

DEMONIC 1161

### **Chapter 1161 1161. Strong**

Noah immediately deployed the Demonic Form. He would still hold back the dark world for the time being, but he didn't dare to underestimate the Megalodon too much.

He didn't recognize its species, so his knowledge in the magical beasts' field couldn't help him in that battle. Still, that only fueled his battle intent. Noah had finally found the fight that he was looking for.

The Shark swam deeper in the darkness, but Noah knew that it wasn't escaping. He had felt its hunger when his consciousness touched its innate aura. The beast wouldn't give up on the chance to eat Noah.

The water in the area became denser as the Megalodon's aggression seeped through its fabric. It was as if the world itself had felt that a violent battle was about to unfold.

Noah created three fiendish copies, unleashed his saber-shaped runes, cast the Black Hole spell, and wielded the Demonic Sword. There wasn't enough primary energy to fuel his abilities in the area, but he knew that he would fix the issue soon.

A massive figure reappeared from the sea's dark depths and swam at an incredible speed toward Noah. He barely had the time to notice the Shark's charge before it arrived in his position.

The Megalodon bit on the seabed where Noah was, but it didn't feel any meat when it shattered the hard rocks through its teeth.

Instead, the saber-shaped runes that didn't crumble in the impact stabbed its flesh from inside its mouth, and the fiendish copies exploded to fill its insides with corrosive smoke.

The Black Hole spell didn't have the time to gather energy, so it crumbled during the impact without injuring the creature in the slightest.

The cloud that Noah had created when he activated the Demonic Form corroded its flesh, but it couldn't go past its superficial layers. Black spots appeared on its skin as poison entered its body, but the Shark ignored it.

The creature was too massive to suffer from the effects of the Black Mark spell so quickly. It would take a while before Noah's poison managed to affect it.

'It's fast,' Noah evaluated as he reappeared in a higher spot in the sea.

Noah had misjudged the Shark's innate abilities. He didn't expect such speed in such a massive creature, but it seemed to be its strongest quality.

The acceleration that the Megalodon could obtain was almost on par with his movement technique, and such feat revealed how amazing that ability was.

The Demonic Sword began to vibrate, and Noah focused on launching a tall slash with countless attacks around its shape. The black lines amassed to create a blow that carried every sword art that he knew.

The Shark didn't fail to notice the attack and accelerated to dodge it. Noah's slash crashed on the seabed and the various lines that made it crushed the rocky terrain, creating an uneven crater.

Noah sprinted to enter his dimension and follow after the Shark. He wouldn't let it prepare another charge.

The Megalodon pierced through the water at incredible speed, but a trace of anger came out of its figure when it sensed that its opponent was after it.

It was its first time finding an existence capable of matching its speed, and that discovery made it feel challenged to no end.

That was its hunting area, and speed was its ability. That small creature couldn't live after such an insult.

The Shark performed sharp turns and launched thick shockwaves whenever it swung its tail. The sea opened every time one of those attacks shot toward Noah, but he dodged all of them.

The beast eventually stopped to swim in a circle. A series of sharp attacks came out of its figure as a whirlpool formed in its position.

Noah felt forced to stop his chase since the pulling force of the whirlpool threatened to drag him inside that storm of shockwaves, but a dangerous sensation filled his mind when he came out of his dimension.

The massive shape of the Shark appeared next to him while carrying the momentum generated by its acceleration. The creature had already left the whirlpool. The beast had used it as a distraction to catch its opponent by surprise.

Noah released a roar as he kicked the water under him to shoot toward the creature's head. The sprint made him avoid the sharp teeth, but the impact between his fist than the Megalodon flung him far away.

Noah crashed on the seabed and straightened his position as his feet and Demonic Sword slid on the rocky terrain to stop his momentum. Three fissures had formed by the time he stopped, but the beast didn't give him the time to catch any breath.

The Megalodon reappeared above Noah. It had sprinted right after their clash, and his punch didn't slow it in the slightest. A fist-sized injury had appeared on its head, but it was only a few centimeters deep.

Noah felt the teeth of the Shark closing around him, but the creature suddenly retreated as a figure pierced the insides of its mouth and came out from the top of its head.

Night reformed among the darkness of the bottom of the sea. The Pterodactyl revealed its new body to the world before hiding inside the blackness again.

'Fine,' Noah thought as he evaluated the damages on his right hand. That frontal clash had broken his wrist and knuckles, but the black hole was already redirecting energy there.

'You are strong,' Noah concluded as a smile appeared on his face. Dense smoke came out of his chest and took the form of a massive winged snake that made the water tremble with its hisses.

Noah had decided to deploy his Companions after those exchanges. The Megalodon was too strong to face when he held back his best abilities.

It wasn't an issue of power levels. The Shark would destroy Noah's spells before they even formed, so he had to rely on more immediate weapons.

The Megalodon retreated in the darkness of the sea after Night wounded it. Noah could sense its intense anger, but he didn't plan to dodge its next attack.

Noah let go of his sword and waited for the assault to arrive. The Shark wasn't late, and its massive figure appeared on top of him in a second.

Snore shot forward, and its massive body coiled around the Megalodon to slow down its charge. Noah also shot forward to help his Blood Companion in the task.

The Shark pushed both Noah and Snore back, but the two didn't let go of the creature. He had both his hands on the Megalodon's head as he pressed on the beast with all his strength.

Night didn't remain still. Its figure flew inside Snore and severed the Megalodon's fins while Noah and the Snake restricted it.

The Shark eventually lost its momentum and found itself unable to escape the giant Snake. It would typically launch a series of sharp shockwaves to destroy anything blocking it, but something else prevented its movements.

Night had severed its fins, and it didn't spare its tail. The Shark was nothing more than a massive body without any ability to move. The Pterodactyl had taken away that ability from it.

Noah revealed a cold smile as he watched the helpless creature. The Demonic Sword returned in his hand, and he swam on top of its head until he reached the spot right above its brain.

The Shark didn't feel defeated yet and tried to struggle even without its core body parts, but Noah didn't lose his foothold on the creature's head.

Noah pointed the Demonic Sword at the Megalodon's head, and laws appeared in his vision. The world froze in his eyes as he concentrated on ending the battle in that last slash without ruining the creature's body.

Then, his sharpness shot downward, and the Megalodon's eyes went dark as Noah dug a hole that reached deep inside its brain.

### **Chapter 1162 1162. Stronges**

Noah collected three corpses of creatures in the middle tier of the sixth rank in little more than a few months. His hunts had gone far better than he expected, but he found some trouble searching for his fourth target.

The vastness of the sea was his enemy, and the hunting areas of the marine rank 6 creatures were far bigger than those on the landmass.

The seabed was irregular too. It had deep trenches filled with countless magical beasts and a high density of "Breath".

That made Noah's exploration slower, especially since many marine creatures had good hiding capabilities. His target was an octopus-like beast at that time, but he didn't seem able to find it.

Noah searched in every trench and underwater structure that he found inside the hunting area recorded on God's Left Hand's map. He even dug inside submarine mountains and volcanos.

However, he found no trace of his target. Even the fauna in that area didn't act like it had a rank 6 creature hiding somewhere.

'It might have moved,' Noah considered that option, but the hunting area recorded on the map wasn't close to the piece of Immortal Lands.

The creature didn't have any reason to move, and it had no threatening opponents nearby. The Mosasaurs weren't close to its hunting area.

Noah had to spend months to find the first traces of his target. He had to use his knowledge in the magical beasts' field to imagine what the octopus would do if it wanted to expand its hunting area.

That was the only explanation that he could find for the lack of traces, and his guess ended up being on point.

In one of the deepest trenches at a few kilometers outside of the hunting area marked on his map, Noah found a large patch of polished rocks that spread till the ditch's bottom.

The water in the area was dense, and a slimy green substance hovered near the trench's entrance. Noah found that oily liquid more often as he descended deeper in the ditch, and the water almost disappeared when he reached the bottom.

It was as if a different sea had formed right above the seabed at the trench's bottom.

Noah knew that only a creature in the sixth rank could create such changes in the environment. The influence of its aura had changed the entire zone, modifying it so that it suited its natural gifts.

The atmosphere became tense as Noah continued his descent. The creature hiding in the depths had noticed his presence, and its aura naturally expressed its battle intent.

Noah felt a dangerous sensation forming inside his mind. He had yet to see the beast, but he felt sure that his opponent was at the peak of the middle tier.

Everything fell into chaos in an instant. Tens of thick tentacles shot from under the oily substance and converged in Noah's position.

Noah didn't even evaluate the threat. The dark matter came out of his black hole, and the dark world enveloped the area. Snore took form around his figure, and a fuming armor covered him, transforming him in his fiendish form.

The tentacles pierced the dense dark matter that had appeared in their way and clashed with the Blood Companion. Snore endured the blows, but large chunks of its body shattered during the impact.

The limbs of the creature didn't stop there. They had flat tips with the shape of an arrowhead, which allowed them to dig deeper into the dark matter that made Snore.

The creature knew that the Blood Companion was only a puppet. Its attacks pointed directly at Noah.

Snore didn't remain still. The damages to its body didn't affect it in the slightest.

The dark world resonated with its intentions, and dark matter amassed around its figure while a layer of hard rocks covered its skin. The higher energy also transformed, and Snore soon became a massive statue that stopped the tentacles inside its body.

A shadow ran through the dark world and severed the restrained tentacles. Night had attacked as soon as it found an opportunity, and it took down seven limbs in one charge.

A wave of large bubbles containing the green liquid surged from the bottom of the trench, but Noah didn't wait for the creature to unleash its angry counterattack.

The defensive layer around Snore broke and turned into smoke as Noah stepped outside of his Blood Companion. He held the Demonic Sword high above his head, and dark matter converged around its figure.

A massive head came out of the oily substance. Two dark-green eyes shone among the trench's darkness, and hundreds of tentacles became visible around it.

'What octopus!' Noah shouted in his mind as his sword descended. 'This is a Kraken!'

The Demonic Sword carried a large amount of dark matter in its descent. The higher energy had transformed the weapon into a three hundred meters long blade that slashed at the creature emerging from the depths.

Countless arrow-headed tentacles rose from the oily substance's surface, but Noah's slash fell on the head of the Kraken before it could launch an attack.

The whole trench began to tremble as Noah's sharpness, and that wave of dark matter crashed on the beast. Large boulders fell from the polished walls, and cracks opened on their surface.

The dark world moved so that the corrosive smoke released by Noah could flow on the spot where his slash had fallen. The Demonic Form's corrosive properties followed the tunnels that the dark matter had created inside the cloud.

That was Noah's strongest attack. It surpassed both Sword Saint's techniques, and it was the best that Noah could do with his current expertise.

Sword Saint had shown him his final slash in the past, but Noah had yet to understand its forms. His knowledge of the sword arts was too poor even to see that attack correctly.

The seabed continued to tremble, but Noah remained still. The boulders falling in his direction crumbled under the pressure of the dark world, but they amassed freely on the spot where the Kraken had appeared.

Noah didn't believe that his attack had killed the creature. He knew exactly how strong he was, so he was aware that only one slash wasn't enough to defeat a magical beast at the peak of the middle tier.

Just as he had predicted, a series of pointy tentacles shot out of the debris and converged toward Noah. The slimy green substance covered their tips and part of their surface as they cut through the dark world.

Noah launched a few slashes, and the dark world resonated with his sword. The thick black lines that came out of his blade enlarged as dark matter joined their assault and copied their properties.

One black line was big enough to clash with multiple tentacles, but the latter pierced right through Noah's attacks before continuing their charge toward him.

Black sparks gathered between Snore's horns before a thick array of sword-shaped lightning bolts shot toward the tentacles. The dark world enhanced those elemental attacks too, and crackling sparks amassed around them.

The simple elemental attacks had turned into small lightning storms that flew toward the tentacles. The impact with the Kraken's limbs deviated them from their original trajectory, but they remained intact even after such an amass of energy had exploded on them.

'What is this substance?' Noah thought before a copy of the Demonic Sword formed in his free hand.

Both swords began to vibrate before Noah slashed toward the array of tentacles. Two attacks that expressed all the sword arts he had learnt in his life came out of them, and they stopped the tentacles when they crashed on them.

However, not even Sword Saint's technique managed to cut them. It seemed that the green substance improved their defensive properties in ways that Noah still didn't understand.

Clean cuts appeared on the tentacles once they stopped, and their severed ends fell toward the bottom of the trench. Night became visible for an instant before its figure mixed with the dark world again.

The oily liquid countered Noah's sharpness, but it couldn't stop the strongest predator inside the darkness.

### **Chapter 1163 1163. Escape**

Night's performance was spectacular. Its innate abilities worked perfectly with Noah's dark world, and the Royal Metal inside its new body made it so fast that no one could keep track of its movements.

Its attacks were smoother too. The Royal Metal and the dark matter enhanced its innate skill, and the dark world pushed that ability's power even further.

Noah wasn't sure if the Night-blade Pterodactyls were the strongest predators inside the darkness, but he knew that no one on its level could match Night's offensive prowess now.

Surges of bubbles came out of the oily layer at the bottom of the trench. Noah could sense the Kraken's anger from those underwater roars, and the vitality that they expressed made him even more serious about the battle.

The Kraken had lost almost twenty tentacles, and Noah's strongest slash had landed right on its head. Any creature would typically show some weakness after those injuries, but the marine overlord sounded more vigorous than ever.

The Demonic Sword's copy turned into smoke that fused in the dark world as Noah raised his blade above his head. Dark matter gathered around its shape as he prepared another massive slash.

The Kraken didn't dare to show its head again, but it didn't care about its tentacles. Hundreds of sharp arrowheads came out of the oily surface and shot toward Noah at high speed.

Noah couldn't see the trench anymore. Sharp tentacles covered by the green liquid filled his vision and created a blockage that he couldn't dodge. Yet, he had no intention to escape from that clash.

The Demonic Sword descended and carried a big chunk of the dark world with it. A sharp wave of dark matter and corrosive smoke fell on the limbs that filled the trench.

The oily substance tried to stop the attack and make it slide over the tentacles, but Noah's slash was too massive and violent. It crashed on the limbs and cut everything on its path.

Dark-green blood filled the water and created a large stain between Noah and the Kraken. Still, the slash had managed to cut only part of the tentacles. The other continued to shoot upward.

Snore opened its mouth, and a wave of black flames engulfed the tentacles. Raging black gales came out of its nostrils, and lightning bolts shot from its horns.

The dark world empowered the elemental attacks. The fire became denser and vibrated as its destructiveness reached its peak. The gales created proper tornadoes, and the lightning bolts fused with them to give birth to a crackling storm.

The tentacles tried their best to overcome the elemental attacks, but a layer of ice soon covered their surface, and a series of small snake-like puppets coiled around them to restrain their movements.

Snore then unfolded its wings. Its feathers began to tremble and exude a sharpness that spread through the entire dark world.

The tentacles stopped struggling as that aura filled the dark matter around them. The Kraken had sensed the power of the incoming attack, and it didn't like the dangerous feeling that it caused inside its mind.

The dark world aided Snore's wings. Noah's higher energy helped to gather primary energy, which flowed inside the feathers at an incredible speed.

Snore completed the preparations for its strongest attack in a few instants and released a barrage of sharp feathers that radiated the power of a spell at the peak of the liquid stage!

The elemental attacks had continued to restrain the tentacles while Snore prepared its offensive, but everything between Noah and the Kraken vanished once the feathers arrived.

All the tentacles that had amassed in the trench crumbled into a pool of blood and torn flesh. The grand offensive of the Kraken couldn't do anything against such a massive attack.

The Kraken was about to roar in anger again, but Noah had already launched another slash. The Demonic Sword had fused with the dark world and had begun its descent by the time the feathers disappeared.

Another intense series of tremors filled the trench, and the seabed around it as Noah's slash landed on the creature's head. Dark-green blood filled the entire area, but the corrosive smoke soon destroyed everything that wasn't dark matter.

Noah descended toward the trench's bottom, uncaring of the boulders falling from the walls at his sides. His Demonic Sword was above his head again, and more dark matter gathered around it.

Snore launched its elemental attacks toward the oily bottom, and Night inspected the situation, waiting for a suitable moment to act.

The Kraken couldn't do anything against that violent offensive. Its remaining tentacles shot upward only to clash with the elemental attacks. A shadow then severed them and opened a path for Noah.

Another long slash descended, and the Kraken could only rely on its thick skin to block it. Elemental attacks followed, and the creature sank deeper into its slimy layer to deplete some of their power before they landed on its body.

Noah launched another slash, and the oily layer opened to reveal the massive creature. It was more than one hundred and fifty meters large, and it filled the entire bottom of the trench with its size.

A few tentacles still undulated around its figure, but there were mostly maimed limbs. The creature had lost most of its offensive abilities in the last exchanges, and fear soon filled its mind.

The Kraken began to escape. Noah had overcome everything that it could throw at him, and there was nothing else that it could do to stop him.

Noah saw the Kraken using its remaining tentacles to sprint across the trench and enter a fissure in the polished walls. The opening was narrow, but the beast slid inside it without any problem.

A human-shaped crack replaced Noah's figure, and he reappeared right in front of the fissure. He stabbed one of the tentacles still outside with the Demonic Sword before using his clawed hands to dig deeper into the injury.

Noah used that wound as a handhold when he tried to pull the creature back in the trench. Still, his physical strength couldn't overcome the Kraken.

Snore quickly reformed and bit on another tentacle. The two continued to pull while Night entered in the fissure and cut every piece of flesh in its way.

The Kraken struggled madly, but Night eventually cut too many vital tissues. Noah and Snore finally managed to pull the beast outside of the fissure, but it was already dead by the time it returned at the bottom of the trench.

A shadow came out from one of the cuts that filled the Kraken and returned to its original form. Night made its appearance among the blood, water, oily substance, and dark matter that filled the area.

The Pterodactyl raised its head as if expressing how proud it was about its achievement, but Noah ignored it as other thoughts filled his mind.

'This is my limit for now,' Noah thought as he stored the massive corpse and swam through the battlefield to collect any body part that he found.



A creature at the peak of the middle tier had forced him to make use of all his weapons. The fact that he could defeat it would surprise many experts, but Noah never felt satisfied with his current power.

'Peak of the middle tier is equal to liquid stage powerhouses around the halfway mark of the stage,' Noah calculated in his mind.

The dark world was more effective against cultivators since it could interfere with the laws they wielded and tried to express. Still, Noah's raw power placed him among experienced liquid stage powerhouses already.

'I should be a bit weaker than Great Elder Diana right now,' Noah concluded. 'My body and sword need to advance before I can claim to be unbeatable in the liquid stage.'

Noah knew that the journey in the separate reality had made him skip entire centuries of training. That had been possible because his individuality had been ready to reach his current level, but now it needed to grow again.

Thinking about the many years he would spend in complete peace annoyed him a bit, and he felt even more eager to ascend.

#### **Chapter 1164 1164. Breakthrough**

Noah had many adventures during his life, and he rarely stayed still. Having a safe place to cultivate had been a priority in his youth, but the search for incentives had replaced it once his level started to depend on his individuality.

Experiencing new struggles was the quickest way to improve, and Noah had always wanted to grow as fast as possible.

Yet, the world didn't have other secrets. Noah had explored the entirety of the surface, its depths, and its core. He only had part of the sea left before he could claim to know every inch of those Mortal Lands.

Noah knew that the dimensional tunnel led to a different world that could lead to another core, but something told him that the raw laws wouldn't be as effective as before.

His cultivation level matched the state of his individuality now. A sheer increase in its size would require some time to consolidate in his existence.

The raw laws would still quicken his growth, but Noah would consider making a journey toward an unknown plane's center only if he was out of other options.

King Elbas had taken care of most defenses during the mission in the separate reality. The journey there had been smooth and almost without any environmental threat.

Sword Saint had hinted that different planes would have different guardians, so Noah could guess that the other world's core would be far different than the explored one.

Noah wasn't King Elbas. He was terrific in his fields, but his expertise wasn't as vast as the Royal. He didn't have any confidence in the journey.

That was the same reason why no powerhouse had suggested a second mission. Without King Elbas leading them, going to the other world's mysterious core was too much of a gamble.

Noah could only continue his hunt for marine rank 6 magical beasts to increase his power. He had stashed four corpses already, but he planned to add two more before going back to his quarters and approach the breakthrough.

He had other projects in mind, but they required his body to be in the middle tier and the Demonic Sword to advance.

The only aspect of his battle prowess that he could still improve on his own regarded his spells. Noah could create sword arts to pair with his new abilities.

He knew that he wouldn't manage to complete the process for many spells, but there were a few of them that could become core assets of his prowess with enough work.

Noah spent one entire year to track his next target, but the power of the creature forced him to give up on the hunt. He found the whale-type beast that ruled over the sea north of the new continent, but it was in the upper tier.

His senses had allowed him to recognize the threat before it was too late. The last battle with the Kraken had shown him that his limit were opponents in the middle tier, so he retreated.

That setback forced Noah to waste more time, but he found the other two creatures signed on the map rather quickly. It took him only a few months each.

The first prey was a giant carp with black scales that protected the entirety of its body. It was only a beast at the beginning of the middle tier, but its innate defense forced Noah to spend an entire day to kill it.

Even his strongest attacks managed to break only a dozen scales with each blow. Those body parts had peculiar properties that Noah would study later on.

The second opponent was a giant piranha that had a tide of weaker beasts in its pack. They were mostly rank 4 creatures, but they were so many that Noah found himself submerged in violent waves that couldn't pierce his skin.

That kind of approach couldn't work on him. Noah's only weakness was that he was facing creatures with stronger bodies, but those attacks didn't even manage to bite him.

The piranha pack's leader was a specimen in the middle tier, around the halfway mark. Its innate ability consisted of subtle roars that echoed through the water and reinforced its underlings.

Yet, the weaker piranhas couldn't hurt Noah even after the roars made them enter a frenzy. The underlings launched suicidal assaults, but they could only explode on his body without doing any damage.

Noah charged straight at the leader, ignoring the smaller creatures that swam in his way. The battle lasted only a few exchanges since the rank 6 beast died in no time.

After Noah collected his last prey, he decided to head back to his underground quarters. He had left for less than three years, so he was sure to find nothing new there.

He had gathered six corpses of magical beasts in the middle tier of the sixth rank. The last three known creatures in that world were in the upper tier, so Noah couldn't go after them just yet.

Noah spent some time with June when he came back, and he studied with Thirty-seven the materials that were better off in the automaton's hands.

The Fog Demon was virtually useless in terms of materials, and the same went for the Megalodon. Its teeth were sharp, but they weren't as sturdy as other metals.

The Kraken's body was useless too, except for the organ that produced the oily green substance. Noah gave it to Thirty-seven since his expertise covered even alchemy and other fields that could help him identify the nature of the liquid.

The Mountain Dragon had lost most of its skin, but Thirty-seven took an interest in its remaining rocky skin, and Noah found no reason to keep it. The same went for the organs that the piranha used to empower its underlings.

The automaton showed interest in the carp's black scales, but Noah didn't let him take all of them at that time. Those materials could be useful to him too, so he kept a large share of those goods.

After he gave away all the useless loot in his space-rings, Noah spent many months following his usual training schedule. He spent most of the time fighting with Sword Saint, but he didn't neglect his dantian and mind.

The breakthroughs of his body had always taken a while. Noah preferred to make his centers of power ready for his long sleep before consuming the corpses acquired during his last mission.

He even improved the spherical rune again so that his mind could expand while he couldn't train. Only his dantian would remain still for a bit, but Noah guessed that a complete rest could only benefit his center of power after its leaps across the stages.

Once he set everything, Noah entered one of the deeper areas of his underground mansion and sealed it through the defensive formations deployed there by some expert.

Only June remained in the mansion, but she wouldn't disturb him during such a crucial moment. Those coming to visit her would do the same without question.

Noah began to eat the six corpses and continued until he left no trace of them. The drowsiness hit him as soon as the black hole distributed that energy through his body, and he closed his eyes to immerse himself in the warm feeling of the breakthrough.

No dreams appeared during his sleep, but Noah remained in a nigh-aware status for the whole duration of his breakthrough. The black hole in his chest would release violent flares when a surge of energy escaped its suppression, but it soon took back that power with its gravitational pull.

The membrane around the black hole also expanded from time to time, but it soon condensed again to give that energy to Noah's body.

Noah had to sleep for fifteen years before a surge of energy filled his body, and startled him awake. He didn't even have the time to check his improvements when the Demonic Sword appeared in front of him.

The living blade exuded an aura with power in the middle tier. While Noah was asleep, the Demonic Sword had advanced to match his dantian.

### **Chapter 1165 1165. Horned head**

Noah had to attend an important event before he could resume his regular training schedule. It was something that the Hive had patiently waited for years, and it wouldn't be wrong to say that the entire alliance had been in the same situation.

Chasing Demon's death had left an empty spot in the Hive's leadership. Dreaming Demon, Flying Demon, Elder Julia, and Skully took care of that part by managing different matters, but it wasn't the same without a proper leader.

The problem wasn't in the management of the Hive. The Demons and various other higher-ups were self-sufficient. Every dome could keep working without orders coming from above.

However, the Hive lacked an identity without a leader. Rebels and lone cultivators would appear in an organization that showed that kind of weakness, and the morale of the troops would plummet without someone to look up to.

It was the same with the Shandal Empire. Its warriors could engage in long wars without fear for their lives because they knew they had a god watching over them.

Such flaws in an organization would never affect cultivators like Noah and the Demons, but they were the minority of the Hive's assets. Most human experts and cultivators in the fourth rank wanted to put a face on their organization.

"It's time," Flying Demon's voice resounded inside Noah's underground mansion.

Noah interrupted his training and stood up to leave his quarters. June shot a smile in his direction as she watched him go through the main door.

Flying Demon and Dreaming Demon appeared in Noah's vision when he left his quarters. They wore black robes that had a purple octopus draped on their back.

The octopus had long tentacles that enveloped a series of purple spots in a protective embrace. They represented the islands of the Coral Archipelago, the ancestral home, and the symbol of the birth of the Hive.

"Do I need to wear these too?" Noah asked while inspecting his clothes. He didn't prepare for the occasion. He was wearing an old robe that had borne the weight of his training sessions.

"Yes," Dreaming Demon replied while revealing a warm smile, "But that will come later. Now there is something that you must see before the ceremony."

Noah noticed how Flying Demon wore a stern expression that conflicted with his usual joking mood. It seemed that the event was quite important to him, so Noah decided to respect his feelings.

The Demons led Noah in the sky, where they began to fly in the direction of the Coral Archipelago. The trio didn't use any teleportation matrix, and their pace made them reach their destination in a few weeks.

Some tension surrounded the trio. Noah didn't receive any explanation, but he understood the reason behind the duo's silence.

The ceremony had already begun. The travel itself was part of it, and the silence was a gift for Noah. He could use that time to enjoy his last moments without the weight of an organization on his back.

Of course, Noah could use that time to go away. Taking charge of the Hive wasn't mandatory, but he could see how there wasn't anyone more suitable than him inside the Hive.

He had understood what it was to be a leader by then. He had always ignored those obligations because of the issues that they would bring, but the situation was different now.

Leaders didn't need to be the smartest asset in their organization. They didn't need to be the canniest, nor the most empathic.

Their only requirement was to be able to inspire the other members of their organization. Cultivators had to take pride in their leaders, and they had to strive to become like them.

Noah had always thought that his battle prowess was the only thing he could offer to an organization. Yet, he had often failed to consider how his life had inspired others.

From being the bastard of a medium-size noble family, Noah had reached the peak of the lower plane. Also, he was now about to take charge of the same organization that he had helped become independent.

Any human cultivator would feel waves of ambition surging inside them when hearing that story. Noah's journey was a tale that they could describe in legends even if they didn't include all his incredible achievements.

That was the role of a leader. Noah had to become the embodiment of all the dreams and hopes of the weaker cultivators in his organization. His figure would become proof that anyone could reach that level of power.

Noah couldn't help but reveal a surprised expression when he and the Demons reached the Coral Archipelago. The place didn't change much, but a tall structure had appeared on the central island that had once been Chasing Demon's home.

A statue stood at the center of the Archipelago. The structure depicted a man with sharp features, and a pair of shining red crystals illuminated the area from its eye sockets.

The figure depicted Chasing Demon in his prime. It represented him with an arm raised toward the new continent. It had a stern face, and a heavy aura surrounded the structure.

Noah didn't recognize the materials used to build the statue, but he knew that the structure wasn't only decorative. Faint traces of inscriptions hovered around it, and the density of "Breath" on the entire island surpassed that in the rest of the Archipelago.

"You'll also have a statue one day," Dreaming Demon commented when she saw that Noah had remained speechless. "As long as the Hive exists, your name will survive the passage of time."

The trio moved toward the base of the statue where the other powerhouses of the Hive were waiting. Noah saw Skully and Elder Julia bowing toward him as they landed on the island.

Dreaming Demon touched the statue, and a formation began to shine on the polished gray material. She then gestured to the others to follow her, and all of them place a hand on those lines.

The scene in Noah's vision changed, and he found himself in a room surrounded by complete darkness. He and the four powerhouses stood around a table placed on the small patch of brown ground under them.

An inscribed item stood at the center of the table. It was a fist-sized horned face similar to that used by the Hive to bind new cultivators to its rules.

Noah guessed that the item was the core of the network binding all the Hive's members, and Dreaming Demon confirmed his hypothesis.

"This the item that manages all the oaths sworn by the members of the Hive," Dreaming Demon said. "You have received the privileges of the Demon Prince already. You will obtain complete control over the network now."

Noah didn't back away and revealed his palm to the group. The tattoo of the horned head rose from inside his body to appear on his skin.

The powerhouses did the same. Even Skully had a similar tattoo, and she showed it without any hesitation.

The item began to shine as if resonating with that gesture. Dreaming Demon then hinted to Noah to touch the horned head, and he didn't shy away.

Pieces of information flowed inside Noah's mind when he placed his palm on the inscribed item. They covered every aspect of the Hive, from the number of recruits to the domes' power.

There were a series of reports too. They were yearly reviews of every formation deployed on the Hive's domain. They considered their current condition and the amount of energy that they depleted.

Then, Noah felt a connection with all the other cultivators inside the Hive. It was a faint sensation that didn't weigh on his mind. Still, he knew that he could control their oaths from now on.

"You have formally become the Patriarch of the Hive," Dreaming Demon announced. "Now it's time for the celebration. We have already prepared suitable clothes."

### **Chapter 1166 1166. Gesture**

Noah changed clothes after he exited from the separate dimension that contained the horned head. His new control of the Hive's oaths took place in the back of his mind and became an instinctive ability on its own.

He didn't need the training to enforce those oaths, and a simple thought was enough to modify some of them. Noah had gained complete control of the Hive in a few minutes.

Skully and Elder Julia left to prepare the new continent for Noah's arrival, but the Demons remained with him. Dreaming Demon continued to reveal her warm smile, and Flying Demon appeared more relaxed after the transfer of the leadership.

"Master wasn't the type to waste time on ceremonies," Flying Demon said after heaving a sigh. "Well, there wasn't anyone capable of making him change his mind either. I'm surprised you have accepted this role without complaints."

Noah was about to reply, but Dreaming Demon interrupted because she felt the need to explain her lover's words. "He is saying that you are quite similar to our Master. We were both afraid you would refuse to become a Patriarch because it might limit your freedom."

The Demons knew how Noah thought, and that was the exact reason behind their doubts. Yet, Noah saw his new role differently.

"I won't organize any event," Noah said. "I won't handle any political issue. I only need to step in when the Hive is in danger. I might end up doing less than what I already do."

Noah spoke earnestly, but the Demons exploded in a loud laugh when they heard his words. They could finally understand why Noah didn't even try to avoid that role.

"Do you plan to be a Patriarch that remains hidden in his quarters and comes out only when the situation can benefit him?" Flying Demon asked, and Noah shrugged his shoulders to reply.

His gesture caused another wave of laughs, but the Demons knew that Noah's attitude didn't come from laziness.

The world was at peace, and the Hive was the strongest organization in the entire plane. The Council and the Empire had leaders with a better cultivation level, but that didn't matter too much when Noah was part of the picture.

Noah's obligations wouldn't change after he became a Patriarch. The other powerhouses already managed all the aspects of the Hive, so he didn't need to do anything else for his organization.

"I can accept that!" Flying Demon eventually stopped laughing to speak. "Protect the Hive when everything else fails. Do it for the organization that has given you a home, and for Chasing Demon."

"Master has never liked organizations either," Dreaming Demon continued. "He has always considered them a trap for weak-willed cultivators. He used the Demon Sects only to gather resources that he needed."

Flying Demon and Dreaming Demon continued to describe how Divine Demon was as a leader. He sounded like an absent Patriarch who appeared only when a situation involved precious resources.

Divine Demon was quite strict in his idea of the cultivation journey. He acknowledged the utility of organizations, but he loathed that they could take time from his training.

He was also a ruthless teacher. He often fought to obtain whatever he wanted, and he never gave too much importance to appearances.

Noah felt that he would be the same type of leader. He would use the Hive only when he needed resources that he didn't have the time to collect.

As for the political borders, the alliance only had the Elbas family left as an enemy. Noah wouldn't need to join meetings or negotiations unless a new threat appeared.

The trio resumed their flight again, but their destination was the forest of White Woods on the western coast of the new continent at that time. The Demons wanted to escort Noah from Chasing Demon's old quarters to the new ones.

Noah wore a neat robe that appeared less luxurious than those of the Demons. The higher-ups didn't want to make him go out of his character, so they prepared tight clothes that gave off an important aura.

The octopus and the islands were still there, but Noah's robe didn't have loose sleeves or special symbols on his shoulders and legs. His were simple battle clothes of exceptional fabric.

Noah's underlings wouldn't see him as an unreachable existence if he appeared in public with those clothes. They would see an ordinary cultivator who had reached the top through struggles and battles.

That was the exact image that the powerhouses wanted Noah to have. There was no need for him to pretend to be someone else. He only had to be himself, and the story of his life would do the rest.

Noah and the Demons crossed the entire new continent to reach the western coast. The journey took a while, but everyone could see him getting his earned throne in that way.

The forest of White Woods had remained the same, but there was a throne floating above it now. The seat was nothing special. It was a simple tall armchair made of rocks.

The Demons left Noah at that point and flew toward the sides of the throne. Elder Julia and Skully appeared from different teleportation matrices and imitated the Demons.

The four powerhouses waited for him to take his seat, and countless teleportation matrices lit up as Noah began to fly toward the throne.

Many experts reached the region to witness the birth of their new Patriarch. Even human cultivators managed to attend the event through special channels that shielded them from the new continent's pressure.

Noah didn't look behind him. He flew until he reached the throne. Then, he turned to sit on it.

The powerhouses didn't make any speech nor announcement, but everyone on the scene knew that the Hive now had a new Patriarch.

Noah stared at the crowd watching him while wearing a stern expression. June and other old friends were among the audience, and traces of his surprise almost appeared on his face when he saw all of them bowing in his direction.



Thousands of cultivators amassed near the teleportation matrices and on the edges of the domes nearby, but all of them bowed to greet their new Patriarch.

Memories resurfaced inside Noah's mind. He had already seen a similar scene. It was the same view experienced during the attitude test at the Royal Academy.

Countless powerful existences bowed toward him, but Noah didn't feel anything special at that sight. It had been the same during the attitude test. He had never desired to rule, and his mindset didn't change after almost a millennium.

Noah recalled how that dream continued. His eyes instinctively went to the sky, and the Demons couldn't help but smile at that sight.

Some of the best experts on the entire plane were expressing their loyalty toward him, but Noah's only interest was in the world above.

The Demons knew that. Noah's gesture had only confirmed their idea of him, and they felt glad that they were right.

Some of the experts inside the audience noticed his gesture too. Noah's first act as a Patriarch made him appear uncaring, but a few promising cultivators caught a glimpse of his drive.

Even becoming the Patriarch of the strongest organization in the world couldn't distract him from his real goal. Noah's drive was pure, and the audience could see that from his gesture.

That casual move expressed who Noah was as a cultivator. Some of those in the region felt their ambition surge and fill their minds.

### **Chapter 1167 1167. Oval**

The ceremony ended with a large celebration that saw most of the higher-ups of the Hive joining in. The weaker cultivators had parties and events in their respective domes since their status didn't allow them to be with the other Elders.

Large tables filled with strong wine and delicacies filled the various domes. Noah and the other powerhouses moved to the azure plain, where they enjoyed a well-deserved break from the tension that had followed Chasing Demon's death.

The main theme of the celebration was Noah's life. Experts told stories about him or tales that had spread among the weaker troops.

Those who had interacted with Noah during their lives recalled those moments loudly and laughs filled the Elders whenever they described how aloof he had always been.

Noah's character had never been a secret, but many were still amazed that he had reached his current position. They didn't feel surprised that he had become the new Patriarch. Instead, they wondered how he had survived through his many adventures.

"Dreaming Demon and I were using our best spells to fend off the lightning bolts," Flying Demon shouted while waving his cup, "But he took them directly on his shoulders! I swear, I've never seen someone overcoming a Heaven Tribulation in that way!"

Laughs followed his story, and Noah shook his head as he refilled his cup. Flying Demon was twisting the events in Divine Architect's separate dimension, but Noah had no intention to correct him.

The Council's higher-ups joined the celebration at some point, and more tables appeared in the area. Faith, Elder Regina, and Great Elder Diana sat near Noah, but the others didn't have the right to join him.

More experts told stories, and they became vaguer as the celebrations continued. Some founded their tales on rumors that everyone found it hard to believe.

Noah let them have fun and commented when the Elders asked for more details. Many also wanted to learn about his mindset when he went through specific struggles, and he didn't mind explaining his reasons.

Toasts happened often. Everyone wanted to announce their loyalty toward the new Patriarch, and some of Noah's old titles came up through the various speeches in his honor.

Noah heard titles that he had left behind by many years. Some called him Hooded Devil, or Patriarch of the Balvan family, or bane of the Elbas family.

Still, all of them ended up with the same line. "I drink to honor Defying Demon, the second Patriarch of the Hive!"

God's Left Hand joined the celebrations too, but she had come only to express her acknowledgment of Noah's new position. She would deal with him for the upcoming political issues, so she intended to start with the right foot.

Noah's wasn't famous for his mild temperament. God's Left Hand wanted to make sure that their past experiences didn't endanger the relationship between their organizations.

The celebrations continued happily for almost three days, but a sudden event forced them to a stop.

The Elders and other guests had begun to discuss individualities at that point. They had taken the chance to improve their knowledge and understanding of the heroic ranks, and the powerhouses would give their opinion whenever they felt like it.

Yet, the sky above them began to flicker during those discussions. The tremors were faint and almost unnoticeable. They had to appear a few times before the powerhouses noticed that something was off.

Noah raised his eyes to the sky, and the other powerhouses imitated him when they sensed the same disturbances in the fabric of the sky. The rank 5 Elders didn't immediately understand what was happening, but they followed the higher-ups' gazes when they saw their stern expressions.

The sky trembled, and its fabric bent from time to time. It was as if something or someone was trying to tear it open from a place that no one could see.

Noah suddenly stood up, and the other powerhouses did the same. Great Elder Diana, Elder Regina, and God's Left Hand neared the Hive's experts and prepared themselves to fight.

That group could think of only one explanation for that phenomenon, and they didn't like it. Only the joint forces of their three organizations could give them hope to fend off that dreadful outcome, but even that didn't make victory sure.

The sky continued to tremble, and an oval shape formed. Yet, its edges were too faint to affect the sky, and no crack appeared on its fabric.

Something opened inside that oval shape. A line formed and tried to spread, but nothing managed to reach the sky. That seemed to happen in a separate dimension that the experts could see because it was quite close to theirs.

"I-." A voice came out of that shape, and the powerhouses' auras became tense when they heard that.

They recognized that voice. It belonged to the expert that they had banished during their mission in the plane's center!

"Will-," The voice echoed again. It seemed that King Elbas was struggling to convey that message.

It wasn't clear if he could pierce the fabric of the sky and return to that world. His aura didn't reach Noah and the others in the end. Only his voice seeped through the barriers among dimensions and turned the celebrations into a grim event.

"Return!" A small tongue of golden flames came out of in the world, and King Elbas' aura spread in the environment before vanishing.

The fire dispersed in the sky, revealing that the oval shape had disappeared. The world had returned to its previous peace, and no more tremors spread from that spot.

Noah and the others sent a series of mental messages toward the cultivators in charge of the observation points through the continents. They wanted to know if that phenomenon had appeared somewhere else in the world.

The cultivators' answer was positive. The phenomenon had happened at the same time in eight different spots of the sky. Still, it seemed to be over now since they didn't report anything else.

The powerhouses remained silent as the weaker Elders watched them. There was something far more important to plan, and they couldn't relax anymore.

King Elbas had announced his return, and his message had reached multiple areas of the world. Those who knew about his banishment could only remain speechless and respect the Royal even more.

Noah and the others couldn't stop that. King Elbas was bound to become stronger after what had happened, and his complete return would push that improvement further.

Not even the barriers among the dimensions could keep the Royal away from that plane, and the powerhouses could only accept that the peace was about to end.

Noah knew that their time was short. The organizations had to develop a plan to defeat the strongest cultivator in the world, and they had to do it quickly.

The celebrations had yet to end in theory, but Noah decided to cut the matter short by giving his very first order as Patriarch of the Hive.

"Prepare for war," Noah said as he turned toward the weaker Elders.

The seriousness that he exuded made his sharpness surge. Cuts appeared under his feet as his aura became tense due to the imminent threat.

The cultivators remained speechless, but Noah left right after he gave his order. His first instinct was to fly toward the desert to find Thirty-seven. The automaton was the only one who could know a method to stop King Elbas.

### **Chapter 1168 1168. Preparations**

Noah didn't give other orders, but the Elders didn't need more directives. His call for war was enough to activate all the parts of the Hive that could help in battle.

Chasing Demon had taught Elder Julia how to handle the Copying Technique, so she set off to hunt more magical beasts. She even relied on Noah to make use of his expertise in the magical beasts' field.

Since they knew King Elbas' abilities, they could pick creatures that countered him.

Of course, that wouldn't be enough to stop the Royals' leader. A powerhouse in the solid stage who used only higher energy couldn't lose against an army of weaker beasts.

Still, King Elbas needed to consume himself to set fire to his higher energy. Slowing him down might tire him enough to defeat him.

Flying Demon had learnt how to create doors in the separate dimension, so he handled the creation of specific tunnels that could give the allied forces an edge over King Elbas.

The Hive didn't care about the secrecy of the separate dimension anymore. It preferred to reveal its functioning if that gave it an advantage over its enemy.

The world already knew that the Hive had a method to teleport troops secretly, but the other organizations didn't know how exactly it worked. Still, the Hive was willing to reveal everything to solidify its position as the strongest force in those Mortal Lands.

Skully instructed the hybrids. She taught them battle formations and created different platoons according to their abilities.

The hybrids would be nothing more than cannon fodder if the Hive deployed them in a frontal assault against King Elbas. So, Skully decided to prepare a strategy with Flying Demon to make them rely on the separate dimension.

Dreaming Demon couldn't do anything specific, but the hybrids were in desperate need of a proper teacher. Skully could control them, but they needed someone that could teach them how to fight.

Noah would be perfect for that role, but he had other plans. Dreaming Demon took that position, and she filled the hybrids with spells that could match their innate gifts.

The Hive couldn't live in fear of a revolt from the hybrids' side. It preferred to bring their power to their peak so that they could help against its threatening enemy.

The rest of the Hive worked around the powerhouses. Many helped Flying Demon digging new paths in the separate dimension, while others joined hunts to capture magical beasts useful for the Copying Technique.

The entire Hive began to work toward the same goal: Creating an array of defenses that could block King Elbas!

Noah's schedule was different. He had just advanced to the middle tier, and his dantian had reached the liquid stage only recently. He couldn't hope in any breakthrough, and his current power couldn't do anything against King Elbas.

Yet, he had projects that could help the Hive as a whole. The creation of living weapons and his inscribed items could improve his domain's defenses by a lot.

Noah didn't waste time. He immediately contacted Thirty-seven and reviewed the situation with him. The automaton wasn't a strategist, but he knew how powerful solid stage powerhouses could be.

Thirty-seven couldn't help too much in the matter. His expertise was incredible, but the heroic ranks were his limit. He couldn't create inscriptions capable of stopping an existence that bordered the divine ranks.

Still, he could advise Noah. The mass production of living weapons resumed immediately, and the automaton ideated formations that relied on Noah's disposable items.

Noah didn't mind using his time to focus on his inscription methods. The creation of living weapons was something that he had avoided for many years, but King Elbas' threat made it his priority.

Noah and Thirty-seven worked with Elder Julia to refill their stash of magical beasts' corpses, and they soon gathered enough materials to resume their project.

Hundreds of living weapons came out of the separate dimension to arm the Elders. Noah took care of the weaker cultivators before focusing on items that required his complete concentration.

Equipping rank 5 Elders at his current level wasn't a problem, but the Hive needed far more to fend off King Elbas. The entire world was against a solid stage powerhouse who used higher energy. Having weapons in the fifth rank wasn't nearly enough.

Noah created living weapons for each powerhouse and for the rank 5 cultivators that deserved special treatment.

June obtained a spear capable of enhancing lightning bolts. Noah had used the best materials that he could gather to create the most durable quasi-rank 6 weapon in the world.

Daniel obtained a living weapon too. Noah used a peculiar species of frog-type magical beasts to create a cauldron capable of improving the purification process with every material.

That was another quasi-rank 6 item. Noah had chosen to restrain his ability again so that rank 5 cultivators could use it.

The same went for other promising Elders in the fifth rank. Noah armed every expert in the Hive before moving to other projects.

The second part of his strategy against King Elbas was preparing traps that could keep him away from the Hive's domain.

Noah worked with Thirty-seven to create formations that could enhance the destructive properties of the Instabilities. Those disposable items weren't cheap, especially their rank 6 version, but Noah didn't care as long as they could stop King Elbas.

The last phase of his strategy was something that he had to handle alone.

The alliance had assaulted the regions under the Elbas family's control after Noah's achievements in Divine Market city. Still, both the Council and the Hive had chosen to attack the Royal Academy rather than the paradisaal territory built by King Elbas.

The southeastern corner of the new continent was King Elbas' new home, and no one in the alliance had dared to attack it for fear of the defenses in the area.

The powerhouses wanted to leave that region as the last target of their assault. They feared King Elbas' expertise too much to siege his home.

However, Noah had learnt to understand King Elbas after their interactions. He knew that the Royal couldn't possibly create too many defenses in a region that he had restructured in a few years.

There was a limit to how much a powerhouse could build in less than a decade. Even the best inscription master in the world would need his fair share of years to deploy an array of defensive formations capable of stopping the assault of rank 6 cultivators.

Noah flew toward the corner of the southeastern coast once he completed all his projects with Thirty-seven. There was something that only he could do in that region, and he didn't hesitate to step forward since his opponent was King Elbas.

The Royal had brought the Ape God back from the sea of magma, and he had also restored part of its power before resurfacing.

The Ape God was the strongest being in those Mortal Lands, but no one had heard about it after King Elbas took over the snowy plain. The creature was still somewhere on the surface, and the only place capable of containing it was King Elbas' home.

Noah inspected the paradisiac region thoroughly before deciding to land in front of the palace built at its center. His instincts didn't sense any threat, and that confirmed his hypothesis.

King Elbas didn't set any defense in the region. He had used his name to keep everyone away, but that wasn't enough to fend Noah off.

### **Chapter 1169 1169. Negotiations**

Noah neared the corner of the southeastern coast slowly, but his instincts soon reassured him. He didn't feel any fear when landing on that prairie. The region appeared harmless.

The magical beasts living there maintained their unusual behavior even after King Elbas had disappeared for years. Still, Noah didn't sense the effects of formations when he neared the entrance of the palace at the center of the region.

There was something active underground, but it didn't seem aimed at Noah. King Elbas had created training areas, but he didn't waste time building defensive formations.

Noah felt some danger when entering the palace. The inscriptions there applied pressure on his mental sphere. Yet, they didn't aim at him.

They expressed part of King Elbas' might, but their purpose wasn't to protect the area. Noah guessed that they gathered energy to fuel the training areas underground.

Of course, there was a chance that many defenses had become inactive after they spent many years without their creator.

Noah didn't care about the specifics of that region. His target was somewhere inside the palace, and he felt free to enter it when his instincts didn't sense anything.

The palace's insides were as luxurious as Noah had recalled, but he didn't spend time investigating every room that he found. Many areas contained valuable resources, but they had barriers dividing them from the rest of the structure.

Noah could break those barriers if he decided to invest time and resources in the effort, but his target was elsewhere. He had felt it since he had entered the palace. He had to go underground to find it.

The palace had many corridors, but Noah only needed to listen to his instincts to find his target. He walked past many halls radiating a breathtaking aura and descended stairs with multiple branches until he reached a large room.

There were barriers there too. It seemed that King Elbas had deployed defenses only when he had to protect specific resources, and one of them could be vital to the alliance.

Noah arrived in front of a small door that had multiple shining lines on its edges. A peak solid stage aura covered those walls, but he didn't need to think of a way to break them just yet.

He kept his eyes fixed on the quasi-rank 7 magical beast restrained by a golden sphere inside the room. His best hope to stop King Elbas was in a creature that loathed humanity with every fiber of its body.

The Ape God appeared to be sleeping when Noah arrived, but the sole trace of his aura made it react. The creature didn't speak human words when it noticed its guest. Its anger took control of its functions and made it unleash a violent offensive against the golden barrier.

Noah noticed how the chains didn't appear no matter how much the Ape struggled to break free. He couldn't help but rejoice to see that King Elbas' influence had waned after they banished him in that different dimension.

"I've come to talk," Noah said while the Ape screamed and threw punches at the barrier.

The creature didn't stop its offensive at his words, but Noah had predicted that reaction. He didn't show any surprise as he sat in front of the room to wait for the beast to calm down.

The Ape God's stamina was immense. It raged against the barrier for two entire weeks before it grew bored of that struggle. Noah had studied the creature in that period. The Ape appeared stronger than before, but it was still far from returning to its previous peak.

King Elbas' absence had slowed down its recovery, and Noah could only feel glad about that. The fact that the Ape was still near the heroic ranks made it too weak to break the barrier and gave him the chance to seal a pact.

The Ape God snorted after it stopped its offensive and lay down inside its barrier while showing its back to Noah. It didn't want to talk to him, and even the sight of his figure caused waves of anger inside its mind.

However, Noah needed it, so he made the first move.

"I can give you freedom," Noah said. "I can give you the chance to take your vengeance against the cultivator that has captured you."

The Ape didn't answer, but Noah didn't give up. He knew what the creature thought about humans, and he was aware of its mindset's weaknesses.

"My organization is treating your kind quite nicely," Noah continued. "The Kesier Apes under our control are growing well. I suspect that we will have some rank 6 specimens in a few more centuries."

A tremor ran through the Ape God, but it didn't turn. The creature did its best not to fall for Noah's tempting words.

"You know," Noah pressed on, "I agree. Humans are lucky. They are born with three centers of power, but many of them don't deserve it. I've seen far too many cultivators wasting their innate gifts. This doesn't happen in the magical beasts' world."

The aura of the Ape God surged at those words, but Noah knew that the barrier would stop any attack. King Elbas' restrictions worked in his favor now that he wasn't attempting to break them.

"I don't know if you are aware of this," Noah continued his monologue, "But humans envy magical beasts. Your bodies and innate gifts are incredible. Every cultivator wishes to have such an easy path toward the higher ranks."

Noah taunted the Ape with his last line, and the creature couldn't ignore him anymore at that point. It stood up and turned to stare at him while unleashing a wave of violent mental waves that crashed on the golden barrier.

"This is the same reason why I fused with a magical beast," Noah said while making up for his previous words. "I wanted your strength and training method, so I accepted every aspect of your kind."

The Ape God didn't want to listen to him, but its situation had never been lower. It had lost its pack, the hidden world, and its freedom in a few centuries. Everything that it had built had crumbled, but Noah was there to give it hope.

As for what kind of hope, the Ape didn't know. Yet, that was better than spending decades without food and freedom. Listening to the man who had destroyed its world was better than nothing.



"You have ruined me," The Ape God said. "My pack, my power, you have destroyed everything out of your greed. You are no different from the golden human. You can only see resources when you look at my species."

"Is that bad?" Noah replied while shrugging his shoulders. "We do what we can to reach the sky. You would do the same if you were in our position. Don't look down on humans only because you can't be like them."

Noah's words caused a violent reaction in the beast, but he waited for the creature to calm down. It took the Ape God another week to stop its assault on the golden sphere and accept that idea.

The Ape God had never discussed matters related to species with a human, and Noah was quite peculiar even at that. He could understand the vision of both cultivators and magical beasts, so his words always hit the right topic.

"You didn't oppose the sacrifice of your companions," Noah said, and his words reopened the Ape God's old scars. "You let them die to reach the divine ranks. You are no different from humans hunting down a species for their benefits."

#### **Chapter 1170 1170. Orders**

"What do you even know about my pain?!" The Ape God exploded into a loud reply. "How can you compare greed to a pure sacrifice? Humans and magical beasts have nothing in common!"

"And yet," Noah replied after heaving a sigh, "I'm a human and a magical beast. I have lived in the wilderness and among the politics of the cultivators. I have seen both sides, and I know that your feeling is nothing more than envy originating from your weakness."

"Envy?!" The Ape God exclaimed. "There is nothing to envy in humans!"

"You wanted a dantian as far as I remember," Noah replied. "I wonder why you desired a human organ."

Noah revealed a smile at that point. He wanted the beast to become even angrier so that he could see how deep its hatred was.

His plan would become unfeasible if the Ape God hated humans from the bottom of its existence. Yet, there was hope for cooperation if it could accept them.

"I want the world to be fair!" The Ape God complained.

"I'm against Heaven and Earth too," Noah replied. "We have two common enemies."

The Ape God remained silent after that reply. Noah had made clear that King Elbas was his opponent, so the creature could guess that he needed its help to defeat him.

"Little human," The Ape God said, "You have yet to gaze at the divine, but you want to fight beings that are near that stage. The golden human isn't as weak as I was."

Noah continued to smile. That answer had started the negotiations, even if the beast wasn't aware of that.

"If King Elbas remains in power," Noah said in an uncaring tone, "Your species will remain enslaved. There won't be any free Kesier Ape in this plane."

The Ape God shook its head before expressing its doubts. "I bet you want to offer my species freedom. You, the human who destroyed our last lair in the world."

"I'm not a human," Noah promptly replied.

"You are no savior either," The Ape God continued. "You must be desperate to seek my help. I think that I will enjoy hearing your dying cries from my prison. Who knows, you might get a cage right next to mine."

The beast showed a mocking smile, but Noah didn't lose his cool. He had dealt with existences that were far more threatening than the Ape. He knew how to apply pressure when he held the advantage in a negotiation.

"Hybrids run free in my lands," Noah explained. "They live, eat, breed, and die in complete freedom. Your species can obtain the same treatment."

"I won't trust a destroyer," The Ape God answered.

"I don't trust those hybrids either," Noah replied. "I barely trust anyone in general. I'm not asking for that. I only want your power, and you can trade it for the well-being of your species."

"I'd rather die," The beast said.

"Then you have doomed your kind," Noah replied and stood up to leave the area.

Noah didn't turn. He walked through the corridor and reached the stairs that led to the surface without hesitating. He felt the eyes of the Ape on his back, but he didn't give it any leverage through his gestures. The beast had to think that its only hope for freedom was about to leave forever.

"How many?" The Ape shouted before Noah could step on the stairs. "How many Kesier Apes are there in your organization?"

Noah stopped his tracks, but he didn't turn. His mind focused on his connection with the horned head, and a list of reports appeared in his vision.

"More than a hundred specimens in the human ranks," Noah said without turning, "A dozen in the heroic ranks."

"Why have you asked for my help?" The Ape questioned him.

Noah turned, but he didn't return to the entrance of the prison. He pretended to think about his reasons for a second before answering. "King Elbas is about to attack the entire world. You are the strongest creature in this plane right now. Asking you to fight with us is only natural."

The Ape God fell deep in its thoughts as it sat on the floor. Noah didn't know what it was considering, but he knew that the creature would accept to deal with him unless it had a death wish.

There were fates worse than death, and the Ape God was experiencing one of them. It had survived the initial hunt of its species only to see Noah destroying its world.

Then, King Elbas had captured and trapped it on the surface. The Ape God didn't have any contact with the outside world, so it could only spend its days wondering about its species' fate.

Magical beasts could sleep for a long time, but the creature was partially awake when Noah visited it. That was a clear sign that its mental state didn't allow it to sleep properly.

The fate of its species weighed on its mind. After all, the Ape God had failed those that had sacrificed to push its power to the divine ranks. The creature couldn't enter a long sleep even if it tried.

"What happens if he wins?" The Ape God asked.

Noah shrugged his shoulders again before giving an honest answer. "Most experts will hide and wait for King Elbas to ascend. My organization will destroy every resource before retreating to a safe area, including the Kesier Apes. We can't give them to our enemies."

Noah's words sounded like a threat, but he didn't want to put his words in that tone. He only wanted to tell the truth to the beast.

The Ape God remained silent for a while, but it eventually expressed its conditions for that cooperation. "I want the members of my species free of your control. I don't want them to interact with humans anymore."

Noah shook his head and replied without showing any hesitation. "Cultivators need the Kesier runes. I can ensure their freedom, but they must cooperate with the human world."

"That's just a different type of prison!" The Ape God complained.

"It's a prison with wardens that won't perform experiments on you," Noah replied. "No one would rip off your runes nor force you to breed. You know that humans are stronger than magical beasts. You won't get a better deal."

"This is an extortion," The beast complained again.

"You can tell this story to your underlings if you accept these conditions," Noah said. "Your alternative is an entire life as the last of your kind until King Elbas forces you to breed."

The Ape became angry and started to shout. "You are using my dedication toward my species to manipulate me!"

"Of course," Noah replied. "I will use every trick at my disposal to improve the success rate of this battle. You only have to decide how badly you want your species to thrive."

The Ape God felt defeated. It couldn't win in a discussion against Noah, and he had spoken the truth for the entire negotiation. The beast didn't have any other option.

The only thing that could stop it from accepting his conditions was its pride. Still, the Ape would easily give up on it to protect its species.

That had been its main purpose. The Ape only wanted its underlings to live without fear of being captured. It didn't matter how much it had to sacrifice to obtain that.

"You are a monster," The Ape God eventually said, but Noah shrugged his shoulders again.

"I have to deal with beings that are far above my level," Noah said. "I can only be a monster if I want to survive."

Silence fell between Noah and the Ape, but the beast soon expressed its decision to accept those conditions.

"I'll send someone to deal with the defenses and create an oath," Noah said as he finally stepped on the stairs. "Remember that you take orders from me now."