Still, it also relied on the dark world to express its true might, leaving Noah with a small number of attacks that he could use without the dark matter.

Sword Saint's slashes were powerful and immediate, but Noah knew that he would eventually abandon them to make room for attacks that expressed his individuality.

He needed reliable techniques that could reach opponents far away, and he had made sure to improve spells that could fix that weakness in his battle style.

The Dark Ray spell had always been weak compared to the other spells that Noah had owned in the past. The Demonic Form was too strong, and his physical prowess usually pushed him to engage in melee combat.

Yet, training with Sword Saint had taught Noah that everything could be a sword. Even a spell with good piercing abilities could turn into a blade in his hands.

The Mountain Dragon roared in pain, but anger soon filled its mind. It had barely fought for a few minutes, but its opponent had already injured it.

Its atrophied wings began to vibrate, and the vegetation around its mountain wilted as the Dragon forcefully drained energy from the environment.

The wings slowly grew as nutrients filled them. The Mountain Dragon turned its lair into a wasteland to restore its body parts to their old peak.

Its tail cracked in Noah's direction during the process. Intense shockwaves shot toward him, but the Demonic Sword launched slashes that fended them off every time.

Noah appeared to be lost in his thoughts as he deflected the Dragon's attacks. The new Dark Ray spell had decent power, and its piercing abilities were strong among his skills, but it took a long time to cast.

A small dark sphere eventually came out of his clawed palm. A vortex rotated at its center, and uneven edges contained its power.

The sphere enlarged as primary energy converged toward its form. It soon became a ten meters large mass that leaked surges of power from its shape.

The new Black Hole spell resembled Noah's fourth center of power, but it lacked its orderly shape. It was a simple mass of energy that absorbed anything coming in its way and used it to grow in size.

Noah couldn't add sharpness to that ability, but it expressed both creation and destruction due to the power that it could absorb and unleash. The only problem was that its shape had become quite unstable after all the modifications and improvements.

Noah had created the current Black Hole spell from two different abilities that he had rebuilt until they could reach the sixth rank. That instability was a natural consequence of all the modifications applied over the years.

The Dragon continued to launch shockwaves with its tail, but the Black Hole spell's gravitational pull made them converge toward its form.

The attacks crashed on the sphere and destabilized its surface even more, but the spell eventually absorbed their power to increase its size.

Some worry filled the Dragon's mind as the spell became more than thirty meters tall. It wasn't even spherical anymore. Its shape had become a mass of flares and boiling edges.

'I wonder how much energy it can absorb before exploding,' Noah thought while creating copies of the fuming armor.

When creating that spell, his initial idea had been to replicate the dark star's power, but it seemed that his darkness wasn't dense enough to contain so much energy.

Yet, he could use its instability to his advantage. After all, he only wanted an explosion. He didn't care if he couldn't control it.

'I guess I can only wait and see,' Noah took a step back as he thought that and launched his fiendish copies toward the dragon.

The Mountain Dragon's wings had returned to a decent condition after absorbing all the energy in the environment. It began to flap them, and intense shockwaves spread under the creature.

The mountain chain had lost most of its energy by then, and those attacks made it crumble. Large fissures opened among the rocks, and the ground began to cave in as its underground structure shattered under that pressure.

The Dragon then aimed its wings at Noah before using them to help its tail in its offensive. The number of attacks shooting from its figure tripled, but they all ended up inside the Black Hole spell.

Meanwhile, the fiendish figures landed on the dragon and began to slash at its rocky skin. Their power alone wasn't enough to pierce its tissues, but the corrosive smoke made them able to surpass that first line of defense.

The Dragon saw those enemies cutting away large boulders from its skin and turned its attention toward them. A series of shockwaves shot from its tail and wings, and the fiendish copies soon exploded, filling that area with even more corrosive smoke.

The creature turned toward Noah only to see that the Black Hole spell had reached its head. The mass of energy had become more than fifty meters tall by that point, and the vortex at its center released sharp sounds as it rotated.

The Dragon didn't have the time to roar as the Black Hole spell exploded, engulfing everything in the area with a wave of dense energy that carried corrosive properties.

The black cloud dispersed as the spell detonated, and Noah removed his fuming armor to fly toward his opponent.

A large crater had appeared where the spell had exploded, and all the mountains in a few kilometers' radius had crumbled as the wave of energy swept them.

The danger zone had entirely changed after those exchanges. Any battle among existences in the sixth rank would alter the environment forever, and those effects were even more evident in the old continent.

Many packs of magical beasts had died during the battle. They had been too slow in their escape, and the shockwaves released by Noah and the Mountain Dragon had destroyed their bodies, leaving no traces on that ruined region.

Noah descended into the crater while his mind went through the battle to find flaws that he could fix and new ideas on how to improve his abilities.

He had already found something that could solve the Black Hole spell's instability and improve the power of his copies. Overcharging them with the energy accumulated in the sphere would make them far more threatening.

Noah didn't even need to modify the diagrams inside his sea to apply those effects. He had already invented a martial art that worked similarly. He only needed his copies to perform it to gain its effects.

The Dragon was under a pile of debris and dust. Most of the rocks on its head and torso had crumbled during the explosion, so he could see its exposed pale-yellow skin.

The creature breathed weakly. It had survived the explosion, but it was too tired to continue fighting. Noah had destroyed its will and forced it to accept its death.

'If only your element were different,' Noah thought as a sigh escaped his mouth.

The Mountain Dragon was an exceptional specimen, and he would consider turning it into a Blood Companion once his mind had more room if it had a different aptitude.

However, Noah would spend fewer resources building a similar body and throwing inside a different will. The Dragon's mind was too weak to meet his standards.

The Dragon could even become a useful asset in the Copying Technique, but Noah needed it for his reasons. He didn't hesitate to sever its head with a clean slash.

Chapter 1160 1160. Megalodon

A creature with one of the weakest bodies in the magical beasts' field and one that had just awakened from a long slumber couldn't satisfy Noah's thirst for a decent opponent.

Noah had gathered valuable data from both battles, and he had even accumulated a decent amount of flesh that could help him during the breakthrough. Yet, he wanted more.

The world had understood that Noah had set off to hunt powerful magical beasts by then. The mystical fog had hidden his fight against the Fog Demon, but the mountain chain didn't have the same covers of that region.

Every organization had noticed the violent shockwaves that had spread from the mountain chain, and the higher-ups who explored that area after Noah left could see the aftermath of his battle.

The mountain chain had changed forever. Noah's destruction still lingered on the destroyed ground of that danger zone and continued to make it crumble.

It would take years for the area to become fertile again. The aura of a rank 6 existence wasn't something that the ground could shake off in a few months.

Noah didn't care about the damages that he caused to the world. The old continent was useless anyway, and he wouldn't hold back even if he found valuable prey in the piece of Immortal Lands.

His issue now was that he had to venture through the sea if he wanted to find other rank 6 creatures, and they wouldn't be as weak as his previous two opponents.

As for those still living in the new continent, Noah decided to ignore them. His new position as the Patriarch of the Hive would give him some responsibilities, and he didn't want to hurt his organization by killing every possible candidate for the Copying Technique.

'There should be at least seven creatures in the sixth rank in the sea of these Mortal Lands,' Noah thought as he studied God's Left Hand's map.

That was the same map that he had used to reach the world under the seabed. Noah didn't find anything wrong in relying on it since the marine rank 6 creatures' habitat didn't change by much through the years.

Noah didn't even think about hunting the two Mosasaurs. They had fought with God's Right Hand during the Heaven Tribulation for the seventh rank, so their power had to be in the higher tier.

His battle prowess was incredible, and his body carried features that every existence in the world envied. However, Noah was still in the lower tier, so he preferred to leave those two creatures for last.

The other recorded overlords of the sea had an unclear level, but Noah wasn't too worried about that. The lizard-crocodile that he had found in his journey to the hidden world was only in the lower tier in the end.

'There should be a Megalodon south of the old continent,' Noah evaluated before setting off from a cave that he had dug inside the Utra nation.

Shark-type creatures usually had a limited number of attacks, and the same went for their ancient version. The sea had different requirements in terms of the characteristics needed to survive and improve. Speed and tracking abilities usually triumphed over a large variety of techniques.

That would typically benefit cultivators if the hunts happened on the landmasses, but they became deadly abilities once inside the sea.

Noah had the movement technique, so he didn't fear the speed of any creature. His hybrid consciousness surpassed both human and magical beasts, so he wouldn't lose in that field either.

Only various innate abilities could create some problems, but Noah didn't fear those either. His carefulness was an instinct that he had trained through the years, but it didn't reflect the actual danger that he would face.

Noah immersed himself in the sea once he crossed the southern coast of the Utra nation. He descended until he reached the seabed and began to swim while following the hunting area's edges recorded in God's Left Hand's map.

His journey through the pure darkness of the bottom of the sea was solitary, but it was never silent since Night would often comment on the environment's beauty.

"We should move here!"

"Why didn't you build my quarters in this beautiful place?"

Noah ignored the Pterodactyl for most of the journey, but he never failed to question the creature about the Immortal Lands whenever it showed signs of recalling something about the higher plane.

"Do the Immortal Lands have a sea?" Noah asked.

"I couldn't explore much up there," Night replied. "I ascended only to remain stuck under the surface. The sky was too blinding. I couldn't even use the storms to travel."

Noah guessed that the storms mentioned by Night were the same that Shandal had tried to replicate in his separate dimension. Those gales carried chaotic laws that anyone could absorb, but the Pterodactyl couldn't describe more since it had never explored the surface.

"What about the underground world?" Noah continued his probing. "What do you remember about that?"

Night thought for a while before giving a vague answer. "It isn't any different from here. Better ground, stronger creatures, but nothing more. I would remember more if someone didn't cut away a big chunk of my mind."

Noah ignored the last line, but something felt off. He didn't believe that the Immortal Lands could be so simple, but Night was only a magical beast, so its understanding of certain aspects of the world had harsh limits.

"How many divine creatures are there in the Immortal Lands?" Noah eventually asked what interested him the most.

Cultivators could ascend as soon as their dantian reached the seventh rank, but Noah's body would probably be still in the heroic ranks by that time.

If the Immortal Lands' environment wasn't too harsh, Noah could consider ascending and completing his body's evolution up there. Meeting its requirements would be far easier on a higher plane.

Night understood part of his intentions, and it advised against that idea. "There are gods wherever you look. Weaker creatures do fill the Immortal Lands, but I've seen leaders that could kill me with a glance."

Noah's mood darkened when he heard those words. That was his greatest worry when it came to the Immortal Lands.

Divine Architect's sculpture hinted that all the divine beings in the various lower planes ascended in the same Immortal Lands, meaning that the higher world would have many gods.

Their long lifespans and experience would make them quite hard to kill, which meant that the Immortal Lands' population couldn't be low.

Noah couldn't think of ways to prepare for that journey properly. Most of the resources found in the lower planes would be useless against creatures that had lived in the Immortal Lands for a long time already.

It was better to ascend and create suitable weapons there than waste precious time in a lower plane. Still, Noah had now decided that he wouldn't leave the Mortal Lands until all his centers of power had reached the seventh rank.

'The black hole should give me an advantage,' Noah concluded as he inspected the insides of his chest. 'I wonder when it will evolve again.'

His journey through the seabed remained peaceful for a few more months, but Noah eventually found his prey. His consciousness even alerted him that the creature had noticed him too.

The faint shape of a massive Shark had emerged in the distance. Noah could understand its size with his consciousness, but the feature that surprised him the most was the dangerous sensation that had appeared in his mind.

The Megalodon was one hundred and twenty meters long, and it had a thick body more than thirty meters wide. Three rows of razor-sharp teeth covered both sides of its mouth, and a tall fin came out of its back.

Scars filled its thick skin, and faint traces of blood came out of its mouth. That rank 6 creature was near the peak of the middle tier, but it was in its prime.