

DEMONIC 1311

### Chapter 1311 1311. Enemies

'How can he fly so easily?' Noah wondered when he saw Zach floating above him.

Zach didn't seem bothered about his position, and Noah found that feature quite strange since the cultivator was in the gaseous stage. Noah guessed that Zach had an item or a technique that allowed him to ignore the white light.

Noah and Zach's minds slowly touched after they made sure that they had no evil intentions. The two consciousnesses took care of selecting the language to use for the incoming conversation, and they separated immediately after that.

"I must say," Zach began to speak, "I'm quite impressed by your battle prowess. It's a pity that your kind can't join us."

Noah didn't answer, and his face didn't reveal any emotion at those words. Yet, his mind grew colder when he understood that Zach knew about his hybrid status.

'He must have observed my battle,' Noah concluded in his mind, and that thought made him quite worried.

If his hypothesis was on point, then everyone knew that the area was a landing zone. Zach would surely see that he had just ascended from a lower plane, and that would reveal that Noah's centers of power were only at the beginning of the seventh rank.

Of course, that wasn't exactly correct when it came to Noah. His mind and dantian were basically at the beginning of the seventh rank, but his body had begun to improve. Also, he had the black hole, which could be his trump card in that situation.

"I don't want to cause any trouble," Zach continued as he took a white tablet from his space-ring. "My name is Zach Forefall. I'm part of the Crystal City, and it's my job to make sure that newly ascended existences won't become a threat to the human army. I need you to swear that you won't cause any damage to our side."

Noah remained silent as he continued to inspect the cultivator. He continued to suppress his emotions, but the coldness that seeped out of his figure became more intense when he heard those words.

Zach didn't speak anymore either. He had said his piece, so everything was up to Noah now. Zach wouldn't spend other words for an existence that couldn't join his side.

"Or?" Noah eventually asked, and Zach immediately understood what he meant with his question.

"I can't let a potential threat roam freely," Zach answered as traces of killing intent began to seep out of his figure.

"I guess this Crystal City must be nearby for you to be so thorough," Noah said as he tried to focus on the horizon.

Noah couldn't see any structure nearby, but Zach's eyes had sharpened for an instant when he heard those words. That was enough to reveal that Noah's guess was close to the truth.

"There is no need to fight over such a small matter," Zach resumed his speech after he exchanged glances with Noah for a while. "This oath is harmless. It won't affect your journey. I will even share a report concerning the last known location of some hybrids with you if you swear it."

Noah memorized his words, but he didn't give him any answer. His attention had shifted during Zach's speech. Noah had begun to sense a peculiar aura coming out of him when his killing intent spread in the environment.

That aura wasn't strange enough to arouse Noah's suspicion, but he felt that something was off when he sensed that it came from multiple directions.

One source of that aura came from Zach, while the other flowed out of a seemingly random spot in the sky.

Noah turned toward that spot, and Zach's expression paled when he understood where Noah was looking. Miss Canson was in that area, but it seemed that Noah couldn't see her.

"How can you fend off the pressure of the sky?" Noah asked without moving his gaze from that seemingly random spot.

Zach felt slightly threatened when he observed Noah's actions. His power was enough to match that newly ascended monster, but he couldn't risk Miss Canson's life during the mission.

Moreover, Zach was unaware of Noah's assets and mindset. He didn't know if Noah would abruptly attack that spot out of curiosity or if he would ignore it.

"We use special items," Zach replied in an attempt to bring Noah's attention back on him. "They are quite common among humans. You can't miss them if you even reach a market."

"Weren't those of my kind unwelcomed by humans?" Noah asked.

"The Crystal City is the most radical about this issue," Zach answered. "Other societies don't care about your species as long as you don't cause any trouble."

Zach knew what was happening. He wasn't revealing those pieces of information because Noah had managed to trick him. That was a pure show of goodwill that he hoped would lead to Noah swearing the oath.

However, Zach had failed to understand Noah's mindset. He couldn't possibly know that Noah had spent a long part of his life cursing the restrictions applied by his world's political system.

Noah saw the Immortal Lands as a place where divine existences could ignore any form of organization and strive to touch the sky with their power. He wouldn't let anyone put limits on his freedom as soon as he reached the higher plane.

"You aren't alone, are you?" Noah asked, and Zach's eyes widened when he heard those words.

An intense killing intent began to flow out of his figure at that point. Zach couldn't hold back anymore when he understood that Miss Canson could be in danger. He had to show Noah that he would kill him if he didn't swear the oath.

The scenery in Noah's eyes slowly changed as his superior senses became used to that peculiar aura. Dark matter flowed out of his black hole and entered his eyes to enhance his view.

Black vessels appeared on his sclera as his reptilian pupils sharpened. Miss Canson's enchanting figure slowly appeared in his vision, and Noah couldn't help but wear a cold smile when he saw the worried expression on her face.

"I can kill her before your attack reaches me," Noah said at some point. "You know that you can't stop me. You have seen my battle."

Zach had no words to express how he felt about Noah. Not even a day had passed since his landing, but Noah had already succeeded in two almost impossible feats.

Noah had defeated the tide of beasts waiting in the landing zone and had managed to look past the technique developed in the Crystal City!

Part of Zach wanted to kill Noah on the spot, but he had to prioritize Miss Canson's well-being, so he couldn't attack. Yet, Noah soon proposed something that he couldn't ignore.

"It's too soon to make enemies," Noah announced. "Let's forget about this discussion. You two let me go, and I'll leave without causing a mess. It seems pretty fair to me."

"You have no idea who you are threatening," Zach said, but his killing intent lost some intensity when he heard Noah's offer.

"I don't really care," Noah said as he shrugged his shoulders. "We have a deal, right?"

Zach hesitated for a second before nodding, and Noah waved his hand before turning to leave.

Noah had been honest. He had no intention of making enemies without learning more about the Immortal Lands. After all, the higher plane was an environment that could contain rank 8 and 9 existences.

Yet, he wasn't delusional. He knew how extremist organizations worked. Zach had let him go, but Noah was aware that the cultivator would report his arrival to the Crystal City.

### **Chapter 1312 1312. Fores**

"We failed the mission because of me," Miss Canson said once Noah disappeared from her sight. "I will make sure that my Mother understands this. You would have taken care of him if you didn't have to protect me."

Miss Canson appeared quite broken about that outcome. She cared about Zach, and she didn't want to see him punished due to her weakness. Moreover, meeting Noah had shown her the difference between an ascended and a divine existence that didn't overcome similar trials.

"I wouldn't be sure so sure about that," Zach replied without moving his gaze from the direction where Noah had left. "Hybrids are hard to deal with, and this one has been ready to fight during the entire conversation. He didn't want a battle, but he didn't fear it either."

"Do you think he had a chance against you?" Miss Canson asked as surprise appeared on her face.

Her Mother had chosen Zach as her protector because he was strong and had a lot of experience dealing with ascended. However, his words conveyed his hesitation about the whole matter.

"I can't be sure of that," Zach replied. "He shouldn't have much experience in battles in the divine ranks, but he managed to defeat the tide without relying on his individuality. That alone speaks for his power."

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Noah left the area as fast as he could. He didn't try to use his movement technique in his current condition, but his physical strength made him capable of great speed anyway.

The magical beasts in the area didn't attack him. Noah could sense them, but he also saw that they ignored him for no apparent reason.

'Did I get approved or something?' Noah wondered as he ran past that crowded land.

The creatures in the area hadn't hesitated to attack him when he landed in the Immortal Lands, but they were ignoring him now. It was as if they had no interest in fighting someone that had survived the tide.

Moreover, they also ignored each other. That area featured multiple lairs, but those powerful magical beasts didn't bother to fight for the ownership of that region.

It was as if they had agreed to attack only the newly ascended existences, and Noah couldn't even begin to understand how they had decided that. His extensive knowledge in the magical beasts' field didn't cover that behavior.

Noah didn't stop to inspect the environment, but he still memorized the lands he crossed as he tried to leave the landing zone.

The area was full of life and had an uneven layout. Short mountains filled with magical plants covered that azure land. Various magical beasts had created lairs in that environment, but their influence didn't manage to affect the laws in the matter around them.

Noah could sense divine auras filling the entire area. The magical beasts, some plants, and the terrain radiated their influence in the environment and covered it with a thick halo.

The pressure radiated by the white sky fused with that halo and created a shining environment. Noah couldn't linger in the area for too long, but that sight left him mesmerized.

He didn't need to unfold his consciousness to sense the difference with the lower plane. Every brim of matter in the Immortal Lands carried an intense vitality and appeared as the most valuable material in the entire world.

The piece of Immortal Lands that had fallen in the lower plane was no match for the actual higher world. The amount of energy in that environment was on a superior league, and Noah couldn't wait to feed on it.

Anxiety that only a dangerous environment could cause filled Noah's mind. His arrival in the Immortal Lands had been quite messy, but he had learnt a lot about the higher plane during those events.

The Immortal Lands didn't have a shortage of living beings. Countless magical plants filled every inch of the landing zone, and many divine creatures inhabited those areas.

Moreover, he had confirmed the presence of cultivators. The two gods had also disclosed the existence of organizations and societies that had different beliefs.

'I wonder if the Crystal City has a cultivator in the eighth rank,' Noah thought as he ran through the uneven terrain.

Noah crossed countless mountains and ran for entire weeks before the scenery in his eyes started to change. A large river appeared on his path and marked the entrance to a different environment.

The uneven terrain filled with short mountains and chaotic vegetation stopped before the river. Noah could see a tall forest on the other side of that large stream, and the aura that surrounded that zone triggered his survival instincts.

Trees more than four hundred meters tall filled his view. They had large azure leaves, and their thick brown trunks hid the insides of that region. Also, a dense aura covered the entire area and made Noah's instincts rage in fear.

Something powerful had taken the forest as its lair. Noah felt glad that his knowledge of the magical beasts' field revealed itself useful in that situation, but he couldn't be happy about what he understood.

'Maybe the landing zone is one of the exceptions of the Immortal Lands,' Noah thought as he stopped before reaching the river. 'This region follows the same patterns that I've learnt to recognize in the lower plane.'

Hypotheses amassed in Noah's mind. The arrival in the Immortal Lands had filled him with questions that he couldn't answer due to his poor knowledge about that environment.

Noah turned to look behind him. He believed that cultivators from the Crystal City would eventually come for him, so he couldn't remain in the landing zone.

It was better to hide among magical beasts that would defend their territory rather than among uncaring creatures. Noah would be able to use his expertise in the forest, and the leader of that area could work as a deterrent against eventual pursuers.

'I should hide here until I understand how the Immortal Lands work,' Noah concluded as he jumped the river to land among the tall trees. 'I'm quite curious to see if they will follow me in this environment.'

Noah ventured inside the forest, but he didn't dare to run toward its central areas. He remained in its peripheral parts and changed direction whenever the danger felt by his instincts became more intense.

The forest seemed endless, and it was thick enough to cover part of the white light radiated by the sky. The pressure on Noah's mind weakened in that region, so he didn't mind running for a few more weeks before deciding to settle.

Noah used the Demonic Sword to dig a cave in the tough azure terrain and sealed it to hide inside that dangerous environment. He had to test a few things before he could resume his exploration of the higher plane.

The battle against the tide had brought a few benefits. Noah had managed to test his battle prowess properly and had confirmed that he was quite powerful for a newly ascended existence.

Even Zach Foredall had remained wary of him during their conversation. That proved that his power was worthy of respect.

Noah had seized the corpses of five divine beasts after the battle against the tide, so he could feed himself for a while. He expected his body to improve quickly in the Immortal Lands, and he didn't mind using it as the foundation of his power.

His spherical rune required primary energy, and Noah only needed to unfold his aura to create it. However, he preferred to prioritize another aspect of his power before approaching that matter. He had to see if he could enlarge his dantian.

### **Chapter 1313 1313. Abundance**

Noah's body didn't have any special requirements. It only needed energy to improve. The same went for his mind. He would use the spherical rune for that center of power until he created a better training method.

Yet, dantians could be tricky to enlarge. Their level depended on the cultivators' individuality, and the lower plane didn't offer any knowledge of the divine realms.

Noah didn't know what he had to strive for at that point in his cultivation journey. He had obtained some clues during his Earth Tribulation, but he had yet to understand them completely.

'How should I aim to become a world?' Noah wondered as the sensations felt after he ate Earth resurfaced in his mind.

The meaning of that word was quite vague, but Noah couldn't translate those sensations in any other way. He could only see how cultivating in the Immortal Lands felt and progress from that point.

Noah had already cultivated with his dantian in the seventh rank, but he didn't aim to enlarge it during those periods. He had only needed to refill his darkness to stabilize his dark matter.

The lower plane couldn't suffice enough fuel for the task, and Noah didn't dare to try it. Still, it was now time to test how the Immortal Lands reacted to his training.

The Demonic Sword flew out of his chest to land in Noah's grasp. His cultivation technique evolved together with the living weapon and the rune on his low-waist, so he knew that he met the requirements for that procedure.

Noah placed the back of the sword on his waist and began to cultivate. True meanings flowed into the blade, became primary energy inside it, and transformed once they reached the rune.

His dantian absorbed that energy and began to enlarge. Noah didn't notice any issue during the process, so he continued to cultivate. Nothing strange happened even after two weeks passed.

'Maybe my individuality has already met certain requirements,' Noah guessed after he interrupted his training. 'I can only hope that it continues to be like this.'

Noah was sure that advancing through the divine ranks wouldn't always be so easy. The higher levels of power had different requirements, but he had yet to understand them.

He felt something different during the enlargement. Almost everything around him carried a divine aura, so the laws he absorbed provided him with immense energy.

His lack of knowledge about the higher ranks bothered him, but Noah wouldn't complain about his situation. He wanted to understand the path that his existence was treading, but the absence of hindrances appeased his annoyance.

After Noah confirmed that his dantian could improve, he unfolded his aura to cover a wide underground area. He didn't dare to cause troubles on the surface for fear of attracting the attention of the leader of the forest.

His aura seeped inside the Immortal Lands' sturdy terrain and slowly turned it into primary energy that flew toward Noah. He then absorbed it inside his mind to fill his spherical rune.

The internal pressure became more intense and pressed on his mental walls. His sea of consciousness finally began to enlarge at a decent speed, and Noah continued to stuff the spherical rune with energy until the first drawbacks appeared.

Noah couldn't let his training affect his awareness, so he had to stop stuffing energy before headaches and similar drawbacks arrived. He even interrupted the absorption before those limits to prevent issues related to the white sky and sudden mental attacks.

Once Noah took care of his mind, he could focus on his dantian and body. He had many preys to eat, and he wanted to store a decent amount of darkness before resuming his exploration.

His lack of darkness couldn't be an issue in that environment. Noah couldn't live with the fear that his stash of energy would run out. It was pointless to be a divine existence if he couldn't express that power for more than a few attacks.

Months passed as Noah focused on improving his foundation. His level steadily rose as he solidified his position as a divine existence.

It felt good to be in an environment that could sustain his growth. His centers of power felt at home in the Immortal Lands. The laws were abundant, and the matter around remained intact even after he absorbed its energy multiple times.

Noah would normally cultivate until the growth of his centers of power showed signs of slowing down, but the events with Zach and Miss Canson compelled him to leave the area. He would have hunted all the beasts in the landing zone otherwise.

'I wonder where the next landing zone is,' Noah thought as he unfolded his consciousness to inspect the surface. 'I want to see if those areas have some restriction that forces those magical beasts to attack only the newly ascended existences.'

The forest didn't change in those months. The heavy pressure was still there, but Noah ignored it to continue exploring the peripheral areas.

Noah didn't want to meet the leader of the forest. That creature was ignoring his presence, and he desired to keep things in that way.

That environment was far less crowded than the landing zone. Noah could sense some powerful magical beasts among the heavy aura, but he never understood their exact power since he always avoided them.

Creating chaos in a foreign environment ruled by a creature that could cover it with its aura wasn't ideal. Noah wanted to leave the forest quickly to avoid remaining in that dangerous situation.

Yet, his guess about the Crystal City ended up being on point. Zach had warned his organization about the events with Noah, and a hunting party soon caught up with him during the months that he spent in seclusion.

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A few weeks before Noah came out of his cave, four rank 7 cultivators gathered above the river next to the forest. Zach was among them, and he wore a hesitant expression as he stared at the tall trees.

The four cultivators wore white robes with long sleeves. A few purple designs covered the edges of their clothes, but they all had different styles.

Zach also wore those robes, and his purple designs depicted a series of different weapons.

"Gil, are you sure that he went in the forest?" Zach asked as he turned toward a tall cultivator with long black hair and dark eyes. His purple designs depicted a series of wolf-like creatures.

"I'm certain that he entered the forest more than a month ago," Gil replied.

"This region belongs to the Twelve-legged Queen," One of the two women among the group added. She was short and extremely overweight. Long blond hair covered her face, and her robe's designs depicted a series of bubbles of various sizes.

"Bertha is right," The second woman in the group continued. "Madam Canson has made a deal with her. She will notice me if I were to enter the forest."

The woman had short brown hair and a pair of shining blue eyes. Her robe's designs depicted waves, and she was the only cultivator in the liquid stage among the group.

"You can be at ease, Lady Lena," Zach replied. "The three of us are enough to take care of him. I'm glad that our weakness can be useful to the City."



Lady Lena nodded at his words. The Twelve-legged Queen would react to any invader that wasn't at the bottom of the seventh rank, so only her three companions in the gaseous stage could continue the chase.

"Make the Crystal City proud," Lady Lena said as she gestured to her companions to proceed.

"Remember, humans are a perfect species. Don't let the physical strength of the hybrids affect your belief."

After her words, her three companions crossed the river and entered the forest.

### **Chapter 1314 1314. Ambush**

Noah was unaware that three cultivators from the Crystal City had followed him into the forest. He had predicted that Zach and his organization wouldn't leave him alone, but he didn't expect them to catch up with him so soon.

After all, Noah had plenty of experience covering his tracks, and he didn't stop running for entire weeks before settling to cultivate.

Noah continued to avoid every powerful being sensed by his consciousness as he ran through the forest. Some of those presences belonged to magical plants, but he never had the chance to study them as he did his best to leave the area under Crystal City's jurisdiction.

His travel through the forest went smoothly. He didn't meet any problem during his exploration, but the scenery in his vision didn't change even after a few more months passed.

The forest seemed endless. It made sense for the Immortal Lands' environments to be wider, but he didn't expect that a single region could take entire months to cross.

Still, Noah never stopped moving. The heavy aura that covered the environment stirred his black hole to work faster and redirect most of its energy toward his body.

Noah was moving quickly. Ordinary rank 7 cultivators in the gaseous stage wouldn't match his speed unless they used movement techniques, but Noah guessed that they couldn't release much energy in that environment.

Yet, his belief shattered when he sensed a series of presences entering the range of his consciousness.

Surprise filled Noah's mind when he sensed those presences. They vanished after a second, but he could understand their nature during that time. They weren't living beings. They radiated the unmistakable aura of a spell.

'Did they find me?' Noah immediately guessed as he accelerated.

The chance that other cultivators lived in that environment was relatively low, and the likelihood that they had used spells when surrounded by the heavy aura was even lower.

The cultivator who had cast that spell was looking for something, and it was too coincidental that the technique vanished once it touched Noah's consciousness.

Noah ran at full speed. His black hole poured even more energy into his body and filled his dark vessels with dark matter. He became even faster due to that empowerment, but he still failed in shaking off his pursuers.

A series of ghostly wolves appeared in front of him at some point. Those creatures were identical to each other, but a horizontal black line cut them in half before they could howl at Noah.

The Demonic Sword had landed in Noah's hand as soon as the creatures appeared, and Noah didn't hesitate to slash at them. His attack also landed on some trees, but it didn't manage to sever their thick trunks.

The ghostly wolves began to disperse, but Noah jumped past them without even observing their end. He couldn't study his opponent's ability with the heavy aura being a constant threat in that environment.

Noah continued to run until the ground morphed in front of his eyes. Tall weapons came out of the terrain and tried to stab him. Dodging them made Noah slow down, but he persevered in his escape.

'They must be nearby,' Noah thought as he sensed that peculiar aura again.

The attacks that had appeared in front of him exuded the power of the gaseous stage. Noah knew that his pursuers had to be inside the range of his consciousness. However, he couldn't pinpoint their exact location due to their concealing method.

Transparent bubbles fell from the trees at some point. They shone with an azure light when the sky illuminated them, but they appeared empty. Yet, Noah could sense that they contained an immense amount of energy.

Noah tried to dodge the bubbles, but they released intense waves of energy when they exploded on the terrain. He couldn't escape those shockwaves, but his body managed to endure them without suffering grave injuries.

His priority remained to escape, but his mind began to analyze those attacks and their influence on the environment. There was something off in that situation. He couldn't explain how his pursuers could ignore the aura of the leader of the forest.

If his pursuers came from the Crystal City, they had to know the forest and had an idea about its dangerousness. The fact that they launched attacks so uncaringly hinted that the leader of the area wouldn't bother to intervene in those battles.

'They might also be complete idiots,' Noah thought as he continued to dodge attacks and wave his blade to press forward.

Underestimating opponents was a deadly flaw, but overestimating them could lead to similar awful outcomes. Noah respected those who had managed to reach the divine ranks, but the Immortal Lands had already shown him that he couldn't apply his values in that world.

Noah had understood that when he threatened Miss Canson. She was at his same level, but she appeared less experienced than all the powerhouses met in his life.

The natives of the Immortal Lands would have an easier path toward the higher ranks, especially if they had powerful backings. They would never suffer from a lack of knowledge about the ranks, and the environment around them was a paradise for cultivators.

Those favorable conditions often gave birth to idiots, but Noah couldn't bet on that just yet. He continued to run through the forest and waited for something to change.

Three different abilities converged on his position at some point. Ghostly wolves appeared in the distance and started to run toward him. Various weapons came out of the ground and tried to pierce him with their sharp side. Bubbles fell from the trees and released shockwaves that destabilized him.

Noah was ready to slash his way through those spells, but more of them appeared in his vision before he could perform his martial art. A single attack wouldn't be able to pierce them, so Noah felt forced to stop to take care of them.

Black lines flew under the trees' crowns as Noah attacked those abilities. The wolves and weapons weren't a problem since his sharpness could cut them, but the bubbles exploded even if he destroyed them before they touched the ground.

Shockwaves swept Noah and made blood accumulate in his mouth. He had suffered a few light internal injuries during the escape, and he immediately identified the cultivator behind that ability as the main threat.

Three figures appeared above him after he stopped. Noah could sense the peculiar aura again, but that concealing method couldn't hide his opponents from his awareness when they were so close.

Noah recognized Zach among the trio, and his eyes sharpened when he inspected his companions. The purple designs on their white robes revealed who was behind those abilities, and Noah immediately fixed his on the overweight woman.

"We meet again," Zach announced as he gazed toward Noah.

"How did you find me so soon?" Noah asked as he prepared for the imminent battle. "How can you not fear the leader of the forest?"

The three cultivators revealed a cold smile when they heard his questions. Their reactions told Noah that he wouldn't receive any answer, but he didn't feel surprised about that.

He wanted to gain a few more pieces of information before going all-out, but it seemed that those cultivators had no intention to speak.

### **Chapter 1315 1315. Echo**

Noah had yet to become completely used to his divine powers, but he could rely on his instincts to understand how dangerous a situation was. When he inspected the three cultivators, he felt sure that they could defeat him if they worked together.

It wasn't only a matter of power. Noah's opponents had a vast battle experience, and they were already aware of the physical advantages of a hybrid.

'I wonder if they know about the higher energy in the Immortal Lands,' Noah wondered as corrosive smoke came out of his skin.

Noah didn't hesitate to activate the complete Demonic Form, but he held back from using his higher energy. He only filled his black vessels with dark matter once the fiendish armor covered his figure.

There was something strange about the whole situation. Noah didn't know how the trio had managed to catch up with him so soon, but he felt more surprised about their lack of worry.

The forest was a danger zone ruled by a powerful being, but the trio didn't hold back. The three cultivators didn't show any fear when they launched their attacks.

'What are they hiding?' Noah wondered as the corrosive cloud spread in the area.

The black smoke consumed the trees and ground as it expanded. Even those divine materials couldn't do anything against the might of the Demonic Form.

Zach, Gil, and Bertha revealed some concern when they studied the corrosive smoke. Zach had already seen that spell when Noah fought the tide, but he could realize how dangerous it was only now that it threatened to engulf him.

Gil summoned his ghostly wolves, and they shot inside the corrosive smoke. However, an unsightly expression appeared on his face when he lost contact with them.

His companions saw his reaction and accepted that they had to avoid Noah's spell. Yet, they didn't back out of that fight and summoned their techniques to deal with the threat.

Giant weapons came out of the ground. Zach summoned huge spears and swords made of black metal. They created a tall wall that tried to stop the expansion of the corrosive smoke.

Bertha's belly shrunk as multiple azure bubbles came out of her mouth. They descended toward the expanding cloud and exploded once they touched the corrosive smoke.

The shockwaves that followed the explosions pushed the cloud back and revealed its insides. Half on Noah's corrosive smoke vanished when that surge of energy spread, but he was nowhere to be seen.

Gil closed his eyes and crossed his legs as he sat in the sky. An army of ghostly wolves materialized next to him and opened their mouths as they pointed at the black cloud.

No sound came out of the wolves, but silent tremors swept the area after their gesture. Noah didn't manage to notice it before, but he could sense the matter shaking now that he was inside his corrosive smoke.

'That answers one of my questions,' Noah thought when he saw weapons coming out of the ground under him.

Zach had managed to target him after those tremors swept the area. Gil had to be the reason why the trio had managed to reach Noah so quickly.

Noah kicked the weapons rising toward him. The corrosive smoke had forced them to deplete part of their power, so his attack easily crushed the spell.

However, a series of azure bubbles converged in the part of the cloud above him and exploded, releasing shockwaves that destroyed the smoke and revealing him.

The trio could finally see their opponent again, and their eyes sharpened at the sight of his fiendish armor. A helmet that resembled the head of a dragon covered his head, and two long fangs came out of his pointy mouth. Scales covered the entirety of his body, and a long tail came out of his back.

Claws replaced the fingers of both hands and feet, but the corrosive smoke soon covered his figure again. The cloud reformed while the trio studied Noah's spell.

'Since they don't fear the leader of the forest,' Noah thought as he raised the Demonic Sword above his head, 'I don't see why I should hold back.'

The Demonic Sword trembled, and Noah waved it as soon as it amassed enough dark matter. A storm of black lines came out of the corrosive cloud and flew toward the three cultivators.

Zach, Gil, and Bertha promptly performed evasive maneuvers to dodge the slashes, but they felt forced to stop themselves when sharp black lines appeared on their path.

The entire area was in the range of Noah's consciousness, so he could make his sharpness explode anywhere he wanted. He didn't need to slash to launch his threatening attacks.

Black smoke spread from his slashes and created a second cloud. The three cultivators weren't able to dodge it, but they quickly deployed their defensive measures as they continued to retreat.

Zach, Gil, and Bertha separated as they escaped the corrosive smoke. Their white robes began to radiate a faint light that covered their figures and fended off Noah's spell, but that defense didn't manage to block the Demonic Form in time.

The corrosive smoke had managed to touch them before they could activate their inscribed robes, and bloodied injuries had replaced their skin in those spots. Moreover, black marks surrounded those wounds and expanded through their bodies.

Bertha didn't hesitate to cut away her infected tissues. A piece of her cheek separated from her body and released a violent shockwave when the energy that it contained spread in the environment.

The corrosive smoke had hit Zach on his arm, but the skin on that spot transformed into a black metal that stopped the poison.

Gil had been the slowest to react to Noah's spell. The corrosive smoke had consumed half of his left thigh and had infected what remained of it. The poison was even spreading toward his calf and waist, but he quickly acted to save his leg.

Some of his ghostly wolves flew toward him and ran through his leg. They took away part of the poison every time they crossed his limb, but they died after it spread inside them.

Noah didn't remain still while the trio dealt with the infection. He had initially decided to kill Bertha first due to the dangerousness of her attacks, but Gil became his main priority after he learnt about his tracking abilities.

Gil was still in the middle of saving his leg when he saw a shadow coming out of the second cloud. A large cut opened on his chest before he could even understand what had attacked him, and a dangerous sensation filled his mind when he sensed Noah's sharpness filling the air around him.

A black line materialized and threatened to cleave Gil in half, but a deafening howl suddenly came out of his body and destroyed the incoming attack.

Noah lowered his blade when he saw Gil's aura spreading in the environment. He could see the true meaning that it carried. The cultivator had activated the effects of his law.

'Resonance?' Noah thought when he saw Gil's law.

He couldn't find a better word to translate Gil's true meaning, but its effects soon became clear. The howl released by his body spread through the area and became more intense as the matter began to echo that sound.

Noah couldn't escape from that attack. The soundwave engulfed him and forced his tissues to tremble according to its rhythm.

### **Chapter 1316 1316. Laws**

Laws were powerful tools, especially when cultivators in the divine ranks used their individualities to fuel their attacks. Gil was only a rank 7 existence in the gaseous stage, but the activation of his true meaning brought his attacks on a superior level.

Noah saw his fiendish armor falling apart when the soundwave engulfed him. His skin also trembled according to that rhythm, and blood amassed in his mouth as internal injuries accumulated.

The echo of the howl shook Noah's insides and forced him to spit mouthfuls of blood. He didn't even charge at the cultivator, but the power of his individuality forced him to retreat.

That was the strength of a god. An individuality could affect the matter in the area and change its functions. Simple spells couldn't defend against that type of power. Noah felt naked in front of that ability.

'So that's how it is,' Noah thought as his black hole sent dark matter toward his injuries.

Noah had brought his dantian on a decent level after his seclusion. In theory, he didn't have any weakness. Yet, his inexperience in battles in the divine ranks didn't allow him to express his real power.

Instead, Gil knew what it meant to be a rank 7 cultivator. He knew how effective his individuality was, so he didn't hesitate to deploy it when Noah was about to kill him.

Zach and Bertha imitated Gil when they saw Noah's armor shake. Their auras surged, and their laws spread in the environment as they affected the matter.

Zach's individuality allowed him to transform anything into a weapon. Spears and blades grew from the air, the ground, and the trees and shot toward Noah.

His true meaning was hard to translate into words, but Noah could sense the smell of a battlefield when his aura reached him. That individuality tasted like blood, sweat, death.

Bertha's belly shrunk as her aura spread in the environment. Pieces in the matter around her absorbed her energy and transformed into multicolored spheres that flew toward Noah.

They were proper bombs that threatened to release the dense energy contained in their fabric. Noah felt tingles of admiration surging inside him when he sensed how her aura affected the environment. The might of her attacks was something that he had to respect as a fellow destroyer.

Weapons and shockwaves flew toward Noah while he dealt with Gil's individuality. Most blades and spears crumbled due to the corrosive properties of his fiendish armor. Still, some of them managed to land on his skin anyway. Also, his spell couldn't stop the surges of energy.

Screeching noises echoed in the area as the black weapons landed on his skin. The spears and blades had lost a lot of power when they crossed the corrosive smoke, so they could only slide on Noah's body when they reached it.

As for the shockwaves, they joined Gil's howl in their assault at Noah's insides. Those individualities found it had to work together, so they depleted each other's power while affecting Noah's internal organs.

'It has been so long,' Noah thought as he bathed in the pain that filled his mind.

Noah had overcome many struggles in his life, but it had been a long time since cultivators on his level could even attempt to damage him. However, those opponents could succeed in that task without relying on their teamwork.

There was a limit to the risk that he could feel when he ventured through danger zones. Noah always accepted their threats when he decided to explore specific areas.

Yet, the danger felt against opponents on his same level stirred his instincts in ways that environments couldn't match. The threat caused by the leader of the forest couldn't equal the drive that filled his mind in front of powerful enemies.

'How can I even decide to hold back in front of this power?' Noah thought as internal injuries continued to open inside him. 'Why would I disrespect such valiant warriors?'

Zach, Gil, and Bertha began to cast their next attack after they revealed their individuality. Their auras fused with their mental waves to give birth to powerful spells, but they felt forced to stop when they sensed a fourth law invading the area.

Noah roared, and his cry carried pure happiness. That battle made him feel at home. He recalled his early days as a lone cultivator and rejoiced when he sensed emotions that he had long forgotten.

Enemies that could threaten his life tried to block his path, and he didn't have any back-up or safe area where he could retreat. Noah felt utterly cornered, and that made him ecstatic.

He could finally feel drives that he had forgotten in the lower plane. He could sense his survival instincts stirring him to bring out every bit of his power.

A defeat meant death. That simple but pure feeling filled his mind and made him reveal the power of his ambition.

Zach, Gil, and Bertha had altered the matter in the area with their individuality, but they suddenly lost control of Noah's surroundings when his aura surged.

The matter around Noah began to evolve when his ambition altered its laws and forced them to transform into their best version. Some of the trees that his corrosive smoke had consumed also regrew in seconds as his aura spread.

Part of the shattered ground condensed and took the form of a sturdy terrain that exuded metallic properties. Noah's ambition forced everything affected by his law to evolve.

Still, the changes in the environment were only a consequence of his individuality. His law mostly affected his cultivation level, which rose until it crossed the halfway mark of the gaseous stage. His body also improved as his true meaning filled his tissues.

Noah continued to roar as that empowerment pushed his centers of power toward a superior level. The world even went dark for an instant when black flames came out of his mouth.

Dark matter was filling Noah's black vessels, so his flames came out far stronger than his actual level. The advantage given by his fourth center of power began to show its effects when he used both his innate abilities simultaneously.

The flames fused with the corrosive smoke released by his fiendish armor and fended off the shockwaves released by Bertha's law. The same happened to Gil's rhythm. His howl didn't manage to affect Noah's surroundings anymore after he revealed his ambition.

Only Zach's weapons managed to continue their flight toward Noah, but they found themselves unable to pierce his skin. The empowerment given by his ambition made his innate defense unbeatable by a single ability.

The trio remained focused on Noah and fended off his flames while his ambition spread in the environment, but shadows never stopped moving through the clouds during those moments.

Pure terror engulfed Gil's mind when Snore pointed its open mouth toward him. The Blood Companion had used the corrosive smoke of the second cloud to get close to the cultivator and prepare its innate ability in secret.

Bertha felt a similar sensation while she defended against the black flames. Cuts opened on her large belly when a shadow flew past her. She didn't even understand what had attacked her, but she sensed that her life was in danger.

Zach could only remain speechless when he saw that his companions were in danger. Tinges of anger also formed inside him since Noah had preferred to attack them instead of him.

### **Chapter 1317 1317. Challenge**

Noah didn't underestimate Zach, but Gil and Bertha's abilities were far more annoying in that situation. Gil could track him down even after months passed, and Bertha's attacks carried a massive amount of power.

It was a simple matter of necessity. Dealing with Zach's abilities wasn't a priority in that situation, but that still made him feel underestimated.



Zach's aura became more intense. The smell of blood became more intense in the area, and more parts of the environment transformed into weapons that flew toward Noah. Pieces of his skin also separated from his body to take the shape of dark-red spears that joined the offensive.

Gil was sure that he would die if he remained in that position. A different howl came out of his body and made his figure disappear.

A dark beam engulfed his position at that point, but Gil reappeared high in the sky and stared at that violent energy. Pure fear filled his expression. He had managed to teleport away at the last second, but he couldn't shake off the terror caused by Snore's innate ability.

Divine cultivators were extremely hard to kill, especially those that had a vast battle experience. However, Gil knew that the dark beam could kill him in an instant, and that shook the core of his confidence. His current power had no value if a newly ascended existence could overcome him so easily.

Bertha felt something similar while Night attacked her, but her situation wasn't as tragic as Gil's. The Pterodactyl couldn't cut past her layers of fat because they contained a massive amount of energy, so she could react to its assault.

Intense waves of energy came out of her injuries whenever Night managed to damage her. Her explosive power allowed her to counterattack even if the Pterodactyl was assaulting her, and Bertha could disregard that immediate threat to help Zach's offensive.

Her blood flowed out of her injuries and transformed into scarlet bubbles that flew behind Zach's weapons. Noah could only raise his Demonic Sword and fill it with as much dark matter as possible before slashing to fend off that offensive.

A storm of dark matter came out of his figure. A giant blade made of sharp higher energy flew out of the cloud that surrounded him and clashed with the enemy's offensive.

The array of weapons crumbled when it faced Noah's attacks, but it managed to deplete most of its power. When the scarlet bubbles touched the dark matter and exploded, a dense wave of energy reached Noah and flung him on the ground.

The Demonic Form broke when Bertha's attacks reached him. Noah found himself spitting mouthfuls of blood as he slid on the tough ground, but the energy transferred by his dark flames soon converged toward his black hole and healed him in an instant.

'Can I defeat them with the dark world?' Noah wondered as he stopped and deployed the Demonic Form again.

The dark world was one of his most powerful skills against cultivators due to its ability to suppress unwanted laws. Still, Noah didn't know how strong that technique would be in the Immortal Lands.

He didn't want to reveal all his abilities either. He knew how important it was to keep trump cards hidden, especially when they couldn't lead to a certain victory.

Noah wasn't sure that the dark world could make him win that battle. Even with his many advantages, he couldn't overcome three rank 7 cultivators without sacrificing something.

The trio also came from a supposedly powerful organization in the Immortal Lands. After all, the Crystal City seemed to control an entire landing zone, and that showed how strong it was.

The inscribed robes were another proof of its power. Noah didn't know how rare divine items were in the Immortal Lands, but the Crystal City could provide personalized versions to its underlings.

Noah had noticed how the purple designs hinted at the individualities of the trio. The Crystal City had to own experienced inscription masters to complete that task, and Noah couldn't predict whether the trio had other inscribed items with them.

If the dark world failed, Noah would have revealed all his abilities for nothing. Only death would wait for him afterward. That realization forced him to plan a different approach to the battle.

He had already confirmed that his attacks could threaten the lives of his opponents. The only problem was that their numerical advantage forced him to divide his offensive.

'I can win in a one versus one,' Noah concluded as he launched a series of slashes to slow down the arrival of the next offensive. 'I need a few instants to isolate one of them.'

The Divine Deduction technique activated on its own while Noah pondered about the issue. The trio launched more attacks that clashed with his slashes and overcame them.

Snore and Night did their best to mitigate the power of the blows that eventually landed on his body, but Noah still suffered some damage during those exchanges. He couldn't defeat the attacks of three rank 7 cultivators, especially while he tried not to use the dark world.

Noah analyzed his possibilities in an instant. The tongues of black flames allowed him to remain at his peak while countless thoughts ran through his mind and gave birth to a wicked plan that he couldn't wait to deploy.

'I guess I will satisfy my curiosity,' Noah revealed a cold smile as his armor reformed and depicted a devilish grin on its helmet.

Zach, Gil, and Bertha never stopped launching attacks fueled by their laws, but fear filled their minds when they heard Noah giving voice to a deafening roar.

His cry spread through the forest and flew toward its center. Noah had conveyed a simple message with his roar. He had expressed his desire to challenge the leader of that area!

A strange silence covered the area after the echoes of his roar dispersed. The trio and Noah continued to exchange attacks, but the sounds that they released seemed fainter when they spread in the environment.

It was as if something had forced their abilities to make less noise. A powerful creature had decided to join that battlefield after Noah's roar, and its simple decision caused their attacks to be more silent.

Earthquakes began to fill the forest. The battle between Noah and the trio had been unable to cause those reactions in the environment, so the four of them stopped fighting when they witnessed that event.

Trees fell in the distance. Those massive and resilient plants disappeared as a giant shadow neared the battlefield. That figure was as tall as the brown trunks, and it was as large as forty of them.

Fear appeared on the trio's faces, and Zach couldn't help but turn toward Noah to shout words that sounded like a curse. "What did you do?!"

Still, Zach could only see that Noah's figure had disappeared. His cloud had even stopped expanding, which confirmed that he had left the area.

Zach cursed in his mind and began to leave, but a heavy pressure fell on the area and forced him to remain still. The same when for his companion, who could only observe the creature that had appeared near them in fear.

A giant spider had appeared next to them. The beast had twelve hairy legs and a massive body covered in dark-brown fur. Ten black eyes covered its face, and two pincers came out from the sides of its mouth.

The creature released a low screech accompanied by human words once it stopped near the trio. "Who dares to challenge me?"

### **Chapter 1318 1318. Dark world**

Noah didn't leave the area. He had run away from the corrosive cloud and deployed his dark matter to hide behind the nearest tree. His higher energy took the shape of a fiendish armor while he observed the catastrophe that he had caused.

His instincts screamed in fear when he saw the massive Spider. Every cell in his body stirred him to escape as far as possible, but his eyes seemed glued to that majestic creature.

The Twelve-legged Queen's aura was one with the forest. At first, it would appear that the creature's existence had fused with the environment, but the Divine Deduction technique made Noah understand the truth behind that scene.

The beast's aura didn't copy the environment. The Spider had given the laws that it carried to the forest. That area was part of its being, and the creature could bend the matter around it as much as it wanted.

Noah was speechless. Magical beasts would elevate their existence as they grew through the ranks, but they didn't have individualities. The massive Spider could generate those effects with its sole passive influence.

The forest was the representation of the Twelve-legged Queen's aura. Even the resilient matter of the Immortal Lands couldn't escape from its influence.

Noah didn't doubt his instincts. He knew what had appeared in front of him. The Spider was a proper rank 8 magical beast. It was an existence that had grown past the simple state of a divine being!

'It's a world born from its existence,' Noah thought as countless pieces of information ran in his mind.

The Twelve-legged Queen was a living representation of the path past the seventh rank. It showed him what he had to strive for if he wanted to progress through the cultivation journey.

The effects of its aura were different from his dark world. Noah's technique relied on his higher energy to occupy an existing space and transform it according to his will. However, the beast didn't need any tool to generate superior results.

The alterations caused by the Spider's aura weren't a temporary phenomenon. The matter of the forest would continue to belong to its existence unless a stronger law conquered it.

The changes in the matter showed some flaws in their structure. Its laws still strived to enter Heaven and Earth's system, but Noah linked that to the Twelve-legged Queen's level and species.

Cultivator would generate even stronger effects with their individuality. The same would apply to creatures on a higher level, but even those fainter alterations were enough to give Noah an idea of the path in front of him.

'My existence needs to become a world of its own,' Noah concluded as he deactivated the Divine Deduction technique. 'A single law flying through an array of true meanings is not enough. My individuality must become as powerful as the higher plane.'

That was his path. His law had to reach the point when it could generate an entire world without the help of techniques and tricks. Those effects also had to be permanent. The empowerment that his ambition was currently capable of was still too lacking to compare to that power.

Noah's black hole rotated as fast as it could in that deadly situation. The rank 8 beast's aura tried to suppress him and make him helpless, but his many methods had granted him the ability to move.

The dark matter weakened the natural influence radiated by the Spider, and his black hole managed to salvage his body's freedom. The trio also distracted the Twelve-legged Queen, so most of its aura was converging on them.

Only the leftovers of the Spider's aura reached Noah, but he had to deploy all his methods to fend it off. His body felt sluggish anyway, but he was glad that he could still move.

"Why did you challenge me?" The Twelve-legged Queen said as low screeches accompanied its human words.

Its voice generated shockwaves that seeped through the fiendish armor and made Noah's insides churn. He felt as if hammers were striking his organs and didn't want to stop anytime soon.

Rivers of blood flew out of Noah's mouth as he forced himself to remain silent. The dark matter around him was hiding his presence, but he didn't dare to underestimate the awareness of a magical beast in the eighth rank.

The Twelve-legged Queen was in the lower tier, but that didn't give Noah the chance to take the matter lightly. Instead, he had one more reckless action to perform before he could run away.

Simply gaining an escape route wasn't enough for Noah. Gil would track him as soon as he left, and he couldn't deal with the trio when they worked together. Moreover, his knowledge was still too shallow when it came to the Immortal Lands, but he planned to solve all his problems with his next move.

"We didn't," Zach stammered an answer and closed his eyes as he struggled to finish his line, "Your Majesty."

Even the members of an extremist faction had to show their respect toward such a powerful magical beast. Beliefs didn't matter anymore when their opponent could reduce them into a pulp with the sole intensity of its aura.

"I heard the challenge," The Twelve-legged Queen continued. "Magical beasts don't lie. Are you comparing me to humans?"

Those words seeped deep inside the trio's beliefs, but they could only play along in that situation. It didn't matter that Madame Canson had sealed an agreement with that creature. The Spider could still kill them if they made it angry.

"I wouldn't dare, your Majesty," Zach continued. "There is a fourth-."

Zach didn't manage to complete his line because dark matter engulfed the area and suppressed his words. The sudden appearance of the dark world surprised even the Spider, but the aura innately radiated by its body destroyed the higher energy before it could reach it.

The Twelve-legged Queen didn't feel anything when it saw the dark matter filling the area. It didn't sense any danger coming from that almost liquid substance. Actually, that higher energy carried properties similar to its forest.

Noah had altered the aura of the dark world to make it resemble the forest. His imitation appeared poorly-executed, but it managed to make him gain a few instants.

The Spider understood that something was off when it saw ice spreading on the edges of the dark world. A rocky layer also formed on top of the expanding frost, and the black cloud shrunk to transform into a giant Snake.

Snore engulfed the area with its huge body, but the Spider didn't hesitate to throw one of its legs toward the beast. However, when its limb touched the rocky layer, the Blood Companion's figure opened and dispersed into a storm of dark matter.

The Twelve-legged Queen didn't think that a cultivator was behind that attack. It didn't even recognize the dark world as a technique since Noah had given it Snore's shape.

The Spider believed that a unique magical beast had chosen to attack its lair but had retreated once it sensed the forest leader's power. The Twelve-legged Queen then unfolded its aura to search for the invader, but it focused back on the cultivators after it didn't find anything.

Still, the creature noticed that something had happened during the previous events. The trio was a duo now. Bertha had disappeared.

### **Chapter 1319 1319. Pain and hunger**

Noah ran faster than he had ever done before. Trees appeared and vanished in his vision as he tried to leave that dangerous forest.

The area still trembled. Every inch of that environment radiated the Twelve-legged Queen's aura and increased the range of its senses. Yet, they never managed to notice Noah since the dark matter was covering him.

Also, he was less than a speck of dust lost inside an ocean. Noah had never been too good at hiding himself, but the Spider couldn't tell the difference between him and one of the magical plants in the environment while he was inside the armor of dark matter.

'Why am I even forced to go through this as soon as I reach the Immortal Lands?' Noah cursed in his mind as he kept his emission of energy to the minimum.

Cries and tremors ran through the forest during his escape. The Twelve-legged Queen continued interrogating Zac and Gil, but Noah had no intention to see how long that decoy would last.

He had to leave. He would die if the rank 8 magical beast found him and deployed its abilities to hunt him down. Noah's vast knowledge and unique techniques would be useless once the creature decided to use its power against him.

Noah ran for entire months, and his black hole made him go faster when he sensed that the forest didn't shake anymore. The Twelve-legged Queen had stopped dealing with the duo, so he had to give everything on his last sprint.

The end of the forest eventually appeared in his eyes. Noah saw a giant lake unfolding past the last array of trees, and he didn't hesitate to fly above it.

The white sky began to apply the entirety of its pressure on his mind once Noah left the safe area created by the trees' azure crowns, but he didn't dare to slow down.

Noah didn't care if he depleted all his mental energy during his escape. His only priority was to put as many kilometers as he could between him and the forest. Everything else could wait for when he stopped.

The lake radiated a dangerous area, but Noah didn't study it. He flew for more months and eventually reached one of the bordering regions. A gray mountain chain appeared in his vision, and Noah landed in one of its valleys to find a decent hiding spot.

Noah let his instincts pick the place where he would dig a cave. Dangerous auras came out from all the mountains, but he settled in the safest areas that he could find.

The location for his cave ended up being a valley between two short mountains. Noah dug in its terrain and built a temporary home that he reinforced with his dark matter.

Once the dark matter began to radiate the same aura as the environment, Noah called back his fiendish armor and began to assess his condition.

He had suffered multiple injuries during the battle against the three cultivators, but his dark flames had always managed to fix them. At the moment, Noah only suffered from a lack of energy, especially when it came to his sea of consciousness.

His body was still full of energy, and Noah didn't use his darkness during his escape. His dantian was far from full, but refilling it wasn't a priority.

The same went for the black hole. Noah had mostly used dark matter in that situation because it could keep him hidden from the rank 8 creature's aura, but his fourth center of power seemed to have an endless stash of energy.

'I can rest for a while,' Noah thought as his spherical rune appeared in his palm. 'I will move as soon as I learn how to leave the area of influence of the Crystal City.'

Noah had stopped training his mind during his escape due to the white sky, but he would reactivate it as soon as his mental sea reformed. He wouldn't neglect his training, even with pursuers after him.

The Demonic Sword came out of his separate space once his mind recovered and began to expand again. Noah cultivated and refilled his dantian before focusing on what he had gained in the forest.

Most of his thoughts analyzed Noah's sensations when he saw the rank 8 magical beast. The insights about the path past the seventh rank filled his mind and allowed him to understand what his law had to become to advance.

Plans about his current situation also formed in his mind. He didn't have a method to fend off Gil's tracking abilities, but he could counter them by reaching a place where the Crystal City couldn't follow him.

When Noah sensed that the pieces of information in his possessions weren't enough to create a solid plan, he took out something from his separate space.

Bertha fell on the ground of his cave. She had a series of threads made of dark matter wrapped around her large body, but she wasn't awake, so those restraints were only a precaution.

The cultivator was unconscious, and one of Noah's spells was the reason behind her condition. Tiny dark blades ran under Bertha's skin from time to time and reinforced the blockades placed around her centers of power.

It had been a long time since Noah used the Shadow Swords spell. Most of the original technique had disappeared after the many modifications that happened when Noah was in the sixth and seventh rank. Yet, it now was a diagram that suited the entirety of his existence, and that could express divine power.

Noah could restrain a cultivator's centers of power by creating a series of mental blades that carried specks of dark matter inside their shape. The spell was tricky to activate in an actual battle, but the appearance of the Twelve-legged Queen had given him the chance to act.

The expansion of the dark world and the appearance of Snore's figure had the sole purpose of deceiving the rank 8 creature. Noah had managed to seize one of his opponents and run during those valuable instants.

'My problems would be over if I managed to capture the howling guy,' Noah thought as he pressed his hand on Bertha's forehead to check the state of his spell. 'A pity that he was too far away. Well, she was the strongest in the group, so she might have more to say about the Crystal City.'

Once Noah checked that the Shadow Swords spell was still in place, he decided to relieve Bertha's mind of some pressure and called back part of the restraints that kept her unconscious.

She would be able to wake up after Noah reabsorbed some of those blades, but it would be impossible to cast spells in that condition.

Bertha slowly woke up and tried to release a warning cry when she realized where she was. However, no sound came out of her open mouth, so she soon felt forced to turn toward her warden.

Noah inspected her with cold eyes. He had already decided to kill her in his mind. He would only learn as much as he could from her before that.

A rank 7 cultivator with tight connections with the Crystal City was a valuable loot. Noah couldn't wait to learn more about the Immortal Lands from Bertha.

### **Chapter 1320 1320. Torture**

Bertha tried to scream and curse Noah while the Shadow Swords spell suppressed her voice, but he didn't lower the restrictions until she became tired of that process.

"I will let you speak now," Noah said as he placed his hand on her forehead. "You must have understood by now that you can't escape from my spell. Don't try anything funny."

Some of the small dark blades flowing under her skin left her throat and reinforced the blockades on her centers of power. Bertha found herself able to speak again, and her first words were a threat sent to her warden.

"You will die of a horrible death once the Crystal City gets its hands on you," Bertha said as she gnashed her teeth in anger. "Your mind will suffer so many tortures that you will end up begging us to kill you."

"You wanted to kill me already," Noah replied as the Demonic Sword came out of his separate space. "This threat is pointless. You made me your enemy after our first meeting."

Dark matter flowed out of his black hole and covered Bertha's belly. The Demonic Sword then cut a piece of her flesh while the higher energy suppressed the energy that it contained.

Noah analyzed Bertha's tissues right in front of her eyes. He could see the immense energy they contained, and he couldn't help but feel interested in her individuality.

"Your body is really unique," Noah commented once he understood how her law worked. "Your organization believes in the superiority of the human race, but you try to imitate magical beasts with your techniques. It's a pity that you didn't manage to keep your dantian and body separated. This method only allows you to store energy, but it doesn't give you any real empowerment."

Bertha's eyes widened when she heard his words. She couldn't hide the nature of her true meaning in her condition, but she felt surprised that Noah had managed to grasp so many details about her law with one quick inspection.

She had initially believed that Noah was a valiant warrior with rich battle experience, but his last feat altered her idea about him. Noah wasn't only a brute. He was a true master in fields that she had yet to define.

"Accumulation," Noah announced. "A simple true meaning. Your body is the catalyst for your individuality, and it lets you stuff it with energy that you can release at will. The complexity of a law usually depends on its power, but you manage to reach similar results by accumulating more "Breath"."

That second explanation wasn't as surprising as the first for Bertha. After all, her law was right in front of his eyes. Discerning how she had reached that point had been the hard part.



"The Crystal City doesn't answer to threats," Bertha said when she saw that Noah remained silent. "Its members are true believers. It will be an honor to sacrifice my life to slow down one of its enemies."

"Death isn't the issue here," Noah replied. "I will definitely kill you. Nothing can change my mind about that. You only have to decide for how long you want to suffer."

"What do you mean?" Bertha replied.

She could understand what Noah meant, but she wanted to gain as many instants as possible. Bertha hoped that her companions would find her, and only time could make her chance of survival higher.

"I understand fanatics," Noah answered. "I know that your faith isn't something that you can trade. I need to make you desire death to obtain the answers that I want. Killing you will be the reward of this process."

Noah spoke heartless words, and Bertha could sense that he had experience dealing with his enemies in that way. Some fear built inside her when she felt the coldness carried by his voice, but her resolve remained firm.

"Your friends won't come for you," Noah said at some point. "That giant Spider has remained with them for months. I can't imagine what it did with them."

"The Crystal City and the Twelve-legged Queen have an agreement," Bertha replied as pride filled her expression. "This is the power that you have chosen to oppose. We can influence entire regions of the Immortal Lands."

"Your boss must be a rank 8 cultivator then," Noah added. "A magical beast on that level would never deal with weaker beings, and it wouldn't be alive if your leader were stronger than that creature."

Bertha knew that she had revealed something with her words, but that didn't slip out of her accidentally. She had purposely told Noah how strong the Crystal City was in an attempt to scare him away.

However, Noah had dealt with existences stronger than him throughout his entire life. Those threats were nothing more than empty words in his ears. Bertha's line didn't even manage to break his calm.

"I need to know how far the influence of the Crystal City spreads," Noah began to list his questions. "I need to understand where I am and what I need to search for. I also want a complete overview of the forces nearby."

Noah's requests were simple and covered his most impelling doubts. He would ask about the divine inscribed items only after Bertha decided to give up.

"You are wasting your time," Bertha said as a cold smile appeared on her face.

"I know," Noah replied as the Demonic Sword cut another piece of her belly.

The Demonic Sword continued to cut Bertha's belly, but she didn't show any reaction at that event. She didn't seem to care about her body at all.

The blades of the Shadow Swords spell lowered part of the restrictions applied on her dantian. Her individuality began to affect the environment at that point, and energy accumulated on her belly to heal her injuries.

Noah then controlled his spell again to restore the restrictions on her dantian. The Demonic Sword also began to cut her belly, but it dug a bit deeper at that time.

Bertha understood what was happening once Noah stopped attacking her again to give her dantian the chance to heal her injuries. Noah was testing her resistance to pain to see how long it would take to shatter her resolve.

Noah cut her and let her dantian activate its healing properties. He repeated that process countless times, and he always severed a bit more of her body as he continued that torture.

Bertha's resolve was incredible, but her determination began to waver once she saw her body regrowing for the thousandth time in a row. There was still no sign of her allies, and Noah was relentless in his torture.

Worry mounted inside her, and something forced her to accept death as the only possible outcome. Bertha had started to respect Noah's relentlessness, which made her understand that he didn't bluff before.

Noah tortured Bertha until she began to spill a few pieces of information. A map slowly formed in his mind as he learnt about the layout of that part of the Immortal Lands.

The following topic of their conversations revolved around weapons and inscriptions. Noah had an intense interest in the tools that allowed those cultivators to ignore the pressure radiated by the white sky.

In the end, Noah killed Bertha. He seized her dantian and let the energy contained in her body flow inside his tissues. He had learnt enough. It was time to move again.