

## **Demonic 1861**

### **Chapter 1861 - 1861. Sudden**

Being so close to the three Kesier apes gave the experts the chance to inspect them. Yet, Noah and the others refrained from expanding their consciousness to study those creatures.

Even King Elbas would struggle to study those creatures secretly. The Kesier species was incredible in the mental field, so the three lower tier apes would notice every form of inspection meant to uncover the secrets carried by their flesh.

Noah and the others knew how they had to behave, but refraining from fulfilling their curiosity turned out to be hard, especially since those creatures didn't bother to answer their questions. They had fallen silent as soon as the two groups reunited, which left the team of experts in the dark and confused.

The matter was even harder since Noah's group could theoretically defeat those creatures. After all, the Kesier apes had struggled to face the crackling giant, while the team of experts had defeated it rather quickly. It wouldn't take much to seize one of those three bodies if everyone attacked at the same moment.

The temptation was incredibly strong. The Kesier apes in front of the group probably contained the secret behind the ability to wield two elements. Also, that species definitely knew where the piece of Heaven and Earth's old sky was. Such a valuable resource would normally be enough to make Noah's group decide to face some risks, but the experts decided to stay put anyway.

"Where are your superiors?"

"Why were they away?"

"Do you have sworn enemies?"

"Why were Heaven and Earth so set about destroying you?"

"Do you have two elements?"

"Do you have the piece of the old sky?"

Noah threw similar questions at the Kesier apes whenever the wait grew too dull, but the creatures never said anything. They limited themselves to turn to look at Noah before moving their gaze back to the distant storms again.

The chaotic laws had finished fixing the crack created by Divine Demon's massive attack by them. Everything had returned to normality, but the scene never grew more interesting. Noah and the others didn't even want to go to the ground and cultivate for fear of disrespecting the Kesier species.

The experts couldn't even speak properly since the Kesier apes could understand them. Even the mental conversations risked ending up in the creatures' range due to their powerful innate ability.

Noah preferred to remain silent rather than underestimating those creatures, especially since he wanted to study the city and its insides. Many rulers had controlled those structures throughout the eras, but they remained part of the old sky. He couldn't miss such an interesting chance.

The wait ended when a flicker ran through the three creature's faces. Everyone on the scene could notice that change in their expression since their fur rose and actual emotions appeared in their eyes.

Noah and the others instinctively tensed up. They did their best not to show any reaction, but their minds went battle-ready, and the Kesier apes sensed that change. Their innate ability made them incredibly s.e.n.s.i.t.i.v.e to mental energy, so that faint new vibe that seeped out of the experts inevitably alerted them.

The whole area grew tense at that point. The two groups knew exactly what their opponents were experiencing. One side featured the careful and driven Kesier apes, while the other had experts that didn't mind ending up in a battle if the peaceful approach failed.

Still, both sides didn't have the chance to express their intentions since a powerful consciousness shot out of the city and expanded to cover the entire area surrounded by storms. Noah's group didn't even need to inspect the power of those mental waves to understand the level of their source. It was evident that a rank 9 creature in the middle tier had stepped into the scene.

"It's rare to see your kind here," An ancient female voice spread through the consciousness that enveloped the entire area and sent words directly toward the mental walls of Noah's group. "You destroyed your space and defenses before helping against Heaven and Earth's puppet. Tell me, what's the reason behind your presence here?"

King Elbas and the others instinctively turned toward Noah. It was in his role as a leader to speak in those situations, and his species made him more suitable than the others anyway.

"We are some of Heaven and Earth's enemies," Noah growled to express his words. "We wanted to study the architecture of the city and the rumored piece of the old sky contained in its insides. We didn't expect to encounter traps that used the rulers' power and a dimension meant to steal power from the storms."

"Did the rumors tell you about us?" The ancient voice continued.

"We didn't care about eventual rulers," Noah honestly revealed. "Defeating Heaven and Earth comes before the ownership of a mere dead zone."

King Elbas and Steven glared at Noah after they understood the meaning carried by his growls, but the silence that followed his answer surprised them.

Noah remained still as he waited for an answer. A cold smile even appeared on his face as vague understanding dawned upon his mind.

The strongest troops in a force would never leave such a valuable area unprotected, especially when the punishments sent by Heaven and Earth were powerful enough to kill the creatures that remained behind.

The only reasons that could justify such reckless behavior were the presence of a stronger enemy or the chance to obtain something incredibly valuable. Noah couldn't confirm which motive had drawn the powerful apes out of the city, but the event made him sure that those creatures weren't in a good spot. They would never act so recklessly otherwise.

There was a high chance that their lack of power led to cooperation. Noah didn't hesitate to imagine the countless benefits that such an alliance could bring, especially when it came to the Kesier rune in the sky and Heaven and Earth's sparks. Still, a sudden surge of bloodl.u.s.t flared out of his separate space and his figure before flying across the land.

The destructive power carried by his bloodl.u.s.t naturally tried to affect the consciousness that had covered the area, and a few cracks inevitably appeared on that powerful but frail mental energy. Black branches that radiated a scarlet halo expanded among the sky as their power continued to increase. Still, Noah didn't hesitate to activate both his pulling forces to draw that ability back into his body.

Shafu and Duanlong activated their pulling force and forced part of the bloodl.u.s.t to return inside his body. However, the remaining parts were outside their range, so they dispersed in the area and spread destruction until they depleted their energy.

The experts, the three Kesier apes, and even the consciousness lingering in the area glared at Noah, but the latter was as surprised as them. His hand quickly entered his c.h.e.s.t and drew the cursed sword, but he could quickly understand that something had changed. Its structure had grown redder, and the bloodl.u.s.t that it radiated was so intense that Noah almost struggled to wield the weapon.

"What has even happened?" Noah shouted, uncaring that the apes and the powerful creatures could hear him for that position.

"Master?" The cursed sword announced in an ancient but timid voice. "I've reached the upper tier."

### **Chapter 1862 - 1862. Crazy**

"Couldn't you warn me first?" Noah cursed without even bothering to hold back his angry voice.

The situation was extremely delicate, but the cursed sword had ended up hurting the mental waves that covered the area during its breakthrough. It had literally shown that Noah and the experts weren't worthy of trust. After all, who could even believe experts that have no control over their abilities?

"It's not my fault, Master," The cursed sword replied in a voice that everyone could hear. "Defeating the giant gave me a lot of power, but your ambition ended up pushing me toward the breakthrough. I didn't notice it until it was too late."

Noah wanted to scold the weapon some more, but he had to take care of other important matters first. The three lower tier Kesier apes were looking at him while showing clear hostility, and the consciousness that covered the dead zone had yet to react to the sudden event.

The silence was worse than the evident hatred. Noah didn't know what to say in that situation. Every word that he could think of sounded like a lame lie.

"Ehm," Noah cleared his throat before continuing with a human voice. "Well, some of my abilities are strange. This sword isn't even the strangest in my arsenal."

King Elbas felt the need to rip off his hair when he heard his leader. Steven, Robert, and Wilfred experienced a similar feeling, Alexander remained completely speechless, and Divine Demon exploded into a loud laugh.

Meanwhile, Sword Saint materialized a silver blade and prepared himself to fight, but his action only caused another wave of anger to spread around him. His companions and the Kesier apes were shooting furious stares toward him.

"What?" Sword Saint asked when he noticed that reaction. "We are crazy. They'll never trust us."

King Elbas opened his mouth to speak, but no words came out of it. He couldn't say anything against that statement. Sword Saint was completely right.

Noah rolled his eyes and scratched the side of his head with the base of the cursed sword. He had tried to be polite, but that approach seemed doomed to fail every time.

"Look," Noah eventually shouted in a human voice, "Tell me what you want to do. We can fight or talk. It's honestly the same at this point."

Noah wasn't delusional. He knew that his opponents had at least one middle tier creature in their ranks. However, the cursed sword had just advanced, so the potential battle didn't appear completely hopeless anymore.

Yet, the cursed sword had advanced to the upper tier now, which put its new output of power in the ninth rank. Noah could even empower that ability with his many methods, which could potentially create attacks capable of hurting rank 9 magical beasts in the middle tier.

Of course, that math was purely theoretical. The cursed sword had just advanced, so it might struggle to reach the ninth rank in terms of power on its own. The same went for his empowerments. He could defy logic, but he might lack the potential needed to push his power to the d.e.s.i.r.ed level.

Still, Noah didn't want to continue with that pretense, especially after the cursed sword shattered it. He would fight if the Kesier species wanted a battle and talk if they were okay with a peaceful approach.

The silence became deafening, and only Divine Demon's occasional laugh broke that suffocating environment. Everyone waited for the leader still hidden inside the city to speak, but its words struggled to come out. Noah's group didn't know whether that was a negotiation tactic, but they could only wait and see what the pack would do to decide their next move.

"Did you just scold your weapon?" The ancient female voice eventually resounded again, but a tinge of liveliness had appeared in it at that time.

"That's not its first time either," Noah snorted while glaring at the cursed sword. "It announced its power once. Can you imagine? You should be a trump card, not an announcer."

"How come that's not the strangest weapon in your arsenal?" The voice resounded again, and it sounded even more lively now.

"You'd be surprised," Noah sighed. "All the strange and crazy in this world ends up under my banner."

"We don't have a banner," King Elbas coughed.

"What's the point of having a banner when we are the last organization in the world?" Noah complained.

"It's a matter of pride," Steven announced.

"You literally came from a force that hid the names of its members," Noah rebuked.

"The banner was in our minds!" Steven shouted while raising a hand to the center of his chest and raising his face to wear a melancholic expression while looking in the distance.

"Even the Demon sects had banners," Divine Demon commented in a low voice.

"And the Legion," Alexander added.

"And Heaven and Earth," Robert whispered.

Noah shot a cold gaze toward Wilfred at that point, but the expert limited himself to shrug his shoulders.

"We'll get a damned banner," Noah eventually sighed.

"It's quite pointless now that I think about it," King Elbas exclaimed. "Who would even see it?"

"Our figures are enough to spread fear in this empty world," Divine Demon continued. "Being alive is our banner."

"Is this finally happening?" Steven asked. "Are we throwing challenges at Defying Demon?"

"We are getting better at this," Alexander commented. "It took us millennia of training, but we have finally reached the point when Noah has to remain silent."

"If only the pig were here," Wilfred sniffed while pretending to wipe away tears from the corners of his eyes.

"Please, tell me that you want to fight," Noah shouted, but the Kesier species didn't satisfy his desire.

The mental barrier that covered the city fell as a pale-orange halo ran through its invisible surface. The buildings changed shape as the illusion fell and revealed their true form.

The old and crumbled buildings transformed into tall and shining structures covered by an array of lightning bolts that connected all their roofs. A pale-orange halo surrounded the entire city and shot into the environment now that the barrier was down, but the heavy consciousness made sure to suppress that radiance.

The scene was quite spectacular, especially for experts who claimed to be part of the last organization in the world. The city appeared as the most advanced fusion between architecture and inscriptions. It was majestic, functional, and powerful. The palaces on the black landmass felt like poor imitation built by children in comparison.

"The apes build better than the humans," King Elbas heaved a helpless sigh. "The higher plane desperately needs an Elbas family."

"Did Second Prince and the mansion meet in the end?" Noah asked. "I'm actually curious about that story."

"We found perfect allies!" Divine Demon shouted, and Noah could only shake his head.

The cultivation journey resembled a dive toward madness rather than a constant struggle to reach the peak. Everyone who got into the high levels was simply too crazy to understand those details.

### **Chapter 1863 - 1863. Us**

The incredible city covered by the pale-orange halo and the rank 9 Kesier ape in the middle tier that sat lazily on the floating throne created a spectacular scene. The experts would even forget that the environment featured magical beasts if it weren't for the obvious furry creatures standing in front of them. The structures simply didn't seem to suit those usually wild species, but their eyes weren't lying to them.

King Elbas glanced at the middle tier creature before taking out a few inscribed items. Sensors of various kinds started to float around his figure and study the city. His expression changed whenever he understood part of the inscriptions deployed in the area, but his eyebrows never stopped showing his surprise.

Instead, Noah and the others moved their focus on the middle tier creature. Its heavy consciousness didn't press on their minds and only covered the area. It suppressed the orange light radiated by the city and prevented it from spreading in the area, but it didn't seem to carry any ill intention.

Noah and the others stored their weapons and recalled their energy to express their peaceful intentions, and eight large cups materialized in front of the ape when it waved its hand.

The event slightly surprised the eight experts, but they relaxed when they realized that the Kesier ape had only activated the storage properties of the throne with its mental energy. The creature wasn't like Divine Demon.

The cups flew toward the experts, and the latter promptly grabbed them. A grey liquid already filled their insides, and the Kesier apes in the area fixed their gazes on the group as they waited to see their reaction.

"Do we-?" Steven began to ask, but his companions glared at him before he could finish his line.

The expert could only take a deep breath before raising the cup to his lips and taking a sip of the grey liquid. His companions did the same, and a dense warmth soon spread through their insides.

The liquid appeared meant for existences with powerful mental energy. Noah sensed the warmth rising toward his sea of consciousness and enveloping it into an aura that loosened his mental walls.

The process didn't affect the overall firmness of the mental walls. It applied a temporary effect that made them easier to enlarge, and Noah's internal pressure didn't hesitate to join that power. His mind improved at an incredible pace for a few seconds before the effects of the sip vanished.

Noah couldn't help but glance at the middle tier Kesier ape again after experiencing that process. The creature was inspecting the experts while showing a confident expression. It knew exactly how valuable the grey liquid was, but it had still decided to offer it to its violent guests.

'What is it thinking about?' Noah wondered as he took another sip of the grey liquid.

The black hole stepped in at that time. The warmth that tried to flow toward his mind entered the fourth center of power and went through the usual empowerment that the organ applied to every form of energy that it touched.

However, the warmth didn't change at all inside the black hole. The organ failed to improve it due to its already perfect state. It seemed that the Kesier species had created or found the best possible drug for the mental spheres.

That discovery made the whole matter even stranger. Noah couldn't explain why the magical beast would ever offer something so valuable. Still, he didn't lose his chance to drink all of it.

His companions did the same once they confirmed that the liquid didn't have any negative effect. Only King Elbas limited himself to a single sip before deploying even more sensors and inspecting the fabric of that substance.

A frown appeared on the expert's face as his sensors slowly uncovered the secrets behind the liquid's fabric. It turned out to be relatively easy to find out of what it contained, but his stupor came from that precise detail.

King Elbas could see the very fabric of the Kesier runes into that liquid. The substance carried a shattered and dense version of the best training method for the seas of consciousness. Still, its dense structure made it far more powerful than a simple rune.

"How did you even create this?" King Elbas asked. "Do you really belong to the Kesier species?"

Confusion spread among King Elbas' companions, but the latter promptly threw lumps of golden light toward their heads. Noah and the others could experience King Elbas' reasoning and look at the clues he had gathered since he first noticed the strange aspects of the Kesier species once that energy fused with their mental spheres.

The fact that the main materials for the liquid were Kesier runes didn't stop the experts from emptying their cups, but it made them curious about the whole procedure.

Noah even experienced a faint disappointment. The Kesier species usually could ignore their innate aggression due to their intelligence, but the pack encountered of the dead zone was clearly different. Those creatures built marvels and went beyond the limits of the inscription methods known in the world. Still, they seemed to have sacrificed their connection to their peers to achieve that.

The Kesier apes could fuse their runes to empower their leader or other specimens, but the current version appeared unable to use that ability. They lacked the unity that usually reigned among their packs, and Noah saw that as a step back in their evolution.

"Of course we belong to the Kesier species," The middle tier specimen announced in its ancient female voice. "We just tweaked ourselves to improve our potential."

The middle tier specimen pointed at its head before continuing its explanation. "First, we improved our mind. Having an incomplete sea of consciousness has always been pointless. Luckily for us, our species already strived to unique completeness.

"Then, we made sure to rebuild our society. Magical beasts have always experienced deep flaws in that aspect. The blinding hunger and the instinctive submission are pointless restraints for creatures that aim to defeat the sky. We got rid of them and optimized our value."

Noah couldn't help but feel strange when he heard that explanation. He could sense those words coming out of the creature's mouth, but they didn't seem to come from a living being. It was as if he was in front of a program.

"In the end," The middle tier specimen concluded. "We built our home to express the apex of the inscription world."

"How could you achieve all of this?" Noah asked once the explanation ended. "A piece of the sky isn't enough to give you so much knowledge and determination."

"It doesn't explain why you are telling us all of this so easily either," Alexander commented.

"Siding with organizations that have the same enemy is only logical," The middle tier specimen replied. "Also, you can remind us of our previous emotions. That alone shows your power."

Noah's group felt more confused than ever. Entire pieces of that explanation didn't make sense, and the creature even expressed a unique detachment. They weren't completely sure they were talking with that magical beast.

"Your confusion is understandable," The middle tier specimen exclaimed before turning toward the city. "Come inside the city. I'll let you meet us."

### **Chapter 1864 - 1864. Orange**

'Us?' Noah wondered, and his companions showed a similar confusion.

The middle tier specimen's explanation had blank spots that the group couldn't fill, but the situation was too interesting to refuse answers.

The Kesier ape had stated that the creatures had modified their species, changed their instincts, and built a city at the apex of the inscription world. Still, simple magical beasts couldn't accomplish that with some knowledge and a bit of power. Those transformations and feats required far more, especially since they had to affect an entire pack.

Noah knew that the city could hide traps, but he found it impossible to hold back his steps. The other experts felt similar fears and curiosity, so they followed him toward the buildings while chasing the floating throne.

The lightning bolts that ran from roof to roof intensified as the group approached the city, but no defense appeared in sight. Noah and the others didn't even trigger the hidden traps, so they could reach the buildings in no time.

The vast city expanded in their vision as the group continued to follow the floating throne. Many inscriptions and glowing formations shone of the various experts as they crossed building after building, and the array of lightning bolts above them applied a constant pressure that tried to make them land on the ground.



Smooth and clean streets divided the various buildings. Kesier apes of different levels occupied those areas and stared at the group floating above their heads.

Noah and the others replied to those stares with inspections devoid of mental energy, but even their mere eyes could understand that something was off in those creatures. Most of them wore the same resolute expressions of the three lower tier specimens that had fought Heaven and Earth, but a few seemed detached like the middle tier creature.

Noah and King Elbas often exchanged meaningful gazes to express how off the situation appeared. Both of them had initially thought that those magical beasts were trying to imitate cultivators, but there seemed to be far more to the matter.

Space seemed to bend inside the city. The dead zone was relatively big, but it couldn't even come close to the size of the black landmass outside of the storms. Instead, the area among the buildings stretched immensely. It almost appeared endless when that multitude of structures hid its edges.

One of the most stunning aspects of the city was its population. The group flew past countless divine Kesier apes that featured the same odd features as the rank 9 specimens met outside. The creatures with blank or detached expressions even increased as the group continued to follow the throne.

The group flew until the pale-orange light intensified so much that the shapes of the buildings disappeared. The experts had to use their mental energy to keep track of the throne, but the journey proceeded smoothly nonetheless.

"Sorry," The ancient female voice eventually resounded among the blinding halo that blocked the experts' vision. "We didn't prepare for guests. It seems that the city still needs improvements."

The halo slowly dimmed and revealed an area devoid of buildings. Noah and the others could finally inspect their surroundings. The area above them still had the dense array of lightning bolts, but the ground featured countless shining lines converging into a deep pit. It seemed that all the inscriptions of the city passed through that hole.

"You can descend," The middle tier specimen said as its voice started to change source.

It began by coming out of the creature's mouth, but its source slowly moved across the sky until it came out from the pit.

The middle tier specimen's expression changed. A resolute face replaced its previous lazy look as the creature abandoned the throne and flew back to the city without saying a word. Noah and the others wanted to say something, but the magical beast disappeared among the pale-orange halo that surrounded the visible area before words could escape their mouths.

The group remained alone, with the throne floating next to them. Yet, the item descended toward the pit and disappeared among the blinding light released by the countless inscriptions converging toward the hole's bottom.

"I don't like this," Robert whispered. "It's too similar."

Robert didn't need to explain himself any further. His companions were experiencing similar sensations. The pale-orange light carried a faint trace of Heaven and Earth's aura, and the pit wasn't an exception.

"Noah?" King Elbas asked while fixing his eyes on the pit.

"The storms hide old secrets," Noah uttered as a cold smile appeared on his face. "I didn't think they could be so interesting."

"Are you having strange ideas already?" Alexander laughed.

"I know nothing right now," Noah replied, "Which leaves countless possibilities open."

Noah began to descend after those words, and the other experts followed him. They immersed their bodies into the light and flew until their mental waves found a large chunk made of an orange material connected to all the inscriptions that flowed into the hole.

"What should we call you?" Noah asked as the light slowly dimmed and allowed the group to inspect the orange chunk with their own eyes. "I believe Heaven and Earth is taken."

"We've heard whispers about your c.o.c.kiness, Noah Balvan," The same ancient female voice from before resounded from the orange chunk. "We are happy to see that they were correct."

"Happy?" Noah asked. "Didn't you forsake your emotions to conquer the world?"

"Who spread this false rumor?" The orange chunk asked. "We live, so we feel. That has always been the main issue with the world. Planes should just exist, not think."

"I'm surprised Heaven and Earth let you live for so long," Noah revealed. "Aren't you a major threat to their current power?"

"We are but a shadow which still retains a faint connection with the world," The orange chunk explained. "Our knowledge is outdated, and our power is unstable. Yet, we are smarter than they will ever be."

"Is this even possible?" Steven asked. "How can you exist when your existence transformed?"

"We don't really exist," The orange chunk stated. "We are rumors, voices, and ideas that the magical beasts have defeated and forgotten a long time ago."

"Stop playing with words," Noah snorted as he descended further. "Why didn't Heaven and Earth destroy you? You might be weak, but you remain dangerous. This city proves that."

"Do you know how we took control of the world and filled it with "Breath"?" The orange chunk asked before replying right away. "We summoned the world's will and absorbed its power. We might have failed to attune with it and contain its laws, but we still ruled over everything for eras. We even had loyal followers grateful for our gift and our fair system. I don't even recall the number of dimensions ready to hide us."

"But the world fell apart," King Elbas contradicted the chunk, "Many times even."

"You don't realize it, do you?" The orange chunk exclaimed while giving voice to a faint laugh. "The "Breath" is our law. We would only reappear somewhere else if this metal of ours falls apart."

**Chapter 1865 - 1865. Army**

"I thought you dealt with lightning bolts," Divine Demon declared, "With fairness and other stupid rules as the main aspects of your law."

The experts were too caught in the situation to realize that Divine Demon was behaving seriously. His questions even expressed one of the most common theories behind Heaven and Earth's law.

"We had a lightning aptitude," The orange chunk explained. "We have evolved it until we became part of every storm on the plane and made their power converge to synthesize the "Breath". That became our law."

King Elbas moved his fingers oddly. He seemed to take mental notes whenever that ancient voice resounded inside the hole.

"What's the reason behind your plural state?" Noah asked. "Weren't you a single existence? How did your personality split?"

"Our personality has always been one," The orange chunk explained while giving voice to a laugh, "But our centers of power had to split once the world had turned out to be too hard to control in one piece. Each organ then evolved independently according to its task.

"Our mind set the fairness and handled the Earth Tribulations, our dantian became the sky and dispenser of "Breath", and our body fused with the plane to facilitate its evolution. If we have to be completely honest, the title Heaven and Earth has always failed to express our triple nature."

A broad smile appeared on Noah's face before a loud laugh came out of it. His roars even mixed with his happy outburst now that the orange chunk had confirmed one of his older guesses.

"You are turning into Divine Demon," King Elbas sighed.

"Maybe we should rely more on your guesses," Alexander calmly analyzed.

"We already do," Wilfred snorted. "It's not like we can stop him or go somewhere else."

"It was a perfect system," A sigh escaped the orange mineral. "Existences worthy of grasping the secrets of our superior energy could strive toward the sky. We were even so close to the tenth rank, but a world can't hope. We failed to see the system of the universe while we were busy building our utopia."

"Perfect?" King Elbas sneered. "How can you call your fairness perfect? It does nothing but punishing those truly exceptional among us."

"You are nothing but a boy who has only seen the corruption of our perfection," The ancient voice remarked. "Our fairness was a worldwide training method. We wanted our world to advance as a whole, but the magical beasts have ruined our plans."

A wave of anger suddenly spread through the hole. The pale-orange light became blinding and started burning the experts immersed inside it. Even the inscriptions connected to the mineral began to deploy their effects in the area.

Still, the burst of anger vanished in a mere instant. The anger in the area dispersed quickly, and everything returned to normality. Part of the light even separated from the main halo and healed the superficial injuries inflicted on the experts.

"We are sorry," The ancient voice expressed in a tired voice. "Part of the anger that has corrupted us still resides inside us. We now understand why we failed. Our fairness favored our old species, and a word can't do that. We had to be more to pull that off."

"So, did the current Heaven and Earth just throw you away?" Noah asked.

Noah couldn't stop himself from asking questions. The orange mineral knew all the secrets of the previous world, and it had even approached the breakthrough to the tenth rank. He would directly try to rip away its memories if he felt confident enough in his ability.

"How can you throw yourself away?" The mineral laughed. "We decided to evolve past the "Breath" and become something that could defeat the magical beasts while maintaining control over the world, and we ended up separating in the process."

The process turned out to be easy enough to understand by everyone without further explanations. After all, everyone had to abandon or adjust some aspects of their existence as the cultivation journey continued. They could imagine how Heaven and Earth's previous core simply left their law once they moved toward the chaotic laws.

"What's your plan then?" Noah asked as a frown appeared on his face. "What are you even doing here?"

The orange metal clearly contained Heaven and Earth's previous existence. Yet, it was so different that even Noah struggled to find similarities with the current state of the rulers. He had spoken with Earth a few times, but she had always lacked that humbleness and openness.

However, Noah and the others could sense that Heaven and Earth's old version wasn't angry at the current rulers. They didn't even hate their previous destroyers too much. Still, they were building something with the city and the Kesier apes. The only issue was that Noah couldn't see that meaning or purpose.

"We want to stop ourselves from forsaking our previous dreams," The ancient voice explained. "Our hatred toward the magical beasts and our obsession has corrupted us. We wanted to elevate the world to reach the tenth rank, but we are devouring it to seize chaotic power now. Our story has to end. We failed once, and the repercussions were immense. We can't allow ourselves to fail again. We are afraid to say that the same would happen if we succeeded."

"How do you plan on doing that?" Robert asked. "You said it yourself. You barely have power left, and your knowledge is also outdated. How can you help us win against your better versions?"

"They aren't better," A snort came out of the orange metal. "They have more power and influence, but their power is chaotic. They can only devour and sever away laws from their existence. Everything else doesn't matter to them."

"This pride was expected," King Elbas commented, but voices continued to come out from the mineral.

"We have worked together with packs of magical beasts during our life in hiding," The mineral explained. "It took us a long time before we could find a species that could exploit us properly. The Kesier apes have now evolved and inherited part of our power. They even lost their dangerous instincts."

"You have turned them into a brainless army," Wilfred complained.

"They have retained their minds," The chunk explained. "They are free to leave and behave as they prefer. We don't want pawns. We need warriors capable of evolving on their own and without our help."

"And how do we fit in that plan?" Noah asked. "From what I've understood, you can take control of their minds quite freely, and they even believe in you deeply enough to let you do it. This city might be a weapon of some sort, but the issue remains. I can only see Heaven and Earth's work here."

"You fit because an army needs a commander," The chunk explained. "This is the best force in the entirety of the plane. Take it and assault the sky. Bring destruction to me and all the other creatures that have decided to side with Heaven and Earth. This world needs to go back to its previous state as soon as possible."

The first real chance to affect the world in its entirety appeared in front of the group. Noah only had to accept to gain access to a force groomed to oppose the rulers. It was even unclear how strong it was. Yet, Noah shook his head and announced his position. "I refuse."

### **Chapter 1866 - 1866. Perspective**

Victory could be in sight, but that didn't matter. The strongest ally had appeared, but Noah didn't care. He didn't mind getting help nor receiving benefits from powerful existences. Still, obtaining that army would put his very journey at risk, and he couldn't allow it.

"Why?" The orange mineral asked in shock. "We are giving you the chance to end it all. Your defiant influence, this army, and our knowledge together can remove Heaven and Earth's rule once and for all. You can achieve the victory that the world needs."

"Who cares?" Noah shrugged his shoulders. "I'm no savior. Why would I even answer the world's call for help?"

"But!" The orange mineral exclaimed. "You can achieve greatness with a single decision. It's not about saving. It's about removing the last hurdle!"

"What would I even gain from that?" Noah asked as Caesar's words resounded in his mind. "I will destroy Heaven and Earth, but I won't do it by wielding a power that doesn't belong to me. My journey is more important than life, death, right, and wrong."

The other experts couldn't help to go through different emotions at that scene. The orange chunk had clearly offered the army to Noah, but the situation was opening a chance for them. All of them knew that they could seize the army if they played their cards correctly. Yet, hesitation, doubts, and worries inevitably spread inside their minds at those thoughts.

Sheer power generally was a good thing. It didn't matter where it came from as long as the experts could use it to pursue their goals. However, everything became more complicated when they considered their cultivation journey.

Noah and his companions weren't existences who simply wanted to reach the peak. They also d.e.s.i.r.ed to accomplish that feat on their own terms to give value to their laws.

All of them had different goals that would be easier to seize if Heaven and Earth weren't in the way. Yet, those rulers were also one of the threats that pushed them to work harder. Divine Demon had proven multiple times how defeating powerful enemies brought benefits, and every existence at that level was aware of that feature.

Of course, Noah and the others wouldn't leave Heaven and Earth alive just to have a powerful enemy to defeat and give more value to their existence. Still, they didn't deny that the feat could help them complete their law.

That wouldn't happen if they used foreign powers to accomplish their feats. Their existences might even suffer since they had accepted such a huge help to deal with one of their greatest problems. It might create doubts in their confidence and ruin them forever.

Everything depended on what they d.e.s.i.r.ed, but none of Noah's companions founded their existence on their enmity with Heaven and Earth. Even Noah only saw the rulers as mere opponents on his endless path.

"How can you refuse the easier path?" The orange chunk continued its desperate rant. "Are you trying to make your journey harder on purpose? That method has a clear limit. We already tested it."

"Worsening it on purpose?" Noah asked. "What nonsense are you even saying? I'm preserving my existence here."

The silence that followed his statement described how the severed piece of Heaven and Earth didn't understand his position. It couldn't see the matter from Noah's perspective. It only considered the world as a whole.

"What do you think would happen if I accepted the help of a power that doesn't belong to me?" Noah continued. "I would normally do that to absorb it, but you are asking me to take care of one of the major threats of my journey. I simply can't do that."

"We don't understand," The severed piece of Heaven and Earth exclaimed, and Noah sighed while deciding to explain himself better.

"Where would my power end and yours start once I accept this army?" Noah asked while spreading his arms. "You even reek of Heaven and Earth. Do you have any idea of what getting your help would do to my existence?"

His companions had reached similar conclusions in those seconds. Even Steven, who wanted to avenge the death of his underlings, wasn't willing to put his existence at risk for the chance to destroy Heaven and Earth.

"I think you have forgotten how to think about a single existence," Noah explained. "The world will keep living or just die. That's none of my concern. I only care about bringing my path forward, and your path won't work for me."

"Not even in front of victory?" The chunk asked.

"It won't be my victory," Noah replied in an easygoing tone. "It will help on one side and hurt on the other. I'm willing to sacrifice something about myself to reach higher realms but not putting the entirety of my existence at risk. Heaven and Earth is only another wall on my path."

"I'd take a look at your knowledge if you don't mind," King Elbas added once Noah was over.

"I bet you have amassed good food throughout this period," Alexander stated. "Can I see your stashes?"

"I'm with him," Wilfred promptly announced.

"Do you have training areas in this city?" Divine Demon asked. "I feel the need to stretch."

"I'll go for the training areas too as long as they have something worth cutting," Sword Saint exclaimed in a bored tone.

"It would be interesting to discuss Heaven and Earth's current power with you," Robert confessed. "I don't mind conversing a bit more."

"I also have a lot to ask," Steven declared. "I hope your current state won't make you remain silent in front of my questions."

All the experts asked to use the immense city or the detached piece of Heaven and Earth for their own benefits. Those with paths that shared similar goals naturally banded up together and waited for a reaction from the orange chunk.

"I told you," Noah commented while pointing at his companions. "This sheer power is useless for us. You should have offered your power to existences on the verge of giving up on their journey. We won't care if it doesn't suit us."

The fallen piece of Heaven and Earth didn't understand their point. It had been too long since they last considered themselves as a single existence. They only saw their version as a world, so they struggled to get what Noah and the others were saying. However, the scene awakened memories inside those fake rulers and made them recall some of the emotions they had lost after becoming a barrier that controlled the plane.

A faint emotion spread throughout the light that filled the environment at that point. Noah and the others could sense a strange form of excitement inside the halo, and their eyes couldn't help but fall on the orange chunk.

"I won't accept your power," Noah announced while crossing his legs to sit mid-air, "But I won't run away from a talk that gives us insights on Heaven and Earth's power and goals."

The orange chunk didn't know what to say, but its defensive mechanisms activated on its own before opening. It seemed that the old Heaven and Earth wanted to let the group pass, and the experts didn't hesitate to enter it.

### **Chapter 1867 - 1867. Ghosts**

Noah and the others crossed multiple layers of orange light that featured different defenses before reaching a completely white area. That sudden change in shades initially worried them, but an orange humanoid figure quickly materialized among that whiteness.

The humanoid figure didn't seem to belong to a proper human. It was three meters tall, and its arms appeared oddly long. Its legs also resembled the empty monster that had invaded the insides of the sky.

Moreover, its facial features seemed unable to stabilize on precise details. The fabric on its head continued to shake and tremble without ever solidifying.

It wasn't hard to differentiate the features founded on Heaven and Earth's memories from those depending on their forgetfulness. Their unclear face proved how they struggled to remember their existence even if they recalled vague details about their old body.

"Why is it white?" Noah immediately asked while inspecting the separate space around him.

"We didn't create our new existence out of thin air," The figure replied while waving its hand to materialize a series of praying mats. "We already had that project in mind. Our defeat forced us to make that drastic change."

The figure sat on the mats and waved its hands to create a series of cups filled with the grey liquid. Noah and the others didn't hesitate to sit at that sight. The drink was impossible to refuse now that they had confirmed that the old Heaven and Earth didn't have any hidden intention.

"You won't accept our perfect army nor our city," The orange figure commented while drinking from its cup, "But you want our knowledge and tools. We don't get it, but something tells us that we used to get it."

Noah instinctively glanced at King Elbas. It had become a habit for him to search for his companion with his eyes whenever a troublesome matter escaped his areas of expertise.

King Elbas didn't disappoint Noah. The expert had already fallen deep into his thoughts as he studied the matter. His curiosity forced him to consider solutions and fixes to every problem he encountered, and the old Heaven and Earth were going through something that he might be able to solve.

The issue wasn't with what the old rulers had lost during the severing. Their features had to be somewhere since it was almost impossible for existences that had approached the tenth rank to lose those parts forever. After all, even weaker experts like Great Builder and Supreme Thief had managed to continue to exist after their death. The same had to apply to the old Heaven and Earth.

The problem consisted in the locations of those features, and King Elbas could only identify three possible places.

His first idea saw those memories and lost features still inside the sky. That would obviously make them untouchable unless the experts defeated the current Heaven and Earth or performed a theft. Still, that sounded like the most unlikely of his guesses due to the even more evident lack of personality of the current rulers.

The second idea involved internal damage in the old Heaven and Earth. King Elbas believed that the old rulers were preventing themselves from gaining access to part of their memories.

That guess even saw the new Heaven and Earth as possible culprits behind an eventual sealing of those features, but that didn't sound reasonable to the expert. Keeping those features in the sky or throwing them into the void made more sense, especially since the current rulers already did that.



The third idea, which also was the most reasonable, saw the rest of the old rulers' features in the "Breath" itself. Heaven and Earth themselves had identified that energy as their existence in the end. It felt only normal for their memories to be there. Still, that guess created multiple problems, especially since the new rulers were still in control of that fuel.

King Elbas didn't hold back from explaining his ideas, but he didn't go further even if plans that could improve the old Heaven and Earth formed in his mind. The expert didn't completely trust the ancient rulers, so he didn't want to help them until he was strong enough to deal with the possible negative consequences of that action.

Noah and the others understood that point, so they quickly switched the topic of the conversation while they drank as much as they could. They had many questions about the sky and the stormy regions, and the existence in front of them probably had many answers.

"You were fighting someone else when Heaven and Earth attacked, right?" Noah promptly asked once King Elbas' speech ended.

The sudden question startled the old rulers. They didn't think that Noah would have noticed that detail so quickly. Their delay in helping against the Tribulation wasn't a small thing, but everyone could come up with multiple explanations. Instead, Noah had gone straight for his theory, and the old Heaven and Earth could only confirm that his guess had been correct.

"The old fairness was perfect," The orange figure repeated in its ancient female figure. "We tainted it by favoring our old species, but the new us corrupted it, and the world naturally reacts to their suppression."

The figure waved its hands and created tiny figures that depicted the four upper tier dragons and other random magical beasts. "The first magical beasts were the unbeatable opponents that we deserved. That's why we moved on and opted for corruption. We thought that the world wouldn't be able to counter us if our power went beyond what it could accomplish."

King Elbas couldn't help but take out scanners that recorded those revelations. He was learning about the changes in the world from the old rulers. He didn't know if he could find something more valuable than that.

"We already belonged to the old core as the corruption began," The orange figure explained, "But we know how we think or used to think. We continued to exploit the fairness and successfully approached realms that the world's will couldn't touch. However, we became our own enemy at that point."

The figure pointed at Noah before continuing. "You are just one of the counters naturally generated by our corrupted fairness. This city is another one, and other existences that had the potential to defeat the system have appeared throughout history. Many have died, most of them actually, but some still survive inside the storms, maybe even in the sky."

"How did they defeat so many of them?" Noah asked, deciding to ignore the last revelation for the time being.

"They did what the flaws in their fairness did," The orange figure announced. "They created counters to the counters. The mighty dragons have tiny c.o.c.kroaches as their sworn enemies, the unique

existences with a chance to touch the sky have specific Tribulations tuned for their power, and we have something similar too."

"An enemy?" Alexander asked.

"Ghosts," The old Heaven and Earth described. "Ethereal creatures capable of feeding on light and mental energy. We are suppressing those in the area, but we know that Heaven and Earth didn't forget about us. An army will invade us as soon as we show weakness."

"How strong are these ghosts?" Noah asked. "Can we defeat them?"

"You might have it a bit hard due to our similarities," The old Heaven and Earth explained, "But the others should be fine against them, especially the horned one."

### **Chapter 1868 - 1868. Deal**

Noah didn't feel offended by old Heaven and Earth's words. The similarities that they mentioned referred to his creation and destruction that the rulers shared.

The statement concerning the ghosts actually interested him. Noah didn't know if his d.e.s.i.r.e to prove Heaven and Earth wrong was preventing him from thinking straight, but he couldn't help himself nonetheless.

The group turned toward Robert. For some reason, the orange figure had marked him as the ghosts' counter, and they tried to guess why. Luckily for them, the old rulers explained themselves before they wasted too long.

"His hatred toward us will improve his effectiveness against the ghosts," The orange figure explained.

"What about my hatred?" Steven snorted to express clear annoyance.

"Your feeling is a childish d.e.s.i.r.e for revenge," The figure replied. "It can't compare to an existence reborn to hurt us."

"How much do you even know?" Noah asked as he arched his eyebrows.

Robert's rebirth had happened on the other side of the Immortal Lands after a cocoon of mutated laws had surrounded his figure. Noah believed that the current Heaven and Earth had learnt about his abilities only after he expressed his power, but that didn't involve the old rulers at all. Noah couldn't even understand when they had the chance to study Robert's life.

"The "Breath" can speak," The orange figure explained, "Even if it changes form. We can sense your feelings and existence resonating deep inside our core whenever you speak, move, or breathe."

King Elbas almost regretted mentioning his ideas about old Heaven and Earth's situation after learning that. The orange figure had stated that its power was only a shadow of its actual existence, but that was enough to surprise a group of experts who could defy common logic. He couldn't even imagine how strong it could be at its peak.

"Can they really win like this?" Noah asked as doubts formed in his mind. "Isn't there a limit to this cycle of counters?"

"It depends on how many of them remain alive," The orange figure answered. "Also, yes, Heaven and Earth aren't trying to solve the issue with this method. They are just stalling to have enough time to defeat the dragons."

The images in front of the orange figure never stopped moving and depicting what it said. They didn't represent the ghosts, but they added visuals to the explanation.

"Do the stormy regions have other existence worth keeping in mind?" Noah continued to ask.

It felt strange to be at that point in his cultivation journey. The mysteries of the world unfolded themselves in his vision with each answer he received or step he took. Noah almost couldn't believe that his idea of Heaven and Earth's system was almost complete. The only completely blank spot was the sky. Everything else was understandable, even if his power had yet to reach the ninth rank.

"Every rank 9 existence who opposes Heaven and Earth will eventually face a counter," The orange figure assured. "The stronger they are, the more unique the counters will be."

'Heaven and Earth have yet to make specific counters for us then,' Noah confirmed when he thought about his companions.

The rulers had already built inscribed items that could counter his abilities. The same probably went for his companions and the other experts, but none of them had stepped on the ninth rank yet. Heaven and Earth were still holding back their power in their punishments.

Noah didn't hide his curiosity toward his counter, but his thoughts soon returned on his current situation. His group could have access to many interesting structures and knowledge inside the city, but taking everything for granted was the same as accepting the army. He wanted to pay the price to give more value to his gains. Also, he d.e.s.i.r.ed to hurt Heaven and Earth's plans as much as possible.

"We can't say much about the sky," The orange figure continued its explanation. "It was only a barrier before. We had ideas about cities and homes, but we don't know how far that project has gone. We suspect pretty far."

Noah and the others almost expected that answer. It felt only normal for the last destination in the plane to be so unreachable, even for Heaven and Earth's previous core.

"Let's make a deal," Noah eventually exclaimed. "We will take care of the ghosts in exchange for some structures in the city."

"We are already offering the city to you," The orange figure contradicted, and the experts couldn't help but shake their heads to express their helplessness.

"You really had to repeat that," Noah sighed before showing a cold smile. "I have something else in my mind, luckily. You are too valuable to remain here. Start working on getting out."

"We are just a sha-," The orange figure started to repeat, but Noah promptly interrupted it.

"Shadow of your former something," Noah snorted. "I know. I don't care. You created this mess. You don't get to watch everything unfolding from the stages. I want you to become a core part of the last battle."

"But that's impossible!" The orange figure complained.

"Make it possible," Noah replied. "Welcome to Heaven and Earth's Cancer. I hope you have fun."

Noah stood up at that point. He had a plan, a complicated one even. It would require millennia of work and far more power than he wielded, but it seemed his best bet at stalling Heaven and Earth's victory.

"Come on," Noah laughed. "We have ghosts to catch."

"Do we take souvenirs first?" King Elbas asked as he stood up.

"Of course!" Noah grinned. "I want this spectacular drink in huge quantity, a rank 9 Kesier rune, and multiple weaker Kesier runes for my experiments."

"What?" The orange figure asked in confusion, but the other experts soon stood up and imitated him.

"I'll take everything you have to the origin of inscriptions," King Elbas announced. "Don't forget the drinks either."

"I'll have as many exotic materials you can gather," Robert continued.

"Food," Alexander whispered. "Good food."

"I'll go for food too," Wilfred exclaimed. "I'll see if the city can give something better once we return."

"I want the wine version of this drink," Divine Demon said.

"Give me your understanding of the sky," Steven snorted. "I'll show you how my hatred can keep up with the horned one."

"Don't take it on me now," Robert laughed.

"Can I cut the ghosts?" Sword Saint asked once the experts were done.

"You can," The orange figure slowly answered.

"Are they strong?" Sword Saint continued.

"Strong isn't the exact word we'd use to describe them," The old Heaven and Earth explained. "They have unique powers meant to affect wills and us."

"We can actually kill all of them then!" Noah laughed again.

"I was sure you were sending us against another unbeatable opponent," King Elbas sighed. "What a surprise."

"Some of us has to reach the ninth rank sooner or later," Noah commented. "Do you plan on facing the breakthrough with no experience against beings in the ninth rank?"

"We have fought rank 9 creatures since we entered the stormy regions," King Elbas rebuked.

"I remember you taking care of rank 8 cultivators," Noah joked.

"Because you ordered so," King Elbas corrected. "It won't happen again."

The orange figure inspected the bickering in confusion. The other experts soon joined Noah and King Elbas, but the old rulers continued to fail to understand the reason behind their actions. However, the inspection slowly gave birth to a feeling that it had experienced before. It almost felt the need to laugh when watching the experts.

### **Chapter 1869 - 1869. Factory**

The group didn't immediately leave the city. Noah and the others had to seize the various rewards requested for the mission against the ghosts. They even had to spend some time with those materials and prepare a tactic against that unknown enemy.

Maps of the stormy regions were almost impossible to create since the chaotic laws constantly transformed the lands. Only the dead zones remained the same, even they moved from time to time due to the changes that involved their surroundings.

The group let the old Heaven and Earth create a tracker that could lead them to the ghosts and back to the city, but that was the best they could do.

'I finally understand,' Noah laughed in his mind as he browsed through chunks of fur featuring Kesier runes. 'I still don't know everything, but I understand.'

The end of the known cultivation journey was far away but in sight. Noah could finally gaze at the world without feeling lost. Many of its secrets still escaped his eyes, but he understood their functioning, especially after talking with the old Heaven and Earth.

Noah knew about the beginning of the higher plane. He had seen the world transforming into a hellish whiteness, and he could even study its current functioning.

The new Heaven and Earth created perfect counters to every existence that benefited from the unavoidable flaws of their system. Those beings relied on and exploited the d.e.s.i.r.e of the rulers' fairness to crumble to reach a threatening state, but only a few of them managed to remain alive long enough to become real problems.

Moreover, the only purpose of those counters was to buy some time until Heaven and Earth managed to defeat the dragons and take complete control of the world. The path for the tenth rank might open for them at that point, and everything else would die if they succeeded.

'The best tactic still is to defeat the other counters and keep them busy until we become strong enough to affect the world,' Noah thought as black roots came out of his palm.

The parasite instinctively stretched its roots toward the pieces of fur in Noah's hands. The magical plant recognized food that would benefit its foundation, and it didn't hesitate to turn them into a source of energy that fused with its structure.

Noah could feel that the parasite's base stretched and thickened under the careful inspection of the black hole. The magical plant's foundation improved a lot. The process allowed the creature to generate more roots at the same time and absorb energy faster, but it didn't cause any transformation.

Noah sighed at that scene. He didn't know what to expect from the process, but those results were rather disappointing. The parasite had improved as a living being, but it didn't gain any immediate increase in power. Absorbing the other Kesier runes could only benefit its future growth.

The parasite worked like cultivators. Eventual improvements would lead to better results after the upgrades to its foundation, but Noah didn't gain anything now. He only had made the magical plant even hungrier.

'Is that really all I can do?' Noah wondered as his mind continued to review the topics concerning the world as a whole and Heaven and Earth.

The main issue in the topic was his low cultivation level. Noah was amazing and could cross the limits of his centers of power at ease. He could even fill the gaps among the ranks and stages with only a brim of his power. Yet, he remained a rank 8 expert, and that led to limits.

Heaven and Earth and their system acted on higher realms. The simple ninth rank might even fail to be enough to defeat them. Of course, Noah felt sure that his actual power would be incredible once he completed the known cultivation journey. The problem was getting there without having to migrate toward different planes.

Taking care of Heaven and Earth's counters was a sound plan that could make them waste a lot of energy and time. Yet, that approach would also accelerate the appearance of the counters meant for Noah and his group.

Noah was willing to make the trade since he felt more confident in surviving anything Heaven and Earth tried to throw at him. The same went for his companions, but he still wanted to do more.

'How can I even affect the sky?' Noah wondered. 'Can I do something more than this?'

His question led to a simple negative answer. He was incredible, but he was already doing everything in his power to hinder Heaven and Earth's plans.

The path ahead didn't feature anything that could damage the rulers even more. Finding more existences who could one day be worthy opponents seemed the only possible option other than gaining more power. At least for now.

Noah knew that his breakthrough might give him the chance to find new weaknesses in Heaven and Earth and the sky as a whole. His destruction would finally approach its peak once he reached the ninth rank, and even the rulers would have to fear him.

The group uncovered multiple features of the city as they prepared to hunt down the ghosts. Some of its aspects were spectacular and magnificent, while others were so gruesome that even some magical beasts would struggle to stick with them.

It turned out that the old Heaven and Earth had told the truth. They didn't subjugate the Kesier species. Those creatures had decided to follow the old rulers to break free of their innate restraints.

The old rulers had been completely selfless in their efforts since they had always planned to give away the city to someone else. However, that had created a solid loyalty among the Kesier apes. That feeling had only intensified after the life among those buildings continued.

The old Heaven and Earth had modified the Kesier apes to make their bodies able to absorb one of the previous aspects of their existence. The lightning element that had managed to conquer the world was in the hands of magical beasts that already had a threatening innate ability now.

Still, the process wasn't perfect, especially when it came to the strongest specimen. Many Kesier apes had died or suffered severe injuries, and the old Heaven and Earth didn't throw their valuable bodies away.

Noah and the rest of his group discovered how the city produced the grey liquid, and the sight left some of them slightly disgusted. The old Heaven and Earth had basically created an imperfect breeding ground that never stopped making new Kesier apes. Yet, the system's flaws gave birth to mutated and barely alive specimens, but that was enough to ensure a constant stream of Keiser runes.

The most surprising aspect of that discovery was that the Kesier apes were aware of the factory, but they let it be. They seemed to worship the old Heaven and Earth, so they didn't care about all those deaths meant only to produce materials useful for the city. That event didn't even affect their willingness to give control of their bodies to the old rulers.

The city had far more to explore, but the experts ended up completing their preparations after discovering the factory. Noah and the others left at that point, and they even felt relieved when they left the range of those buildings. Some of them wondered if they would return there at all.

### **Chapter 1870 - 1870. Ambush**

The cruelty and coldness showed by the old Heaven and Earth didn't affect the group's mood. Noah and the others were monsters who had done their fair share of nefarious acts.

Still, the existence in charge of the city was the reason behind the current state of the world, and their mission was to help it. Noah even wanted the old Heaven and Earth to regain a part of their previous might, which inevitably created doubts in the experts' minds.

Noah had always preferred crazy plans that could give huge benefits over the steady and slow improvements. Helping the old Heaven and Earth would cause many problems for the current rulers and directly benefit his situation, but the dangers connected to the plan were quite massive.

A lot could go wrong, but Noah considered his situation bad enough to pursue seemingly bad ideas. He didn't care if the old rulers ended up going against his plans as long as they bought him enough time to explore the ninth rank.

Dealing with one, two, or countless versions of Heaven and Earth wouldn't be a problem anymore at that point. Noah firmly believed in the power of his existence. He knew that he would be the strongest, so he didn't care about how many problems appeared as long as they helped him stalling until the ninth rank.

The experts had the tracker created by the old rulers, but the item didn't work as everyone had initially imagined. It didn't lead to the ghost because those creatures didn't technically exist. Heaven and Earth had created them to be the counters to their shadow, which made them even fainter than their target.

Placing a bait was the only method that could work against them, and the tracker did exactly that. I didn't only point back at the city. It even carried a piece of the old rulers that the experts could spread in the land that they chose as a battlefield.

The tracker also worked as a shield for the old rulers' existence, so roaming across the stormy regions didn't attract unwanted attention. The group could keep flying until they found an area that seemed to suit them.

Two tall mountains that created a large valley where their bases connected attracted the group's attention as soon as they passed through the area. The storms were relatively thin there since the ground absorbed energy quickly and transformed it into an azure glow that never stopped illuminating the scene.

The area appeared quite marvelous, but the experts could only consider it for their needs. A few formations placed in specific spots could turn the mountains and the valley into the perfect ambush zone.

The old Heaven and Earth had described the ghosts as an army ready to invade the city, but the group didn't meet any of them after leaving the city. The creatures were using their peculiar existence to hide somewhere, and King Elbas used that knowledge to come up with formations that could counter those opponents.

The old rulers had also provided crucial information to counter the ghosts, but they couldn't be too specific either. After all, Heaven and Earth had created them to go against their old version. There was a limit to how much the old version could understand even after fighting those creatures for so long.

The group immediately got to work. Noah and the others knew that Robert had to be the core of their offensive, but they didn't limit their traps to his power.

King Elbas could easily imitate the features of Robert's law through many quasi-rank 9 inscribed items, and Alexander had innate abilities that could unleash similar effects.

Divine Demon could also help in the matter, but the experts would rather avoid relying on his unstable power unless it was necessary. The ambush required a lot of planning, and the cultivator could almost become everything he wished for. Still, his law required time to activate properly since he had to develop techniques, which made him unsuitable for the plan.

The remaining experts would cover other roles. Noah and Wilfred would make sure to send the ghosts back inside the valley whenever they tried to escape, and Steven would use his determination to keep the formations active and increase their efficiency.

Sword Saint probably was the expert with the highest piercing power in the group, but he had to go through a few exchanges to tune his sharpness to the ghosts. The group decided to leave him free to act as he wished, and the expert didn't mind that role.

It took a while to prepare everything, and the mountains changed color after all the defenses were in place. Their previous azure shades vanished to make room for a faint golden light that made the area hard to inspect with mental energy.



Noah and Wilfred were at the two entrances of the valley, while the other experts occupied specific positions on the mountains. Everyone was ready to start the hunt.

The old rulers' aura spread through the sky as the sphere flew toward the other mountain. A formation even activated and helped move that presence throughout the entire valley and its surroundings. King Elbas' inscriptions were basically enhancing what that small brim of power actually carried, but that was enough for their mission.

The sphere stopped flying once it reached the exact center of the area. It floated above the sky and in the middle of the two mountains to make sure that the ghosts needed to pass through the formations if they wanted to reach it.

A long wait started at that point. The group didn't go too far away from the city, but they still traveled for a few months. That distance shouldn't be much for existences that could threaten the old rulers, but the ghosts didn't come even after the experts remained in those areas for a few years.

Waiting wasn't a problem for existences at that level, especially after the few initial gains from the city. Noah even had the four spheres to handle, so he never wasted time during that dull period.

Strange tentacle-like dark flares of mental energy seeped out of the ground at some point. The event was almost unnoticeable, but some of King Elbas' formations reacted to that event and alerted all the experts busy cultivating.

Everyone went battle-ready at that point. Something was finally coming, and Noah didn't hesitate to make the first move.

The tentacle-like flares were shooting toward the bait, but their power didn't seem too dangerous. Actually, those attacks only appeared powerful only on the outside. Noah couldn't sense much with his mind, and even his instincts felt conflicted about the whole matter.

Night quickly came out of the separate space and flew forward. The creature could sever the laws, so the texture of its opponents didn't matter as long as it had enough time and power to cut.

Noah didn't even need to blink to see the scenery changing immediately. More than a dozen tentacles had come appeared, but the Pterodactyl severed all of them in no time.