

DEMONIC 1551

Chapter 1551 1551. Escape

The sky constantly illuminated the Immortal Lands. The night never fell on the higher plane, and only a few unique areas featured some dark moments.

The existences that had spent their entire lives in the higher plane had never experienced a proper night. They didn't even know what it looked like. They had only heard stories about it from those that had ascended from Mortal Lands.

Instead, those who had ascended had slowly forgotten the night after spending entire millennia in the Immortal Lands. They had ended up accepting that they would never set their eyes on that scenery again.

The whiteness retracted after Noah launched his last attack. His singularities triggered all the destruction that his previous blows had accumulated inside Heaven's body. The detonation generated after the attack shattered those arrays of lightning bolts and dispersed the energy inside that threatening figure.

Destroying Heaven didn't only generate a massive discharge of energy. That figure embodied the very laws of the world, so its defeat paved the path for Noah's ambition.

Black waves of energy expanded through the sky and created a perfect imitation of the night that Noah recalled. The few intact sparks floating among that blackness even managed to represent stars.

The audience didn't know how to react to that scene. The bright Immortal Lands had turned dark. Noah had forced the night to descend on that destroyed region.

'I see,' Noah thought while bathing in the blackness that filled the sky. 'My existence can create an opposite version of the white sky. Heaven and Earth try to illuminate everything with their light, but I can bring darkness.'

The waves of energy that had spread through the sky after Heaven's detonation didn't hurt Noah. They had transformed into part of his energy as soon as his law replaced the world's true meanings.

That piece of the sky was part of his existence. It was an extension of Noah's ambition.

Noah opened his eyes, and the tiny sparks that floated among that blackness slowly started to disappear. They resembled stars that had fallen prey to the densest darkness. Noah almost felt enlighten by watching that scene.

"A darkness capable of devouring stars," Noah whispered before Duanlong and Night appeared next to him.

Night didn't manage to do much against Heaven. The insides of that white body were too dangerous for the Pterodactyl. The creature had remained on the sidelines, ready to pull Noah out of the fight.

Duanlong opened its mouth, but Noah stopped the creature by placing a hand on its head. The dragon couldn't understand the reason behind his action, but Noah soon explained himself.

"Let me watch this a bit longer," Noah said in a pensive tone. "Let the Immortal Lands experience a true night."

The darkness ended up devouring all the sparks, leaving only a thick layer made of black energy above the destroyed region. The audience didn't dare to move their eyes from the sky. The scene was extremely captivating for beings that had lived among blinding whiteness for their entire lives.

The energy that Noah required was around him. He only needed to wave his hand to absorb all of it. Yet, he waited until his cultivation level was almost about to fall into the seventh rank to act.

"Go now," Noah whispered, and Duanlong activated its pulling force.

The dragon respected Noah's wish and slowed down its innate ability. The blackness took a while to converge in its mouth, which gave Noah a few more seconds to admire the scenery.

The energy entered the Blood Companion and flowed inside Noah's hand before ending in the black hole. The fourth center of power then purified it and sent it back to his tissues.

The light slowly returned in the area. Heaven and Earth quickly took control of that piece of the sky and filled it with their whiteness.

The darkness had lasted for less than a minute, but Noah made sure to commit that moment to memory. He didn't want to forget the sensations felt during that short dream.

Waves of power filled every inch of his body and spread inside the fabric of his centers of power. His injured black vessels instantly healed, and the black hole finally started to focus on his cultivation level.

Noah's mind shrunk until it stabilized a bit above the bottom of the eighth rank. It seemed that his mental walls were sturdy enough to endure the weight of that size. A red shade also spread through their fabric as the Demonic Deduction technique evolved and created a tighter link with the whole center of power.

His dantian also shrunk before stabilizing at the bottom of the eighth rank. A denser type of darkness also filled its insides and forced the black hole to improve again.

Noah depleted his entire potential during that evolution. His dantian and black hole overcame the quality obtained with the forced breakthroughs and spread their influence through his whole existence.

Only his body fell back into the seventh rank, but Noah didn't mind that event. He could sense that his tissues lacked a critical process to complete their evolution. He needed to experience the chrysalis again to evolve that center of power properly.

Drowsiness filled Noah's mind. He had already accumulated enough energy to make his body advance, so his center of power wanted to start the evolution right away.

'Not here,' Noah thought while supporting himself on the Pterodactyl. 'The Crystal City will definitely come here to investigate.'

Noah glanced at his companions. Many of his underlings had died, but Fergie and the others had ended up winning the fight.

Instead, the Eternal Snakes were still chasing Monsieur Evan around. The elusive cultivator appeared exhausted, but those creatures had yet to overcome the many defenses stored in his space-ring.

'He seems the defensive type. Good,' Noah concluded before sending a mental message to his companions and letting Night drag him away from the region.

The Pterodactyl shot through the sky. The Eternal Snakes had just resumed fighting against their opponent, but they quickly turned when they sensed that something strange was happening on the battlefield.

Noah had disappeared, and even his companions had separated to fly in different directions. Everyone had begun to run away without bothering to warn the Eternal Snakes.

Monsieur Evan played a crucial role in their escape. He also tried to leave the encirclement when the Snakes became distracted, but his actions made the creatures turn toward him again.

His attempt to escape made Noah's group gain time. The Eternal Snakes weren't willing to let go of that prey after fighting for so long. In their minds, they could always hunt Noah afterward.

Of course, angry hisses came out of their mouths when they recalled their deal. The Snakes had been so immersed in their battle that they had almost forgotten about Shandal.

Still, when they turned to search for Noah and the others again, Monsieur Evan managed to leave their encirclement and forced them to chase after him.

'I don't think we can reach the Outer Lands before my body starts evolving,' Noah said through the mental connection. 'Find a crowded spot. I'll handle the magical beasts there.'

Night followed his orders and brought Noah into a crowded region after putting enough distance from the battlefield. Three large packs led by leaders in the lower tier occupied that area and tried to scare those foreigners away, but Noah gave voice to a roar that silenced all of them.

"I will only remain here for a while," Noah roared. "My pack will arrive soon. I will exterminate all of you if I find my underlings hurt when I come out."

A chill ran down those beasts' spine when Noah's threats reached their ears. His pride was too intense for those creatures. They immediately understood how dangerous he was and decided to migrate.

"Don't you dare to leave the region either," Noah roared before punching the ground and opening a cave. "I want to see all of you when I come out."

Noah dived into the cave and let his companions handle the rest. His body began to release a black gas that created a chrysalis and made his consciousness go dark.

Chapter 1552 1552. Hole

Noah didn't dream. His existence had long since become one. The sleep inside the chrysalis didn't need to show him anything.

A few images flashed in his vision from time to time. They were nothing more than partial memories shared by his companions through the mental connection.

Noah could see his companions defending him and handling the magical beasts on the surface. Those creatures featured six rank 8 specimens, but they couldn't do anything against the new might reached by Snore and Duanlong.

His body evolved during the chrysalis and polished the evolution experienced by his centers of power. Noah's strength kept rising as his existence stabilized in the eighth rank. That harmony also brought a new wave of improvements on his dantian, mind, and black hole.

Divine existences were expressions of personal laws. Their centers of power shared a tight connection that almost prevented them from breaking their harmony.

The same applied to Noah. As his body evolved, his black hole forced the other centers of power to go through multiple refining cycles until it eventually brought his entire existence to a level that no other newly advanced rank 8 being could imagine.

An intense sensation of power filled Noah when he opened his eyes. He had never felt so strong. Even the level reached through his ambition couldn't compare to his current state.

Still, he sensed that something had changed. Noah felt that his existence didn't limit its influence on his figure. It spread through the world on its own, affecting the matter around him and transforming its fabric.

'My existence naturally develops a domain around me,' Noah concluded after studying that phenomenon.

The breakthroughs didn't only bring immense power. They had elevated Noah's existence, putting it one step above simple laws. He felt able to affect the world with simple thoughts. He could recreate a weaker version of the dark world with a wave of his hand.

'Laws for the seventh rank,' Noah listed his general understanding of the divine ranks in his mind, 'Domain for the eighth, and world for the ninth.'

That was the only natural progression that Noah could imagine according to what he had learnt throughout his life in the Immortal Lands.

'Maybe you can give birth to something bigger than a world in the tenth rank,' Noah thought while the images of his ascension resurfaced in his mind. 'Maybe you can create a complete system of words at that level. It would explain how Heaven and Earth can continue to expand. I wonder what they did wrong to fail the breakthrough.'

Doubts about his future in the cultivation journey filled Noah's mind, but he had never felt so sure about his path. He wasn't making plans anymore. He was simply existing, and that was enough to make his power increase.

His consciousness expanded and covered the entire region. Noah could immediately sense every living being on the surface and in the underground world.

Fergie, his underlings, and the Foolery were on the surface. The three wild packs were also there, but it seemed that their patience was reaching its limit. Snore and Duanlong were the only reason why they didn't decide to rebel against Noah's orders.

The Demonic Sword and Night shot inside the cave when they sensed that Noah had awakened, but they stopped once their attention fell on their Master.

The entire cave had transformed during those short seconds. All the rocks and terrain had taken the shape of a black metal that echoed Noah's ambition. Those simple rank 7 materials had even reached the middle tier in an instant.

Noah's natural pressure was far heavier than before. Even his companions couldn't help but feel in awe of his power. He appeared as the strongest being in the entire world.

"I'll take care of your level once we reach the Outer Lands," Noah said before jumping outside of the cave.

His pressure immediately unfolded through the entire region. The grass and trees that covered the surface began to evolve and develop basic wills. That quick contact with Noah's aura had been enough to activate their potential.

Fergie and the others remained speechless in front of the might that Noah naturally radiated. They had no words to describe how powerful he had become. Even the rank 8 Foolery couldn't believe that it was looking at a newly advanced existence.

"You did good," Noah whispered, but his words spread through the entire region. "We have to go now. The Crystal City and its allies must be looking for us."

The Foolery gulped. Their instincts were begging them to bow in front of that powerful existence. Their desire didn't come from a basic fear. They saw in Noah their best chance to improve.

The other magical beasts went through similar sensations, but the enemy packs didn't share the same desires. They felt the need to run away. They didn't want to remain in the same region as that monster anymore.

Noah glanced at the three packs. Fiery lions, metal tigers, and white pumas filled his vision. Those magical beasts had managed to put aside their differences while Noah was inside the chrysalis. They would never stand so close to each other otherwise.

"You," Noah pointed at one of the rank 8 tigers. "Step forward."

The creature tried to resist, but its mind gave in to Noah's pride. The beast began to walk forward and stopped only when it reached Noah.

Noah placed his hand above the creature's head before tightening his grasp. His fingers seeped into its skin and turned its brain into a bloody pulp. A few slashes had also shot out of his arm during that simple gesture.

The rank 8 tiger died under the incredulous eyes of the other creatures. Noah had only needed one attack to kill it.

"The others can follow me," Noah said in a low tone before covering the corpse with liquid dark matter.

The higher energy destroyed its fabric and sent its power toward the black hole, which purified it and spread it through Noah's tissues.

Noah shot high in the sky before turning toward the three packs. Fergie and the others quickly followed him, but the overlords of that region hesitated.

The pride released by Noah's action had freed those specimens from the control of their leaders. They could choose whether to follow Noah or remain in their packs, but their instincts still feared him too much.

However, a few brave specimens decided to roar their willingness to join Noah. They separated from their packs, and Snore allowed them to use its body as a mount.

Two of the five remaining rank 8 specimens and a small group of magical beasts in the seventh rank decided to join Noah. All the others creatures remained still, but they shot mocking gazes at the leavers.

Snore brought those creatures into the sky before glancing at Noah. The Blood Companion knew exactly what was going through his mind. It was aware that they couldn't leave any proof of their passage.

"Turn this place into dust," Noah sighed, and Snore unfolded its wings.

A rain of massive feathers fell toward the region and made all the magical beasts on the ground roar in fear. Still, they couldn't do anything against the strongest attack of a rank 8 Blood Companion fueled by liquid dark matter.

Noah didn't even look at the outcome of Snore's attack. He turned and led his pack away from that region. He didn't need to inspect the ground to know that the whole area had transformed into a massive hole.

Chapter 1553 1553. Talk

'Maybe it's time to contact them,' Noah thought while flying through the Immortal Lands with his pack.

An inscribed notebook appeared in his grasp, and Noah chose which words to use to announce his return carefully.

'I'm back in the human domain,' Noah eventually sent through the inscribed notebook. 'I should reach the other side in a few decades.'

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Divine Demon took a sip from his jug before shooting a lazy glance at the fight happening in front of him. A pack of dragons was fighting against rank 7 cultivators in the liquid stage, but the battle was quite dull to watch.

'I've done this for millennia already,' Divine Demon thought. 'Maybe it's time to cause a mess and force them to clean it up. They won't reach the solid stage with this training anyway.'

June, Faith, Daniel, Flying Demon, and Dreaming Demon had done their best to improve during those years. Divine Demon and the Legion had taken care of their training, but the lack of proper dangers slowed down their advancements.

The group had also taken a tour inside Supreme Thief's inheritance. The Legion had long since begun to consider Divine Demon and the others as part of Noah's team, which granted them privileges that humans wouldn't usually obtain in that organization.

"How are they today?" Jordan asked while landing next to Divine Demon.

Her figure brimmed with power. The hybrid had finally broken through the eighth rank during those years. Jordan was another pillar of the Legion now.

"The same as always," Divine Demon lazily explained. "They fight, they say a few curses, and then they win. The same boring mess."

"It's getting harder and harder to gather dragons for this training field," Jordan commented while seizing the jug in Divine Demon's grasp. "You might want to switch to other magical beasts soon."

"Things will get even more boring then," Divine Demon sighed. "Are you sure that the human side isn't doing anything fishy? Do we really have no enemy on our borders?"

Divine Demon had begun to consider the Legion as his organization after spending so long among the hybrids, and Jordan didn't mind that behavior. She actually felt glad that her force had gained another rank 8 asset thanks to Noah.

"The humans are too scared to attack the Legion now," Jordan replied while taking a sip from the jug. "Our last assault on their domain has forced them to reconsider their alliances and borders. They prefer to fight each other for the time being."

"Really?" Divine Demon almost pleaded. "Don't we have a few grudges? Even a small enmity will do. I will pay your dragon's weight in Soul Stones if you give me the slightest reason to attack an organization."

"You know how it is better than anyone in the Legion," Jordan said while handing the jug back to Divine Demon. "The other castles of the Crystal City are in secret locations. The secret organization is a ghost. Even the other forces are doing nothing but accumulating wealth and defenses to prepare for the next invasion."

Divine Demon felt as if his boredom would swallow him. He didn't mind taking his time to train Noah's friends, but he also desired challenges to keep growing. That peace was lasting too much.

His inscribed notebook suddenly rang. Divine Demon quickly listened to the mental message received by his device, and his eyes lit up when he heard Noah's voice.

"Awesome job, my heir!" Divine Demon exploded into a laugh while holding his inscribed notebook. "You came back at the right time! Let's rejoin and bully some large forces. I have refrained from attacking the Sailbird family only for your sake!"

Everyone in the area heard his loud words. Jordan, June, and the others couldn't fail to understand what was happening, and excited expressions appeared on their faces.

Still, before any of them could ask anything, a lump of golden flames materialized in front of Divine Demon and took King Elbas' shape.

"Did Noah Balvan come back?" King Elbas asked while wearing a smug smile.

"You must be excited for your leader's return," Divine Demon replied. "He is back. Hopefully, he can bring some excitement in our boring lives."

Divine Demon's joke didn't manage to irritate King Elbas anymore. The Royal couldn't feel offended by those words after becoming a rank 8 cultivator. He had proven to that annoying character that he was far better than everyone else.

"Defying Demon can cause a mess wherever he goes," King Elbas snorted. "I am indeed excited, but only because I know that chaos is about to fall on our lives."

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Noah remained speechless when Divine Demon's mental message reached his inscribed notebook. He had expected his companions to be excited about his return, but that amount of enthusiasm had taken him by surprise.

'I need to handle a few matters first,' Noah sent through the inscribed notebook. 'Don't begin a war without me! Also, try to contact Saul from the Balrow family. Tell him that Defying Demon is ready to complete his end of the bargain.'

After sending the mental message, Noah forced his pack to accelerate. His aura covered his underlings and made them break through the limits of their speed.

The magical beasts felt excited. They were moving faster than they had ever done in their lives without using their energy. Only the smartest among them understood that Noah was consuming his darkness to make them reach that speed.

The group took a few years to reach the Outer Lands. They had to avoid human settlements for the time being, but they managed to arrive at their destination rather quickly anyway.

Noah stopped only once strong winds began to fill the environment. Those currents of chaotic laws marked his arrival into deeper parts of the Outer Lands and made him feel sure about his safety.

'The Crystal City will never find us here,' Noah concluded before ordering his pack to take control of the regions under him.

The Foolery, Fergie, and the other magical beasts fought the few packs inhabiting the area and defeated most of them. Instead, Noah took care of the creatures that managed to escape by submitting them.

After his pack spread through the area, Noah built a cave and entered a deep meditative state. He had to take care of an important matter before deciding what to do with his prisoner.

Noah's ethereal figure dived deep into the mental sea and inspected every corner of those dark waters. He even activated the Demonic Deduction technique to bring him closer to a solution, but he still couldn't find his target.

'I don't believe that he can hide something inside my mind even after I reached the eighth rank!' Noah thought before deciding to go all-out.

Waves of mental energy surged and flowed into the red lines that covered his mental walls. It was hard to deplete all that energy at his current level, but Noah kept the process going for as long as necessary.

Noah disregarded the violent thoughts generated by the Demonic Deduction technique. He only needed to empty his mind to find an energy that had remained hidden inside his center of power for too long.

The black mental energy eventually vanished, and the same went for the waters tainted by the bloodlust. Drowsiness enveloped his existence when his mind became empty, but the black hole forced him to remain awake.

Noah couldn't find anything inside his empty mind, but he didn't give up on the matter. Liquid dark matter seeped inside his mental sphere and covered every inch of his mental walls, eventually uncovering a strange blue spot.

"You managed to find me," A familiar voice resounded through Noah's mental sphere. "I didn't expect this meeting to happen so soon."

Noah's ethereal figure descended toward the blue spot. His mind immediately produced mental energy and slowly fixed his temporary weakness, but Noah used the dark matter to keep that area devoid of water.

"Come out already," Noah said toward the blue spot. "It's time to have a proper talk, Supreme Thief."

Chapter 1554 1554. Path

The blue spot morphed. It rose and took Supreme Thief's shape, who began to laugh before sitting on the mental walls. The expert even patted the ground, and Noah didn't hesitate to sit in front of him.

"Care to explain?" Noah asked in an annoyed tone.

He had a vague idea about the true nature of Supreme Thief's inheritance, but he wasn't ready to believe him so soon. After all, both Supreme Thief and Great Builder were planning to come back to life. That could also involve them taking control of other living beings.

"Do not worry, you unique fella," Supreme Thief laughed. "It has never been my intention to hurt you. This is only a speck of my existence. I only happen to have far more power than you."

Noah could understand that point, but he didn't dare to lower his defenses. Having part of a rank 9 existence inside his mind didn't let him feel safe.

"When were you planning to reveal yourself?" Noah questioned the ethereal expert.

"My original plan was to manifest this shard of my existence when you were about to reach the limits of the eighth rank," Supreme Thief replied while scratching his chin. "I was willing to adapt to your potential, but I never expected you to find me right after entering the eighth rank."

Supreme Thief then moved his eyes on the liquid dark matter keeping the area devoid of mental energy. He appeared utterly captivated by the higher energy, but he managed to suppress his pulling force at that time.

"You are definitely worthy of attention," Supreme Thief commented. "What exactly are you? I have seen countless unique creatures and breathtaking existences, but your foundation surpasses all of them."

"Why don't you explain the nature of your abilities first?" Noah asked. "I already have too many techniques that I can't control. I don't want to add yours to the list."

"Right to the point," Supreme Thief laughed. "You should have more respect for your seniors. I have been dead for eras, but you don't want to grant me a few seconds of your time."

"I have the ghost of a rank 9 existence in my mind," Noah replied coldly. "You will forgive me if I'm not ecstatic about this situation."

Supreme Thief realized how uncomfortable Noah must have felt and stopped laughing. A serious expression appeared on his face for the first time since the beginning of the conversation.

"Stealing is only a consequence of my law," Supreme Thief explained. "The core of my true meaning comes from my unfathomable greed, which is quite different from what you and your kind feel."

Supreme Thief waved his hand, and the dark matter slowly flowed toward his palm. The higher energy escaped Noah's control and became part of that existence's power.

"I have no idea how you obtained this fantastic energy," Supreme Thief said while playing with the globe of dark matter that stabilized in his palm. "I don't know how to create it. I don't even know what it is. Yet, something tells me that I would have obtained it if I had followed a different path. This simple knowledge makes this power mine."

Noah's eyes widened. He didn't clearly understand Supreme Thief's words, but his mind began to generate strange ideas.

"This power belongs to you," Supreme Thief continued, "But what makes you the only one worthy of having it? You can't be the only existence in the many planes capable of creating something similar, so why can't I also have it?"

The strange ideas became clearer. Noah didn't know why his thoughts were moving in that direction, but he couldn't deny them.

"What if I were more worthy than you?" Supreme Thief asked. "Why shouldn't I have this energy? I am more talented, so I can make it mine."

Noah's aura burst out of his ethereal figure. A wave of memories fused with his ghostly body and carried a large chunk of the mental sea with them.

The memories going from the first experiments with the higher energy to the creation of the black hole resurfaced in Noah's mind and appeared on his mental walls. The many years spent testing that power appeared in front of Supreme Thief and made him lose control of the lump of dark matter in his grasp.

"I guess it only works on unworthy existences," Noah stated while the dark matter seized by the expert returned under his control.

"Don't overestimate yourself," Supreme Thief replied. "I managed to reach the ninth rank, while you can't even be sure about your survival. You are lucky I had no intention to steal your power."

Silence fell between the duo. Supreme Thief lost interest in the conversation and began to inspect the various scenes played on the mental walls. Instead, Noah was deep in his thoughts. He had understood something, but he didn't know how convincing that theory was.

"Can you understand whether an existence has the talent to reach the ninth rank?" Noah asked.

"What do you mean?" Supreme Thief asked. "You must reach the ninth rank to prove it. Even Heaven and Earth can't divine the full extent of our potential."

"You can steal almost everything and use it freely," Noah said while pointing at the expert. "You make up for the expertise and the years spent developing techniques with your law. You can generate power from almost nothing."

Noah then thought about a certain existence and explained his power to the expert.

"I know someone who can invent techniques out of thin air," Noah continued. "Even the world bends to his will to help him win challenges. He also lacks training and years spent in experiments, but he makes up for those requirements with his law."

Noah then pointed at himself. His strange thoughts were clearer than ever. He felt as if he had found a profound answer that many experts in the world ignored.

"My law allows me to skip entire stages," Noah explained. "I can also use it to boost my cultivation level and techniques. I generate power from nothing too."

Supreme Thief smiled. A wave of coldness came out of his figure, but excitement also seeped through those emotions.

"No wonder you managed to reach the secret area in my inheritance," Supreme Thief said. "You are right. Rank 9 existences are worlds, which means that they must be able to generate something by depleting their "Breath". It doesn't matter how much power your existence contains. You can't advance if your law can't become a source of any kind."

'Divine Demon's Miracles are a requirement,' Noah thought. 'Having a powerful influence doesn't matter anymore in the eighth rank. I need to enhance the features of my existence that make me ignore the laws of the world.'

Noah had found a path right after reaching the eighth rank. He could also share that information with his friend and prevent them from wasting centuries of training.

'Every divine existence must have the potential to perform something similar to the Miracles,' Noah thought. 'The problem is whether they can turn it into a core part of their law.'

Supreme Thief cleared his throat at that point. He didn't want to remain in silence while Noah was deep in his thoughts. He would rather return to his slumber.

"Right," Noah said. "I believe I can't kick you out of my mind."

"You can try," Supreme Thief replied in an amused tone.

"Make yourself useful then," Noah ordered. "I don't like to have no control over your ability. Tell me how to activate you."

"You have always had control over this part of my soul," Supreme Thief explained. "I gave it to you. This power is already yours, and the same goes for its function. You have only forgotten my words."

Noah's eyes lit up as he understood what Supreme Thief's meant. The expert's ethereal figure then melted and fused with his mental sea, forever becoming a part of himself.

'I guess I've gained another powerful ability,' Noah thought while watching his dark waters filling that space in his mind. 'Luckily, I also have a guinea pig ready to test it.'

Chapter 1555 1555. Stealing

Shandal had remained inside the separate space for years. He had witnessed the raging waves of dark matter, the evolution of the dark world, and the empowerment of the two Blood Companions.

The expert had gone through desperation and fear until he felt nothing more than helplessness. Shandal knew that nothing in the world could stop Noah now. He had studied his life enough to be sure that the Immortal Lands were in for a show.

When dark matter began to envelop Shandal's figure, he knew that his time had come. The higher energy brought him back in the outside world, where he found Noah staring coldly at him.

"You have overcome every expectation," Shandal sighed. "The Crystal City knew that you would eventually return in the human domain. Even Madame Canson had taken your threat seriously. It seemed that her efforts were pointless."

Noah didn't answer. His consciousness enveloped Shandal and inspected every inch of his body. The expert still had Madame Canson's crystals fused with his tissues, but Noah's dark matter was suppressing their power.

"I hope you know that my actions have never been personal," Shandal continued. "I couldn't resist when the secret organization introduced me to the Crystal City. I have been desperate for too many years."

Shandal wasn't trying to appeal to Noah's pity. He had lived long enough to know that nothing could save his life in that situation.

His words were nothing more than a memoir. Shandal didn't want to die without saying some last lines. Even those few justifications made him at peace with himself.

Noah slowly removed the crystals. His physical strength had reached an insane level of power. He could directly rip them off and let his dark matter absorb their energy.

The process was quite painful for Shandal, but he didn't flinch. He didn't let out a single scream while his cultivation level fell at the bottom of the seventh rank.

Noah felt quite disappointed when he inspected Shandal again. The expert was a mere existence at the bottom of the seventh rank, but he had managed to cause many problems.

'Why did I even suffer so much because of him?' Noah wondered.

He felt disappointed in himself. The whole mess with the Crystal City had been a mistake on his side. Noah had underestimated how influential large organizations could be. It had been enough for Shandal to point at his friends for Noah to experience desperation.

"Is it too much to ask you to make it quick?" Shandal asked, and Noah finally decided to answer.

"I don't care about your life," Noah explained, "But your ability is quite powerful. I want it."

Shandal could stop time, and Noah had long since acknowledged the power of his existence. Unfortunately, that ability directly interfered with Heaven and Earth's laws. It was a partial copy of their true meaning, which was the reason why Shandal didn't manage to bring it to the seventh rank on his own.

After Madame Canson's empowerment, Shandal had finally managed to step into the divine ranks. His existence was complete. His level didn't fall under the seventh rank even after Noah seized the purple crystals.

'Madame Canson has managed to complete this power,' Noah thought while placing his hand on Shandal's head. 'I wonder what this ability can do with my ambition as a fuel.'

"Do you want to turn me into one of your puppets?" Shandal asked before an unsightly expression appeared on his face. "That's not ideal, but I have seen worse ends."

A lump of dark matter covered Shandal's mouth and forced him to shut up. The silence allowed Noah to focus on the expert's existence and study the full extent of his ability.

Madame Canson had tampered with Shandal's existence. She had to fill the gaps in his lackluster power, which ended up ruining the expert's original idea.

Noah wanted to remove Madame Canson's influence from Shandal's existence. He had to get rid of that virus to gain access to the core idea behind that law.

Purple trails slowly flew out of Shandal's figure as Noah's mental waves seeped into his existence and forced Madame Canson's influence out. His dark matter then absorbed that power and removed the virus from the world.

Shandal's cultivation level continued to fall, but Noah didn't mind it. He had performed a similar procedure with his diagrams. He had broken them down to seize their core idea before rebuilding them according to his existence.

Noah didn't take much to complete the procedure. Shandal was a simple rank 7 cultivator. Even his mental waves were more than enough to crush him into pieces.

Shandal reverted to his quasi-rank 7 state. His eyes radiated an unfathomable sadness when he experienced that familiar level of power again. Yet, Noah's procedure had just begun.

'I hope that Supreme Thief wasn't bragging,' Noah thought before focusing on his greed.

An intense desire to eat and seize everything in the world seeped into his aura, which began to spread destructive features. The matter naturally fell apart and generated primary energy that converged toward his figure.

Noah focused on his desire to obtain Shandal's power. He wanted to seize that ability and transform it into part of his arsenal.

His desire triggered a strange process in his mental sea. Noah felt uncomfortable when blue shades appeared on his black mental waves before giving birth to a pulling force.

Shandal felt as if his existence was slipping away from his body. Noah was forcefully pulling all his experiences and memories from his centers of power.

That energy was nothing for Noah's current level. A faint wave of dark matter was enough to contain it and condense its structure.

When the process ended, Noah let Shandal go, and the expert fell on the ground, breaking into pieces. His tissues had lost their power, so the impact with the terrain had been enough to shatter him.

Noah raised his hand, and a small sphere of dark matter appeared on his palm. An azure light shone inside that prison of higher energy and radiated Shandal's aura.

'The technique worked!' Noah exclaimed while inspecting the azure energy.

Noah felt immediately able to activate Shandal's ability, but he refrained from testing that. The lump of azure light was nothing more than quasi-rank 7 energy. He would need to polish it to bring its power to a decent level.

'I can move right away, but I think that stabilizing my power should come first,' Noah decided before sitting on the ground and sending a few orders to his underlings.

Noah was safe in those regions. He was deep into the Outer Lands, surrounded by his underlings and in areas under his complete control.

The Foolery would soon transform those lands into blue paradises, and his influence would even force his underlings to evolve.

Waiting a few decades before leaving seemed the best option. Noah also had to bring the Demonic Sword and Night into the eighth rank, other than taking care of the Demonic Form.

His ambition was out of potential, so Noah couldn't empower his cultivation level and abilities anymore. It was better to spend some time polishing his new battle prowess to feel even safer during his return. He had even gained a new technique that he couldn't wait to add to his arsenal.

Chapter 1556 1556. Meeting

The years spent in the Outer Lands benefited both Noah and his pack. He quickly learnt how to use his power better, and his underling improved under the constant influence of his aura.

The Demonic Sword and Night took a while to reach the eighth rank. They both had Noah's aura and methods at their disposal, but they still required a few decades to approach the breakthrough.

The Demonic Form didn't share the same difficulties. The parasite fed on Noah's power, so his breakthroughs had ended up accelerating its growth.

His underlings grew even faster than his abilities. Noah's ambition seeped into the ground and forced it to produce better nutrients. His aura also covered the surface and brought benefits to all the magical beasts that lived there.

The creatures that managed to evolve developed the ability to fly as their level increased. Also, most specimens in the lower and middle tier reached the upper tier and approached the peak of the seventh rank.

A few underlings even managed to reach the eighth rank. The Foolery gained another leader, and the three leaders under Fergie also advanced.

Fergie couldn't approach the breakthrough in those short years, but his level grew significantly. Still, the eighth rank remained far away.

Noah decided to move after his battle prowess stabilized. He had no reason to remain in those regions after his whole arsenal reached the eighth rank.

The path toward the Legion's headquarters was relatively safe. It featured nothing different from the journey across the magical beasts' domain. Humans rarely occupied those areas, so Noah only had to be wary of the powerful creatures that had settled there to benefit from the chaotic laws.

Of course, his definition of danger had changed after the breakthroughs. His underlings had also improved, making his force a power capable of scaring away most packs.

The only beings that could make Noah think twice about stepping into their domain were those in the middle tier or above. He had yet to test the full extent of his prowess, so he preferred to avoid those powerful creatures for the time being.

Noah didn't change his approach toward the packs that he could defeat. He let his group assault those creatures and submitted those that managed to survive or escape. Only the strongest could become part of his army.

The size of Noah's group grew. His force only counted a hundred specimens after the battle with the Crystal City, but it soon surpassed one thousand assets.

All those creatures benefitted from Noah's law and grew past the limits of their species. As a result, his group soon featured only specimens that wouldn't normally exist in the Immortal Lands.

The journey proceeded smoothly. Noah could focus on testing his new power from time to time without facing any danger. Part of him wanted to jump in front of creatures in the middle tier right away, but he decided to prioritize his return to the Legion over his reckless desire.

The travel eventually met a hindrance. Noah was overseeing his underlings fighting against a pack of tall turtles when his consciousness sensed a powerful aura approaching from the distance.

Noah immediately waved his hand to fill the area with his sharpness and kill all his opponents. Roars even came out of his mouth as he ordered his underlings around.

The aura's might surpassed the pressure radiated by Madame Canson. It was even stronger than the manifestation of the Heaven Tribulation faced after the assault on the Crystal City.

'A rank 8 existence in the liquid stage!' Noah shouted in his mind as he prepared his underlings for the imminent meeting.

Escaping wasn't a possibility. The existence moved far faster than Noah's top speed. He didn't even know if sacrificing all his underlings could give him a chance to run away from that situation.

His only real chance was to approach the matter peacefully. Then, if a battle were to unfold, he would simply unleash his full power and see how things went.

The existence neared his position in an instant, and Noah soon became able to identify that threat. His expression almost froze when he understood who that expert was.

The powerful aura came from a young-looking man with long white hair and beard. He even had long eyebrows that fell over his eyes and covered his vision.

Noah couldn't fail to recognize that existence. That expert had been his training partner in the Mortal Lands for a long time. He had finally met Sword Saint in the higher plane!

"Hide underground!" Noah roared. "I'll handle this."

Noah then drew the Demonic Sword from his separate space and waited. The weapon gave voice to a roar, but it soon fell silent when it sensed how tense Noah was.

Sword Saint had warned Noah about his habits. The expert challenged any existence he met on his path to sharpen his law. Noah didn't want to experience that clash, but he didn't know if he could avoid it.

"You are a swordsman," Sword Saint said before stopping near Noah. "Wonderful! Let's exchange an attack to see who has the sharpest blade."

'He is the maniac that I remember,' Noah sighed in his mind before performing a bow.

"I have been lucky enough to seize one of your inheritances," Noah said in a polite tone. "You might not know it, but I'm your disciple."

Noah then took a strand of mental energy from his mind and handed it to Sword Saint. The expert hesitated at the sight of that black substance, but he eventually absorbed it to watch Noah's memories.

The scenes of the intense training in the Divine Cut flowed inside Sword Saint's mind and made him aware of Noah's identity. His expression relaxed once he learnt about those events, but his drive didn't vanish.

"Even more wonderful!" Sword Saint exclaimed while raising his forefinger above his head. "Noah Balvan, let me see how strong you have become!"

Noah's actions ended up making Sword Saint even more excited. The expert couldn't hold himself back in that situation.

"I have just advanced to the eighth rank," Noah replied. "I'm not sure my power can be of any help to your existence."

"Nonsense!" Sword Saint promptly shouted. "I can sense the sharpness seeping out of your body. Your existence has used my teachings, and I want to see its shape."

Noah sighed while a wave of dark matter flowed out of his chest. Higher energy also seeped out of the Demonic Sword, and both of them covered the blade.

The long weapon transformed into a black pillar that flew high in the sky. Noah even used the unstable substance to boost his physical strength before raising the Demonic Sword.

"I thought I told you to fuse the aspects of your individuality," Sword Saint complained.

"But they are part of me anyway," Noah replied. "It doesn't matter how I deploy them. My sword arts don't use only sharpness. They go far beyond that."

"I see only a lack of purity," Sword Saint snorted before a wild smile appeared on his face. "I hope that your attack carries as much power as you say."

Noah didn't speak anymore. His Demonic Sword landed on his forehead and generated high-pitched noises as it slid over his skin.

The dark matter accumulated in the environment disappeared at that point. Even the energy of the two experts vanished. Noah had covered the sky between Sword Saint and him with a massive singularity.

Chapter 1557 1557. Pointers

Noah's attack didn't have the appearance of a slash. He had attacked with his blade, but the area covered by the singularity was too big to be part of sword arts.

Those effects came from the different powers deployed by Noah during the attack. His creation and destruction generated singularities when they clashed, and his dark matter increased the size of his offensive in ways that normal "Breath" couldn't achieve.

His sharpness had reached a superior level due to the many features carried by his law. It had transformed into singularities capable of piercing everything in the world. Even the air in the sky vanished under that power.

Noah inspected the area of nothing generated after his attack, and his eyes sharpened when he saw something moving inside it. There was a slash flying through the singularity.

'How is this even possible?' Noah wondered. 'He is even limiting the power expressed by the attack to the gaseous stage!'

Noah's many advantages made him the strongest type of existence in every stage and tier. He could defeat experienced gaseous stage cultivators as soon as he advanced. However, Sword Saint was overcoming his abilities even while limiting his power.

The slash pierced the singularity and brought new energy into that empty area. Sword Saint's sharpness filled the sky before converging toward Noah's figure.

Noah instinctively activated all the defenses that he was capable of. His dark world expanded, and his companions came out in the open. His sword also flashed again as the Demonic Form entangled its roots around the blade.

Snore spat destructive dark matter, Duanlong absorbed part of the energy in the slash, and Night fused with the world to destabilize Sword Saint's sharpness.

The aura radiated by the Demonic Form at its new level carried unfathomable corrosive properties. Noah's surroundings crumbled under that power and transformed into strands of energy that flowed inside the parasite.

Sword Saint's slash lost power before reaching the wave of violent dark matter. Part of its fabric also crumbled when it began to pierce that destructive energy.

The violent dark matter forced the slash to deplete even more of its power, but the attack continued to fly forward.

A singularity covered by raging dark matter eventually clashed with the slash. Sword Saint's attack continued to pierce Noah's ability, but it stopped once it reached the Demonic Sword.

The slash transformed. It took Sword Saint's shape. The expert's forefinger had clashed with the Demonic Sword, but it found itself unable to pierce the weapon.

The roots around the blade had shattered, but Sword Saint couldn't move forward anymore. Noah had stopped the attack, even if he had to resort to almost his entire arsenal to achieve that.

Sword Saint revealed a surprised expression while he retracted his finger. He had limited his power to the gaseous stage, but he didn't expect Noah to stop his attack.

"You should be proud of yourself," Sword Saint announced.

"How so?" Noah snorted. "You were holding back, but I still had to rely on my entire arsenal to stop you."

Noah lied about that last part. He still had the cursed sword, the Shadow Domain, and Shandal's ability at his disposal. He also had Supreme Thief's stealing skill, but he wasn't sure whether that would work against Sword Saint.

"My understanding goes beyond the gaseous stage," Sword Saint revealed. "I might have limited my power, but my law is far denser than yours. I wonder how this exchange would have gone if we were at the same level."

That explanation didn't satisfy Noah, but he had to let the matter go. His status as a newly advanced cultivator was undeniable, so he didn't let that exchange hurt his pride.

'Though, I do wonder who would have won,' Noah thought while inspecting the expert.

Sword Saint's sharpness went far beyond Noah's base power. He had to rely on multiple techniques and abilities to match it. His existence alone wasn't enough to face that law.

"Did you think you could face me while holding back part of your arsenal?" Sword Saint questioned Noah. "I have built my whole existence on the sword. All my experiences, training, insights, and growth converge into the understanding of my path. My attack might look simple, but it carries my entire life."

Noah stored the Demonic Sword. His companions also returned inside the separate space as both experts flew toward the ground to sit and exchange pointers.

"I should still be able to reach a similar sharpness," Noah sighed. "I have taken a different path, but I still want to use your entire power as part of my foundation."

"It's too late for that," Sword Saint explained. "You have already gone beyond my teachings. Your attacks might come from swords and slashes, but they are something that can't fit into my path. Only time will tell which one of us will obtain the greatest power."

"What's your next step?" Noah asked without revealing any hint of shame.

"You first," Sword Saint replied while wearing a cold smile.

"I honestly don't know," Noah sighed. "Amassing more power, more assets, fusing them into simple attacks. I don't strive for a result. I only pile up abilities and adapt to what comes out of them."

"Ah! Don't make me start!" Sword Saint snorted. "I have challenged so many experts in the human domain that I had to leave for the Outer Lands. Do you know how annoying it is to search for the faintest enlightenment in sword arts that I have executed millions of times?"

"Are you lost?" Noah asked.

"I have never been surer about my path," Sword Saint replied. "I only have to find the stage that surpasses perfection. Unfortunately, it seems that my endless training can't help me anymore. I need something else, but I can only keep slashing to find it."

'Maybe he lacks the Miracles,' Noah wondered.

Sword Saint was a simple existence in the end. He had continued to trail the path of the blade for millennia. Noah could imagine him swinging his fingers millions of times only to make the slightest improvement.

'He is a sword capable of generating sharpness,' Noah thought, 'But that doesn't count in his case. He has already paid for his power with the millennia spent training. Should I help him?'

Noah felt conflicted. Sword Saint had taught him a lot, but the expert didn't have a clear alignment. Noah didn't know if he could become an enemy.

"What do you think about the Legion?" Noah probed.

"Legion? Do you mean that small group of hybrids?" Sword Saint asked before continuing when he saw Noah nodding. "I don't think about them. Politics are useless. I only want to swing my sword."

"Let's make a trade," Noah eventually said. "I can give you a hint that might solve your problem, but you have to do the same with me. You have lived for a long time and witnessed many powerful existences. You must know something that surpasses my singularity in terms of power."

Sword Saint's interest suddenly skyrocketed. The expert explored his memories until he found a scene that met Noah's requirements.

"I don't think there is much in the world that can surpass that," Sword Saint said while handing a globe of azure mental energy to Noah, "But this might help you. This is the strongest type of attack that I have ever faced."

Noah didn't immediately check it. Sword Saint had trusted him enough to complete his end of the bargain without hesitation. Noah would do the same out of respect for that expert.

Noah stood up and waved his hand. A cut opened on the ground as his sharpness shot forward.

"I will use the same energy as before now," Noah warned Sword Saint before closing his eyes.

His ambition had regained a small amount of potential during the last years. That wasn't enough to empower his cultivation level, but it could affect a simple attack.

Noah waved his hand again as his ambition seeped out of his figure. The area grew darker, but he didn't rely on any additional energy to trigger those events.

A second cut opened next to the first one. The former was deeper and longer. It was clear that Noah had expressed more power than before without increasing the input of energy.

Chapter 1558 1558. Ecstasy

Sword Saint experienced different emotions. He felt confused at first. Noah didn't do anything specific, but he had managed to express more power seemingly out of nothing.

Then, an idea popped into Sword Saint's mind. Noah's second slash carried something that an expert like him couldn't find with his usual training.

Sword Saint was a maniac. He had dedicated his entire existence to the sword and had exchanged blows with countless experts to polish his arts. His mind didn't even contemplate the idea that there could be something outside the centers of power.

However, there had to be an explanation for Noah's superior prowess. His might didn't come from his centers of power, so there had to be something else, a different source of energy that Sword Saint had never considered before.

The answer to his doubts suddenly dawned on his mind. Cultivators and hybrids primarily relied on their centers of power, but they had something else. They had a path that influenced their might and gave them laws.

"The power of an existence," Sword Saint murmured before standing up and inspecting both cuts.

"It's not 'Breath'," Sword Saint continued. "It's not mental energy either. Your body didn't play a role in this attack, and I didn't even sense your strange black substance."

Sword Saint raised his eyebrows and dropped them from time to time. Ecstasy and confusion alternated on his face. His whole world was falling apart, and he didn't know whether to be happy or sad about it.

"Existences can generate power!" Sword Saint suddenly exclaimed. "Of course! I have been so stupid! Millennia spent side by side with my existence, and I didn't even realize that it was my most powerful source of energy!"

Sword Saint started to laugh maniacally. Noah remained silent while that scene unfolded in front of his eyes.

Part of Noah understood the expert's feelings. The cultivation journey could become a curse for those who met unsurmountable bottlenecks.

'All those who have reached these ranks are crazy,' Noah thought while moving his eyes toward the white sky. 'We force our personalities to evolve. Our good traits transform into laws, and our flaws become curses that we have to carry throughout our entire life.'

His ambition had the power to ignore the gaps between the stages and tiers, but it also made him constantly unsatisfied. Noah always wanted more, and he knew that he would stop at nothing to fulfill his desires.

"Of course! Of course!" Sword Saint shouted in an ecstatic tone. "The centers of power fuse to create existences. They can generate energy, so the existences can do the same. The "Breath" isn't the only fuel for the laws!"

Sword Saint's cultivation level seemed to increase during his shouting. His existence purified, and large cuts opened on the ground under him due to that enlightenment.

"Noah Balvan!" Sword Saint shouted while turning toward Noah. "How did you reach this solution? How did you find the path that can include every path?"

Noah hesitated before letting go of his mental restraint and politeness. Sword Saint's enthusiasm managed to affect his mind. The expert wasn't holding his cultivation level back in that situation.

The world around Noah turned dark, and the ground began to evolve. The cuts also closed, and the air transformed into a dark gas.

"I have met countless experts and hundreds of geniuses," Noah replied in an aloof tone. "I have overcome every expectation, prediction, and label. I have surpassed every existence who could suppress me with a simple thought."

Crackling noises began to resound in the sky as his words seeped into the world and forced the matter to develop wills. His ambition was so intense that the laws around him rebelled against Heaven and Earth's rule.

"I am a mistake, the flaw in a rotten system handled by failures," Noah continued. "I paid the price in blood and sweat for everything I have. I built myself to be the best existence that has ever stepped onto this world. Now, tell me. How could I not reach this solution?"

"Do you think you are better than me?" Sword Saint asked as his aura expanded.

"I am better than Heaven and Earth!" Noah shouted, and a white lightning bolt fell from the sky.

The attack had power near the peak of the middle tier. It instantly filled the sky with blinding light while it descended toward Noah.

"Shut up!" Sword Saint snorted before the lightning bolt could reach the ground. "My disciple is speaking!"

Sword Saint's fingers took the shape of a sword while he waved his hand toward the sky. A colorless line came out of his figure and cut the falling lightning bolt until it reached the source of the Tribulation.

The lightning bolt exploded into a storm of sparks that rained toward the ground. Duanlong promptly materialized next to Noah and absorbed that energy, sending half of it toward his Master.

Sword Saint began to laugh again while he shot toward Noah. The expert hugged him and patted his shoulders without dropping his feverish ecstasy.

"Thank you, Noah Balvan!" Sword Saint said without separating from Noah. "You have given me the greatest of the gifts. I can finally see the path toward the peak."

A sword-shaped lump of mental energy flowed out of Sword Saint's head and floated in front of Noah.

"I have no care for politics and organizations," Sword Saint continued. "But I recognize a debt when I see one. I owe you. If the situation requires it, I swear that I will abandon everything and come in your aid."

Noah inspected the sword-shaped mental energy. It resembled a flare that could echo Sword Saint's power. Still, he couldn't understand its range from that quick inspection.

"Where will you go now?" Noah asked after the expert let him go.

"I was coming back from the Outer Lands to find a source of inspiration," Sword Saint replied. "I found it. I don't need to go further. The lands filled by storms are far more interesting than that peaceful place."

Noah wanted to question Sword Saint. He desired to know everything about those lands. Yet, the expert flew away before he could ask anything.

Sword Saint appeared far faster than before. His figure cut through the world and disappeared from Noah's view in an instant. Even his influence vanished once he left.

Noah's eyes continued to watch the spot where the expert had left. The previous scene had felt like a dream. Both he and Sword Saint had let their drives take control of their mind and speak in their place.

Noah's mind became calm after Sword Saint left. His usual coldness returned and filled every corner of his mental sphere. Countless plans and strategies also spread through his thoughts.

He couldn't live like Sword Saint. Noah was a different type of existence. His enemies were always stronger than him and more numerous. Only constant and careful planning could give him the chance to survive until he reached the peak.

The sword-shaped mental energy seeped into Noah's mental sphere and hid inside his mental energy. Noah instantly learnt how to activate it, but he remained doubtful about its actual utility.

'Can he sense this from the Outer Lands?' Noah wondered. 'Even if he can, how long would it take him to reach me?'

Noah wondered whether Sword Saint had given him that item without considering the reality of their situation. Yet, he soon suppressed those thoughts and moved his attention elsewhere.

His friends were waiting for him, and Noah felt the intense desire to reunite with them.

Chapter 1559 1559. Meeting

A peculiar event was unfolding in a secret location of the human domain while Noah was traveling through the Outer Lands. Different organizations and guilds had gathered in an underground hall covered in inscriptions to discuss the problems that afflicted their reign.

The cultivators in the hall were all rank 8 cultivators who wore white masks for the event. Their covered faces couldn't hide their identity, but it was a tradition to wear them during the meetings.

"We have lost too many lands during the last invasion," A cultivator wearing robes carrying the emblem of the Sailbird family said after standing up. "We managed to expand, but our domain has shrunk significantly. Unrest is spreading. We might be able to witness the first civil war in eras."

"Just expand into the Outer Lands like we did the previous times," An expert wearing robes with the emblem of the Rotway family said. "I don't see why even bother bringing this topic to the meeting."

"Your family has focused on the mines for too long," A third expert who didn't carry any emblem replied. "The Legion has grown strong in these millennia. They managed to fend off our expansion."

"Since when did those hybrids win anything?" The expert from the Rotway family replied. "Send more troops. Overwhelm them with numbers. We did this countless times already!"

"Too much has happened since the last invasion," The expert with no emblem sighed. "I'm afraid the Legion has finally become a threat for the human domain."

"Did Alexander reappear?" The expert from the Rotway family asked.

"No," The cultivator with no emblem answered, "But a new wave of experts in their ranks has reached a threatening level. Unfortunately, they also have humans on their side now. You might want to ask the Crystal City for further explanations."

The cultivator from the Rotway family shot a questioning gaze at an expert who wore the iconic robes of the Crystal City.

"We lost two castles in little more than a few millennia," The cultivator from the Crystal City explained. "Both attacks have involved the same individual."

The cultivator waved her hand, and a series of sheets materialized in front of the experts. The Crystal City had recorded everything known about Noah and his group and had put it into those pages.

"How accurate is this?" The expert from the Rotway family asked.

"We deployed our best experts on the scene," The cultivator from the Crystal City replied. "Defying Demon has grown at an incredible pace, but that's only one of his worrying features. His influence seems able to affect those who follow him. Anyone who has interacted with him has improved significantly."

Silence fell in the underground hall. Those experts knew how troublesome that kind of influence could be when it was in the hands of a problematic character.

"Did you contact our Masters?" The expert from the Rotway family asked while turning toward the cultivator with no emblem.

"The secret organization is going through a fair number of internal fights," The expert replied. "Most of our cells are independent, so they don't share our concerns and desires."

"I asked you a question." The expert from the Rotway reprimanded.

"We did try to contact them," The cultivator with no emblem sighed. "I must say that we never witnessed a similar reaction. They seemed almost too ashamed to answer."

"Do you even dare thinking about this?"

"How can you use these words to describe our Masters?"

"Heretic!"

A series of insults and curses shot out of the other cultivators in the area. They didn't accept those words, but they didn't believe that their companion had lied about that.

"This Defying Demon is a black spot in their immense power," The expert with no emblem continued. "Moreover, he covers every existence met on his path with that blackness. We can already count more than ten hybrids and cultivators who went through that process."

"How powerful is this Defying Demon now?" The cultivator from the Rotway family asked while turning toward the expert from the Crystal City.

"He should be in the eighth rank," The expert replied. "His current battle prowess is unclear. He is probably traveling to rejoin the Legion at this moment."

Silence fell in the hall again. Everyone there knew how hard it was to find a hybrid traveling through the Outer Lands. Even their joint power couldn't make them succeed in the task.

"Hunting him is impossible," The expert from the Rotway family summarized. "Trying to kill him after he rejoins the Legion is also out of the question. Do we have anything on him that we can use?"

"The Crystal City has already tried with his friends," The expert with no emblem said. "However, we might have a chance to kill Defying Demon after he rejoins the Legion. Still, it might require the sacrifice of one of our organizations."

Everyone shot questioning glances toward the expert. They didn't care about the sacrifice of a single organization. That had already happened in the past.

An expert wearing the emblem of the Balrow family stood up before explaining the situation. "My organization will exchange materials belonging to Great Builder's inheritance with Defying Demon. I will gladly sacrifice my force for the greater good of the Immortal Lands."

"How is the inheritance going?" The expert with no emblem asked.

"We retrieved the fourth reward," The cultivator from the Sailbird family explained. "We decided to stop there as planned. Coming back to life shouldn't be possible, but we can't risk it. We had to summon our Lords to kill him back then."

Everyone nodded at those words. Resurrecting seemed an impossible feat, but every rank 9 existence had power that didn't respect the world's laws. It was better to be careful when dealing with them.

After making sure that they didn't have anything else to discuss, all the experts stood up and performed a deep bow. Then, they chanted a few words as per tradition.

"Heaven and Earth!" The cultivators in the underground hall said. "We shall serve you in this life so that we can bask in your boundless light one day."

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Noah was unaware that he had been the main topic of one of the most secret meetings in the human domain. His eyes could barely move from the horizon. He could see familiar lands in the distance.

A happy roar came out of his mouth, and the many magical beasts in his group quickly imitated him. They echoed his feelings and informed the whole area about his return.

A hybrid slowly peeked out of a crack in the distance. Her eyes widened when she saw the massive army of magical beasts in the sky, and her inscribed notebook quickly appeared in her grasp.

A second roar shot out of Noah's mouth. He expressed his intentions with his cry, but the hybrid didn't manage to relax. She informed her superiors before disappearing underground.

A massive amber-scaled dragon soon appeared in his view, and Noah couldn't help but show a smile at that sight. He could recognize Jordan even at that distance.

A lump of golden flames also gathered in the distance. King Elbas soon condensed his body and gave voice to a snort when he sensed Noah's cultivation level.

Divine Demon and other familiar faces also appeared. The Legion was giving him a proper welcome, but a black lightning bolt suddenly flew through the sky and converged toward Noah.

Chapter 1560 1560. Reunion

A lightning bolt usually gave birth to terror and worry in cultivators, hybrids, and magical beasts. Yet, that black energy covered with orange light signified something very different for Noah.

'She has become strong,' Noah thought while letting that attack slam on his body.

The lightning bolt carried power in the solid stage and a familiar aura that made Noah's mind go back in time. Countless memories filled his mental sphere and forced a smile to appear on his face.

'It has been too long,' Noah thought while bathing in that familiar aura.

The magical beasts around Noah roared in anger, and Fergie even unfolded his consciousness to search the assailant. They had no idea that they were witnessing the normal interaction between their leader and his lover.

"It's ok," Noah said before any of his underlings could make a move. "Stay here until I introduce you to the Legion."

Noah teleported away and reappeared on the ground under Divine Demon and the others. A woman with unruly silver hair was waiting for him while sitting on the azure terrain.

"You took your time," June snorted while showing an annoyed expression.

"You also kept yourself busy," Noah replied while inspecting her cultivation level.

June had reached the solid stage of the seventh rank. She appeared to have just advanced, but her foundation seemed quite stable. Noah could already place her above the average expert at the same level.

The experts in the sky wanted to descend to greet Noah, but Flying Demon and Dreaming Demon blocked their path. Their expressions could almost describe the nature of the interaction happening on the ground.

"I was ready to abandon all of you," Noah admitted.

Noah wouldn't hide anything from June. They knew each other enough to guess how their partner thought. It was pointless even to try to lie.

"I bet you would have found a replacement quickly," June replied. "The women in the Legion can't wait to get their hands on you. This situation brings me back to the Royal Academy when the girls used to call you Dark Prince."

Noah couldn't help but smile when June triggered those memories. Millennia had gone by since those events, but both June and Noah still recalled them.

"We have been through a lot," Noah sighed without forsaking his smile.

June snorted before straightening her position and nearing Noah. Her previous attack didn't manage to shatter his robe. His clothes seemed made of a dense substance that radiated his aura.

"I thought I would have died without having the chance of meeting you again," June said while grabbing his robe.

"Do not worry," Noah replied while giving in to her pull. "We will destroy the Crystal City and anything that carries its name. I think we also have another fight planned to happen soon."

"We have yet to see how soon," June whispered before pulling Noah close.

The duo exchanged a long kiss and washed away the emotions accumulated during the millennia spent in different planes. Many of them remained in their minds, but that wasn't the right moment to take care of them.

"I thought you hated being a leader," June teased him while glancing at the army of magical beasts waiting in the distance.

"Part of me still hates it," Noah snorted, "But I can't deny the nature of my influence. I have decided to conquer the whole higher plane before breaking it into pieces."

"Did your dream change?" June asked.

"No. My enemy even has a proper shape now," Noah replied while pointing at the white sky. "What about you?"

"Same as always," June answered. "This world is so big, and you have already given me so many enemies. What a caring partner you are."

"Join my organization then," Noah proposed. "I think most of the human domain is ready to hunt me down. You can have fun before I shatter this plane."

"How could I ever refuse such a tempting offer?" June replied while caressing Noah's cheek and grabbing his hand to lead him toward his other friends.

The duo soon arrived in front of Divine Demon and the others. They all showed broad smiles and challenging gazes, but Noah only focused on the four who had been trapped with June.

Dreaming Demon, Flying Demon, Faith, and Daniel were still in the liquid stage. June had been the only one to advance after knowing about Noah's return. Yet, they appeared quite powerful for their current level.

"To think that all of you would reach the Immortal Lands," Noah said while exchanging smiles with his old friends.

Memories continued to surge in his mind. Noah almost couldn't believe that he had shared entire lifetimes with those cultivators. The long period spent in the Immortal Lands had nearly made him forget what it was to have trustworthy friends next to him.

"You surely didn't make it easy," Flying Demon snorted. "Our arrival here has been quite bumpy."

The Demon laughed, and Dreaming Demon laughed with him. Meanwhile, Faith and Daniel were searching for words that didn't sound awkward in that situation.

Noah noticed the awkwardness between the duo, and a simple glance at June's expression solved his doubts in an instant.

"You know," Faith whispered while nearing Noah. "June has taken your habit of causing a mess wherever you go. She didn't let us grow bored in the other world."

June snorted, but Jordan cleared her throat and interrupted the reunion. She had taken her human form, and she was pointing toward the magical beasts in the distance without trying to hide her gesture.

"They are with me," Noah explained. "I'm sorry. I can't join the Legion. I don't think my existence will ever allow me to have leaders."

"What now then?" Jordan asked as her expression became conflicted.

"You can all join my organization," Noah exclaimed. "I never bothered to give it a name. Just call it pack or something similar. You can consult Fergie for that."

"Your pigs are drooling," June commented.

"They often do that," Noah replied.

"One of them has looked at the sky since your arrival," Faith added.

"They also do that often," Noah replied again.

"I won't abandon the Legion," Jordan said, bringing back the conversation to a serious topic.

"I don't really care," Noah replied while shrugging his shoulders. "I already consider you as allies, so I don't see a reason to fight. Also, I'll soon surpass all your leaders, so you'll eventually become part of my pack."

"Such arrogant remarks," Jordan commented, but a faint smile appeared on her face.

Jordan had almost feared that Noah would challenge the leaders of the Legion for the ownership of those lands. She knew that Noah couldn't win against her force, but his pack was quite threatening. Those creatures could make any army suffer.

"That's my heir!" Divine Demon shouted while exploding into a laugh. "I have a fitting name for our organization. Call it Divine Demon Sect!"

"That's not going to happen," Noah firmly rejected him.

"What about Divine Demonic pack?" Divine Demon asked.

"You will talk with Duanlong from now on," Noah said before summoning his Blood Companion and placing it in front of Divine Demon.

"The invitation is open for you too," Noah said while glancing toward King Elbas.

"I can't have leaders either," King Elbas replied before wearing an arrogant smile.

"And yet you will follow me anyway," Noah said before focusing on his weaker companions.

"I don't want to define the details about my organization now," Noah began his speech. "I don't think I will ever want to do that. The problem is that you are all too weak, and only war can force you to advance quickly."

Divine Demon stopped questioning Duanlong to listen to Noah at that point. Even the other members of the Legion ignored the matter about the different organizations to focus on those words.

"I will attack the Sailbird family soon," Noah announced. "I don't care how many of you decide to follow me. I don't even mind attacking on my own. Yet, I know that many will come, so go and prepare. We will attack when June and I finish catching up."

Noah then turned, and June followed him since she had never left his hand.