

## **Demonic 2005**

### **Chapter 2005 Runnern**

Heaven and Earth couldn't touch the metal, so someone had to handle the fusion with the dragon. Yet, Sepunia had no memories about the island in the void, and her companions could guess that the same applied to most cultivators in the rulers' system.

That left only one option open. Heaven and Earth must have relied on one or more of the privileged cultivators for the task.

King Elbas had already confirmed that Divine Architect had nothing to do with the experiment. His evaluation could be wrong, but Noah trusted his instincts enough to remove that solid stage cultivator from his worries...

The island was self-sufficient. Heaven and Earth filled it with light when it was about to exhaust its energy, but it didn't need maintenance or similar processes. In theory, it didn't need a guardian, but Noah believed that the rulers wouldn't leave such a secretive place without multiple types of protections.

The barrier and the light were powerful tools, and the dragons' aggression only helped increase the dangerousness of the island. However, that didn't sound enough when the matter involved such a risky and powerful material. According to Sepunia's words, the dark metal could melt the sky, and Heaven and Earth were trying to bring it on their side. It was safe to assume that seizing the material wouldn't be easy.

"I'll let you watch if you behave," Noah growled when he approached the restrained dragon.

King Elbas had given Noah another pill to quicken the regrowth of his arm. The latter had returned to his peak quickly, but the task might require more than that. The light had unclear properties, and he wanted to understand more about it, but only the dragon had answers.

"I won't let you capture more of my companions!" The dragon roared as it began to struggle again.

The creature's innate ability started to activate, but a heavy wave of pride suddenly engulfed it. Noah couldn't bother to play it nice anymore. He had treated the dragon properly and given it time to accept its new condition. The beast had to start respecting him now.

Noah's pride made the dragon retract its innate ability and lower its head in submission. The scene felt slightly surprising after confirming that the creature could release such a powerful liquid, but Noah guessed that the issue came from the type of fusion that Heaven and Earth had enforced. The rulers had probably focused on the metal, which explained why all the dragons shared the same physical features.

"I will remain true to my word," Noah explained through roars and growls as he arrived in front of the dragon. "I will save your pack and set you free. I will even fix you for free, but I need a little help here. I need you to remember if the light has ever hurt someone."

The dragon couldn't refuse Noah's order while his pride filled the area. The creature thought as hard as it could and explored messy memories that brought it back to the lie that it had lived for countless years.

The images in its mind always grew blurry whenever the light appeared, but it managed to recall a few scenes that could help Noah.

"I've seen that happening," The dragon growled, "But it was a different light. It didn't even attack us leaders. I'm not sure, but I don't remember feeling fear when it descended."

'It's not strong enough to threaten rank 9 magical beasts,' Noah concluded in his mind. 'Heaven and Earth might have something stronger at hand, but I bet that they'll let the jailer handle eventual issues. My focus must be on not remaining stuck inside the barrier.'

King Elbas had agreed to help Noah with the dragons, but they had to seize the metal first. The expert wouldn't feel ready to waste time on that pack otherwise.

"You can come to watch," Noah exclaimed before retracting his pride.

Noah grabbed the dragon and led it near the barrier. King Elbas and Sepunia soon reached him with the result of their investigation. They had inspected the island again while he was busy healing and dealing with the creature, but they didn't find anything valuable.

"The metal must be in the island's core," King Elbas guessed.

"It can't be anywhere else," Sepunia added. "Heaven and Earth can't transport the metal or move it freely. Some of the privileged cultivators might help them, but they aren't the type to handle these things."

"I still believe this structure has guardians," Noah commented.

"That's possible," Sepunia stated while glancing at the island. "I don't think Heaven and Earth would involve more than one of them in such a secretive matter. They would also need to prepare suitable rewards, which makes the eventuality of a team in charge of this area unlikely."

Noah nodded before moving his gaze on the island. The area was as large as a few regions. He could cross it in no time, especially if he relied on his movement technique. A thorough inspection would take mere minutes, but he still wanted to gather as much intel as possible before his reckless sprint.

The group had already accepted that they had to cross the barrier, but none wanted to deal with the consequences that destroying that defense would trigger. It was better to steal everything silently, but doing that required teamwork and a single runner.

A vast forest divided by a couple of mountains unfolded in Noah's vision. He couldn't say much more from his position, but he wasn't sure whether the island had something else. Its base was nothing more than a chunk of the previously iconic azure ground of the Immortal Lands. The area was that simple.

The underground world could hide something, and Noah would focus most of his efforts on those areas. The group had already decided that he would go inside the barrier and explore the island on his own. His speed made him the perfect candidate for that role, and he couldn't handle the other tasks as well as his companions.

Sepunia's ability to open the barrier without triggering its defenses was unmatched, but she still required King Elbas' help in case something went wrong. Noah didn't have his friend's flexibility when it

came to his inscription methods. King Elbas would be more valuable next to Sepunia, and the same went for Noah on the island, especially due to his hybrid abilities.

"Let's start then," Noah ordered while patting the dragon's head.

The creature didn't feel happy about that treatment. King Elbas' inscriptions still restrained it, and Noah was even treating it as his underling. Yet, the experts were talking about things that would benefit its pack, so it remained silent.

"Wait!" King Elbas said before taking a bottle containing a golden powder from his body. "Let's avoid the mess if we can. Focus on seizing the metal in its original form before planning experiments."

King Elbas spread the golden power on Noah and hid his presence. The expert had even adapted that item to the unique dragons in the area, and the creature next to the group could soon confirm that the defensive method was effective.

"Don't take too long," King Elbas reminded, "And don't destroy the barrier unless absolutely necessary."

Noah nodded and let the unstable substance fill his body. Sepunia opened a path in the barrier, and King Elbas reinforced it. Noah didn't hesitate to charge ahead, and a hole soon appeared on the side of the island. He had completely disregarded the surface to reach the underground world right away.

### **Chapter 2006 Undergroundn**

Noah used his bare body to dig through the ground and reach the center of the island. The dragons were the only magical beasts in the area, and they lived on the surface, so no one noticed his sprint. King Elbas' powder also helped keep his presence hidden, so Noah didn't bother holding back too much.

Noah felt almost nostalgic at the sight of the azure ground. It was a rare material after Heaven and Earth decided to destroy the entire higher plane. Even the regions he had salvaged had turned black after his ambition forced them to express their full potential. .

The scene of the bright underground areas brought his mind back to the exploration of the new continent in the Mortal Lands. Noah had then grown used to that sight in the higher plane only to lose that scenery forever.

The many memories that filled his mind didn't distract him from his task. Noah soon sensed something during his sprint inside the island. A familiar trustworthy feeling alerted his instincts and attracted him toward a specific area of that landmass.

Noah adjusted his direction and dug forward until an immense underground area unfolded in his vision. The hall seemed to make up for almost half of the island, and its smooth dark floor revealed the presence of foreign material. The aura radiated by that pitch-black layer also confirmed that he had reached his destination.

His instincts remained alert even if the dark floor continued to send trustworthy vibes. The desire to land on that material filled his mind, but he suppressed it. Noah knew that his superior awareness couldn't help in that situation. He wouldn't touch the metal until he gained a clear idea of its fabric and the area as a whole.

The area featured Heaven and Earth's presence. Noah could sense inscriptions all around the underground structure, but none seemed to have defensive purposes. The rulers didn't bother placing protections there since the island already had the barrier. The formations there seemed to have the sole task of affecting the dark floor.

Most of the inscription acted to suppress the innate aura radiated by the metal. They did their best to contain it inside that underground area, but something always leaked since the material could naturally oppose Heaven and Earth.

Instead, other formations had a far harder task. The parts of the rocky walls directly above the metal had intricate white lines that applied constant pressure on the dark floor. That force slowly destabilized the unique material and made tiny drops fall from its surface.

Heaven and Earth were still melting the dark metal, which revealed their plan to create more of those strange dragons. The liquid amassed in special cavities that featured different types of inscriptions that clearly had another creator. Noah followed one of those tunnels by resuming the digging until he found large pools full of that material in another underground hall.

The second hall also featured inscriptions that didn't belong to Heaven and Earth. It became impossible to deny Noah's theory at that point. The rulers had a helper.

'Snore,' Noah called through the mental connection, and the snake soon materialized at his side.

Snore didn't need orders. It directly flew toward the pools and made its leg touch the spinning black liquid. Noah prepared himself to sever that part of the snake's body, but nothing harmful happened. The dark matter in Snore's body simply swam among that dense liquid that filled its head with pleasant sensations.

The snake wanted to dive into the pool and drink that metal, but Noah stopped it. Snore would be the first to obtain that liquid if its actual properties turned out to be as valuable as Sepunia stated, but it was too dangerous to use now. It also felt like a waste to rely on that raw shape.

'The transformation happens here then,' Noah commented in his mind. 'Heaven and Earth probably rely on one of their privileged cultivators to liquefy the metal and bind it to the dragons.'

That explanation felt lacking in many aspects. Heaven and Earth had found a loophole in that flaw. They could use the dragons to transform the metal into something that could work as a deadly weapon against their opponents, but Noah had yet to see entire parts of the procedure.

A simple fusion wasn't enough to change the nature of such a unique material. The dragons had to transform after obtaining the metal, and Noah couldn't find that process in the two underground halls, so he resumed digging around to find the missing pieces.

More pools appeared as he continued the exploration, and what he was looking for eventually unfolded in his vision. An underground hall placed right under the metal hid a series of white chrysalides that contained convulsing dragons belonging to different species.

Inscriptions that Noah couldn't even attempt to understand converged toward the ten chrysalides on the wall of the circular area. Those structures had power in the ninth rank even if most of them contained rank 8 specimens. Only one had a rank 9 dragon, but the specimen was in the lower tier.

The inscriptions, the chrysalides, and the hall as a whole brimmed with Heaven and Earth's influence. The rulers had created that area without relying on external help, but Noah couldn't confirm whether they had put the dragons inside those structures on their own. That hypothesis sounded off, but the rulers were resourceful enough to come up with something that made that process automatic.

The dragons inside the chrysalides were unconscious, but they still shook every time part of their bodies transformed. Noah's mental waves were strong enough to seep past the crystal surfaces of those structures. They allowed him to inspect the process and memorize how the corruption worked.

The process was extremely slow. Noah actually had to pay attention to each cell of the dragons' bodies to notice when a change happened. Moreover, each transformation required a long period of maintenance meant to stabilize the creature to its new state.

'Heaven and Earth probably need these breaks due to the metal's unique properties,' Noah guessed.

The underground area didn't have much more. Noah found other pools and countless formations, but everything had already grown clear by them.

Heaven and Earth had hidden the metal under the island through a secret helper. Also, that same cultivator had set up inscriptions capable of liquefying the material so that the dragons could fuse with it. Everything else had the sole purpose of corrupting those mutated creatures so that the rulers could gain access to an unstoppable weapon.

The procedure also helped Heaven and Earth get rid of the material. In theory, the dark metal still existed even after its corruption. Noah guessed that the world couldn't generate more of it when the planned amount continued to be in the higher plane, but he had no way to prove it.

His only clue about that theory came from the unused space in the central hall. Noah could see it as a coincidence, but he didn't dare to ignore those details completely. The dark floor had probably shrunk since its first appearance.

Noah stopped exploring after inspecting the entirety of the underground structure. It was time to seize the metal. He approached it carefully and let Snore interact with it first, but he soon decided to touch it with his bare hands.

The contact with the original form of the metal sent a series of images that he couldn't stop to his mind, and his eyes closed as he started inspecting them.