

Demonic 2121

Chapter 2121 Transformation

Noah had warned the upper tier turtle, but that was his last resort. His inspection of the seabed came first, but he informed his companions about his deal with the pack before that.

The seabed was strange. The veins seemed to belong to a living being with their flashing pale-green glow, but Noah didn't find anything hidden under the sand and rocks. Each grain and small rock carried odd energy that filled the underwater area with a vibrant atmosphere.

Still, Noah's worries turned out to be on point. The whole vibrant atmosphere felt incomplete, and the presence of the turtles even blocked most of the liveliness that the sea would typically have.

Noah waited for June and his other companions to complete their inspection, but their findings didn't differ. Fiery Mountain, Old Tyrant, and Gabrielle's expertise covered various fields, but they couldn't give different opinions. Something was missing in the harmony of the floor, and the sea was behind that issue.

Noah felt forced to voice a soft growl. The upper tier turtle reached his position instantly, and the reason behind its summoning became evident even before Noah started to speak. Still, he needed to say those words.

"Can you store some energy from the sea?" Noah asked.

"The sea gives us the energy we need," The leader explained. "We would have to take away the water itself to store it."

"How long does the floor take to restore the water?" Noah questioned.

"I don't know," The upper tier turtle admitted.

"I'll perform a few tests," Noah sighed before shooting toward the surface and deploying the dark world.

His companions inspected him while his technique sucked away a large chunk of the sea and kept it in the sky. Then, Noah waited to see the reaction of the separate reality.

The area hidden in the deeper dimension was empty, so Noah knew that the floor wasn't getting energy from any lifeform. Still, the sea slowly rose as time passed. The Labyrinth itself was providing the fuel needed to create more green water, but the process wasn't even close to being fast.

Noah studied the process for a while before doing some math. The pack of turtles featured hundreds of specimens, with many of them in the eighth and ninth rank. They wouldn't need to do much, but their bodies would require massive amounts of energy anyway.

Noah tried to compare the time he would need to transform the sea to how much he could store. He also had to calculate the years spent waiting for the floor to restore all the water, and the prospect looked far from good. There was a high chance that the turtles would have to starve, and the same went for his group.

The underground meeting happened again. Noah met with the leader and explained his plan. He could store some water for the pack, but that would only slow down the transformation of the sea. After all, in its current state, the floor was creating the mutated waters on its own, which meant that the turtles had affected the area deeply.

"I will order my pack to move to the sky," The leader agreed after hearing the plan. "Still, if your plan fails after you take away our energy source, we will eat you and your friends before going back to feeding off each other."

"You shouldn't threaten your future leader," Noah joked before recalling something. "Though I think that many of my underlings did that."

The leader didn't answer. It hissed, and its pack gathered around its figure. The upper tier turtle glanced at Noah one last time before leading everyone out of the sea.

June, Fiery Mountain, Old Tyrant, and Gabrielle found themselves glaring at the hundreds of turtles that left the sea to take their place in the sky. The pack did its best to keep its distance from the group of experts, but the exchange of tense glances was inevitable. Both sides knew that they would become enemies if Noah's plan were to fail.

Noah appeared almost unaware of the evident tension. He left the sea and released the water in his dark world before deploying as many workshops as possible. He even relied on his potential to enhance the properties of his mind and endure more techniques.

The dark world divided itself into multiple giant pillars that dived into the sea and connected the seabed to the sky. The dark matter could now touch every material on the floor, and Noah let his ambition run freely.

The water condensed, the seabed trembled, and faint purple clouds began to accumulate in the sky as Noah's ambition ran freely throughout the floor. He didn't have an actual method to restore the sea to its previous state, but he could force everything to improve to solve his issue.

The sea, sky, and seabed retained their original ideas, so Noah believed that he could force them to express better versions of their true forms by letting them evolve through his ambition. The only issue was in the sheer amount of matter that he had to affect, but the dark world came in handy there.

Noah had worked on methods to enhance the effects of his ambitions and spread its influence in a vast area. The quasi-living workshop had been his latest creation in that field, but his power had increased by then, and his situation was also different now.

Noah didn't need to create many distant spots that could carry his influence. He only had to transform the entire floor before the arrival of the drawbacks, which was doable if he went all-out with everything he had learnt about enhancing and spreading his ambition.

The pillars radiated his ambition and forced the floor to change. The purple clouds expanded, the sea froze, and the seabed started to generate metallic materials that fused with its structure during its tremors.

Everything evolved to a level that went beyond the planning of its creator. The floor even darkened to compensate for the superior amount of energy required by its new state. Noah was messing with the very stability of the Cursed Labyrinth, and he did that with a cold smile on his face.

The sea showed greater changes compared to the rest of the floor, but Noah expected as much. Its water gained yellow shades before turning completely red and continuing its transformation.

It didn't take long before everything transformed into its superior version. The sky became a mass of thin clouds, the sea a giant slab of ice, and the seabed a massive chunk of metal with some spots that radiated a scarlet light.

Noah felt exhausted when he recalled his pillars. Transforming the entire floor had almost emptied his ethereal blackness. The success in the feat was forcing his world to produce more fuel, but the process wasn't as fast as he wished, and the drawbacks had fallen on him by then.

A sharp headache had taken control of his mind, and his senses felt dull. Still, his job wasn't over, and he could even feel the many gazes from the turtles on him.

Noah punched open the sea and created a tunnel that led him to the metallic seabed. The veins still existed, but they had turned into solid structures that filled the area with a scarlet halo. He had to take out his swords to pierce one of them, but the light remained unclear with his senses in that state.

The turtles began to voice hisses as Noah waited for his senses to return to a decent state. The transformation had lasted years, and the ambition had also affected them. Their hunger was drilling their minds, but they were doing their best to endure that instinct under their leader's pressure. Still, the situation was becoming dangerous.

'What does it even want?' Noah wondered while he studied the light.

Then, an idea appeared in his mind. The flashes had initially reminded Noah about a beating heart, so he decided to treat the area as a living being. He built vortices with his dark matter and turned the sea into dust before letting the veins absorb everything.

Under everyone's surprise, the metallic seabed began to tremble again, and a deep growl eventually left its fabric.

Chapter 2122 - 2122. Rain

The vortices continued to send energy into the metallic seabed. The latter trembled and cracked as its veins expanded and its internal structure transformed. Something massive was happening, and Noah retreated to inspect the event in its entirety.

Inspecting the changes happening inside the seabed was troublesome. Noah did his best by relying on his potential, but his mind was still recovering, so his senses couldn't benefit from his ambition fully.

Moreover, Noah had improved the whole floor, so the seabed had gained the properties of a powerful inscribed item. Most of its areas were in the middle tier of the ninth rank, so Noah's muddled senses struggled to pierce them.

Still, his experience in the magical beasts' field didn't let him down. The cracks appearing on the surface of the seabed seemed to follow a pattern that made Noah think about a face, and his instincts were rarely wrong about those matters.

'Was the point of the floor to give birth to a living being?' Noah wondered as he began to retreat even further. 'Do we have to kill it now?'

Worries inevitably appeared. Noah didn't know if he had already cleared the floor's requirements, but the eventual need to kill his creation would bring a significant problem. He had forced the whole area to evolve, so the creature that would appear after the sea vanished would be stronger than planned.

More fissures continued to open, and the veins seemed to be at their center. Two rows made of three cracks each appeared in the upper part of the seabed, two oval holes formed at its center, and a giant gorge took form in its lower part.

The edges of the cracks didn't remain still. Shards fell off of them, but that wasn't everything. They moved even if their fabric was tough, and the impression that Noah had gotten before only intensified at that sight.

"Prepare for battle!" Noah roared as the entirety of his arsenal started gathering energy and radiating ambition.

"What did you do?!" The upper tier turtle hissed, and its pack echoed its cry.

"I opened the door for the next floor," Noah shouted through roars. "Now start using those diagrams on your shells."

The leader had never mentioned the innate ability of its species, but Noah had mentioned it without needing any hint. The event expressed his deep expertise in the magical beasts' field, but the upper tier turtle didn't have the time to remain surprised since the seabed voiced another deep cry that made the entire floor shake.

'This separate reality wasn't made for something so strong,' Noah understood when he saw the very edges of the floor shake.

"Boss, what is happening?" Old Tyrant questioned.

"I will scold these damned turtles when all of this is over!" Noah shouted. "I'm not at my best, but we have to survive this anyway. You better show that you have what it takes to get to the final battle."

Noah wasn't really to blame for the current situation. He had been forced to evolve the whole floor because the turtles had tainted one of its core materials. Still, nothing mattered now. He would think about venting afterward.

Snore came out of Noah's back and unfolded its massive wings. Duanlong materialized under him, and roots started to come out of his hands. Night and Shafu remained inside his black crystal, but they were ready to jump into the battle if the situation required it.

Noah's survival instincts suddenly grew louder, and his blades replied with deafening cries. The Demonic Sword roared as dark matter shot out of its structure, while the dark-red color of the Cursed Sword intensified as its high-pitched noises filled the whole area.

Scarlet flares shot out of the six fissures that Noah had marked as the seabed's eyes. They were as thick as mountains, but they split as they flew upward.

The simple attack transformed into a rain of pillars capable of covering the entire ceiling. Noah unfolded the dark world, but part of the pack remained outside his technique. Yet, he didn't even consider that issue, and Snore promptly launched some of its feathers.

The diagrams on the turtles' shells had started to shine with a green light after Noah's warnings and the screams of their survival instincts. Vague geometrical shapes had even appeared in front of their mouths, and a blinding light filled their lines once the attack of the seabed became undeniable.

Nevertheless, the turtles held back their attacks when Snore's feathers exploded. They had initially planned to support Noah's offensive, but the explosion that followed the giant's snake technique left nothing for them to target.

The raging black storms that Snore had unleashed vanquished the array of purple clouds with their shockwaves and destroyed the incoming scarlet beams. Weak flares of that energy crossed the death area, but they didn't have enough power to endanger the army above.

'Peak of the middle tier,' Noah evaluated in his mind as the black storms continued to rage. 'Is it still getting used to its power?'

The seabed was radiating the aura that only an upper tier magical beast could have, but its attacks didn't match its level. That was a good outcome, but Noah didn't believe in luck. He had also fought an upper tier magical plant on the previous floor, so he knew that the Labyrinth would never put him against something so weak.

His hypothesis was obviously correct. A roar managed to pierce the black storms, and everyone's survival instincts screamed again. A scarlet light started to spread among the remains of Snore's attacks, and Noah didn't hesitate to make his companion launch more feathers.

More explosions happened, but some scarlet flares successfully pierced the storms. Noah only had to use the Demonic Sword to fend off the pillars converging toward him, and his companions helped by launching their attacks. The turtles also played their part by sending the blinding diagrams downward and shattering everything flying in their direction.

'Upper tier,' Noah grimly concluded as his survival instincts grew louder.

Something stronger was about to arrive, but that trend had already reached a dangerous point. Snore still had feathers, but Noah didn't want to remain in a passive position. His group might fend off the next attack and even the pillars after that, but the situation was bound to become unsustainable.

"Let's dive before it learns how to control its power!" Noah roared.

"Are you crazy?!" The upper tier turtle hissed. "We don't even know what it i-."

The leader didn't have the time to complete its line since Noah placed his Demonic Sword on his forehead and unleashed his consciousness. A series of singularities appeared above the pack and began to release a rain of piercing slashes capable of killing weak rank 9 magical beasts in an instant.

The turtles could redirect their attacks upward to stop the rain of slashes, but there were dangers below them too. The leader made up its mind quickly and voiced a hiss that made the entirety of its pack dive downward.

Noah and his group were already moving toward the seabed. June threw a giant crackling spear to open a path, Fiery Mountain gave birth to a humanoid giant to defend against anything flying toward them, and Gabrielle created an array of purple crystals to apply another layer of protection.

Old Tyrant wasn't great on that battlefield, but he had created an army of dog-like shadows that shone with a blue light. They weren't strong, but they shot forward and self-destructed to help open a path.

Noah kept his Cursed Sword ready for anything that tried to cross his group's defenses. Luckily for them, the seabed had launched another attack with power in the upper tier that was only slightly stronger than the previous. The giant crumbled, but the purple crystals weakened the surviving red flares enough to remove the need for other blows.

The group soon landed on the seabed, right under the oval holes at its center. However, the turtles didn't give them the time to think since their leader charged toward Noah.

Noah crossed his swords, and the upper tier turtle slammed on them.. Neither of them moved during the clash, and another cry came out from the metal under them while they remained locked in that exchange.

Chapter 2123 - 2123. Dive

"Is that what you do?!" The upper tier turtle hissed in anger as blood came out of the scales pushing on Noah's blades. "Do you attack my pack as soon as we decide to trust you?"

"When I say to dive, you dive," Noah growled. "You don't understand anything about these matters. Remaining silent and following my orders is the least you could do."

"Look at my pack!" The leader continued, and Noah didn't need to unfold his consciousness or divert his gaze to understand what it meant.

Noah's group had weak links, but they were relatively small, and the strong experts among them could compensate for the others. Snore and Noah's ambition were also great assets that could cover an area large enough to make the team pass safely through the dark storms and the red rain.

Instead, the pack was in a far different situation. The turtles' huge size was a weakness, and they couldn't even express their full speed outside the water. Moreover, that group had hundreds of weak specimens, and many of them failed to avoid the red rain that pierced the black storms.

The turtles' numbers had more than halved during the reckless charge, and their leader blamed Noah for that loss. Its anger got the best of its reasoning for an instant, but that was enough to make it disregard the greatest threat and charge at him.

"Do you want to know how many underlings you would have lost if we charged after the next attack?" Noah questioned through a growl.

The upper tier turtle wanted to answer, but the seabed launched more attacks. The scarlet flares' power had increased significantly. It was now halfway through the upper tier.

The leader didn't know what to say in front of that sheer might. The pack and Noah's group would have probably managed to defend if they had remained in the sky, but launching attacks would have been impossible.

Also, even the upper tier turtle understood that the seabed's power was increasing sharply. The battle would have inevitably forced them to charge forward at some point, and the new might of their opponent would have caused far more losses.

Noah, his group, and the pack had avoided the various cracks during their landing, so the flares didn't touch them. Everyone had been fine in the middle of that threatening offensive.

The leader didn't want to admit that Noah had been right, but its actions betrayed its thoughts. The upper tier turtle stopped pushing on the blades and started to retreat until its head didn't touch those sharp edges anymore.

"Are you ready to follow orders now?" Noah asked through a cold growl. "I don't mind dealing with you first if you won't cooperate properly."

The statement was arrogant and unreasonable. The leader knew that Noah didn't mean that, and not due to vague goodwill in his mind. The battlefield was simply too messy to hold a fight between them.

Still, Noah's tone didn't carry any hesitation or lies. He appeared willing to fight an upper tier magical beast among that chaos, and he meant that. The leader might not be forced to believe him due to their tragic situation, but he was ready to remove eventual hindrances before dealing with the seabed.

The upper tier turtle slightly nodded, and Noah immediately diverted his gaze to point it at the seabed. He could sense that the creature was still going through changes. That was part of the reason behind its struggles to get used to its power. Still, that also meant that it was getting stronger.

"Let's dig through!" Noah roared before unleashing the entirety of the power accumulated in his swords.

Noah's companions joined the offensive by adding everything they had to the slashes that left his swords. The parasite launched its dark-purple liquid and seeds, Snore spat its destructive dark matter, Night sent black lines from inside his figure, and Shafu spread the openings created by the attacks.

Only Duanlong remained still next to Noah. The odd dragon was his best defensive method, and he wanted to keep it ready for anything that his other assets couldn't stop.

The upper tier turtle echoed Noah's order through its hisses, and the pack soon started to launch attacks at the seabed. June, Fiery Mountain, Old Tyrant, and Gabrielle did the same, but their offensive tried to converge on the fissures that Noah was opening with his methods.

The seabed was an upper tier creature, but its structure lacked harmony. It had many weak spots, but its size made the deep cracks opened by its enemies relatively pointless.

Noah didn't care about that apparent lack of results. He continued to launch attacks even when another deep growl came out of the metal. He sensed some areas behind him turning red due to the many flares, but most of his focus remained on his offensive since the rain didn't try to converge on him.

June and the others could coordinate with Noah, and the rank 9 magical beasts among the pack also developed an intelligent approach. However, the weaker turtles struggled to keep up or be effective against their opponent. They weren't dumb, but the shockwaves radiated by the red flares flung them away and ruined their concentration.

The leader revealed its ruthlessness soon enough. Its situation was peculiar since it had been stuck with the same underlings for countless years. The turtles had even lived in peace, so they had developed bonds that went past the simple subservience.

However, the survival instincts and the pride of a leader never left a magical beast. The upper tier turtle disregarded its underlings' lives as soon as it accepted that helping them might endanger the mission. The event was a cull that would select those worthy of advancing through the Labyrinth.

Noah was even better than the leader at ignoring his surroundings to focus on his task. He continued to dig the seabed until he reached an opening that forced him to change direction. He wouldn't risk getting in the trajectory of the red flares.

His companions imitated him, but many magical beasts died as soon as the seabed launched another offensive. The flares had grown stronger again, and their shockwaves became an annoying event that even Noah couldn't ignore.

The situation only made Noah push forth with greater strength. His drawbacks tried to slow him down, but nothing could stop him when he moved the entirety of his ambition to his bloodlust. His mind felt on the verge of exploding, but the seabed saw countless black lines spreading through its structure. The shapes they created even carried a profound understanding of the laws connected to destruction.

The seabed's energy increased as time passed, so the shards that fell from its body became valuable materials that could help the group's recovery. Noah couldn't divert his attention, but Duanlong and Shafu made sure to seize everything they could.

The digging eventually led to another opening, and Noah's first instinct was to change direction again. However, the red light hidden among that darkness attracted his gaze, and the strange state of the space-time array in that area eventually made him decide to shoot toward the glow.

Noah released a deafening roar to alert everyone about his decision. The vast army transformed into a descending river that converged toward the source of the scarlet light, but no one touched it after reaching their destination.

Noah couldn't help but feel surprised when he arrived in front of the rotating scarlet sphere hidden near the seabed's center. He couldn't find it during his previous inspections, and the reason for that even was clear. The floor had created it after the metallic bottom had started to take life.

'It's not ready,' Noah exclaimed in his mind after inspecting the sphere shortly.

The scarlet structure was trying to create a passage, but everything was far from stable. The sphere even continued to launch attacks during the process, and Noah had to use Duanlong's innate ability to dodge it due to his position.

"Fuck it!" Noah roared as the dark world expanded and tried to complete what the teleport was missing. "Gather up."

Noah waited as much as possible before jumping into the sphere with his dark world.. Flares were trying to escape the scarlet structure, but everything vanished as laws tried to teleport everyone away.

Chapter 2124 - 2124. Tension

The space-time array went crazy. The unfinished teleport mixed with Noah's tampering made it almost impossible to keep track of the changes in the fabric of reality.

The void, the higher plane, and the separate reality of the Cursed Labyrinth kept replacing themselves as the teleport continued to apply its effects, and Noah was the only force trying to make some sense out of that mess. Moreover, his efforts didn't end there.

Noah felt tired. His mind had approached its limits during the third floor's transformation, and the seabed didn't help his condition. His current situation put his group and him into another danger, and he could only rely on his ethereal blackness to get out of it.

The ethereal blackness sent waves of potential as ambition fueled the aspects of Noah's power needed during the event. He needed his mind, understanding of the space-time array, and dark world to be at their peak to salvage his group and reach the next floor.

Needless to say, his mind wanted to give in. The general tiredness and drawbacks weren't the only issues Noah had to face during the event. His instincts had also started to scream as loudly as possible to highlight the dangerousness of his situation.

The Cursed Labyrinth messed with the very fabric of reality. It was a place that relied on a modified version of the space-time array to exist and remain hidden from Heaven and Earth's gaze. Noah's knowledge in that field couldn't help too much since it mostly came from his studies of the higher plane, but he still did his best to keep everyone safe.

The instability of the teleport put the matter affected by its power in danger. It had more energy than planned since Noah had forced the whole floor to evolve, but it remained unable to bring everyone safely in the higher plane or the void.

Nevertheless, the void and the higher plane had become possible destinations due to the incomplete state of the scarlet sphere. Noah understood how everything should have gone during his struggles to keep the dark world in one piece. In theory, his group would have needed to fight the seabed until the teleport took form and opened a stable passage.

The transformation of the floor had ruined that plan. Noah had been forced to send everyone into the scarlet sphere before it could stabilize, so he had to use his power to compensate for the missing aspects of the teleport and its messy state.

Noah had already gone through the teleport a few times. His mind had the chance to study the force that led his group to the next floors, so his dark matter could create a vague imitation. Yet, he didn't know his destination's exact location, and the answer was hidden in the unstable force around him.

Noah had to divide his attention among different projects. He had to keep the dark world stable to protect his group and the pack. He had to fend off the changes in the space-time array that the Labyrinth's force was trying to apply on his technique, and he even had to study that energy to find the destination hidden in its laws.

Of course, that ended up being too much for Noah. He was strong, and his understanding of those fields was deep. His dark world was also incredible, but he was taking care of too many projects on his own. The number of powerful beings under his protection only made everything more difficult.

Noah felt forced to sacrifice many turtles to relieve some of the pressure on his mind. He made the dark world push away most of the rank 7 specimens, and he moved to the creatures in the eighth rank when he sensed that his control over his technique continued to slip.

The space-time array around Noah never stabilized, but his influence intensified as he emptied the dark world. He became able to move most of his concentration on the teleport after his technique started handling its edges on its own. The black crystal took part of the weight after it understood what to do and allowed him to complete the process.

The areas around the dark world slowly stabilized. An azure sky, random white clouds, and a green prairie slowly materialized as Noah forced the space-time array to follow the Cursed Labyrinth's hidden orders. His control never slipped during the process, and he retrieved his influence only when he confirmed that his group had escaped the danger.

The dark world returned inside the black crystal once everything stabilized. June, the upper tier turtle, and the others found themselves on the fourth floor, but their attention didn't immediately go on their surroundings. Their group had other problems to handle.

The upper tier turtle voiced a deafening hiss that expressed the entirety of its anger. Its bloodthirsty eyes converged on Noah's figure, but the crackling noises coming out of June's body forced it to suppress its desire to charge at him.

The other turtles echoed the angry hiss, but they held themselves back when they felt Fiery Mountain, Old Tyrant, and Gabrielle's auras unfolding in the sky. A battle could explode as soon as someone made a move, and no one wanted that to happen before hearing what their respective leaders had to say.

The dark world didn't hide anyone's senses, so the upper tier turtle had seen Noah throwing away its underlings to increase his influence on the teleport. Its rational side understood that the process had been necessary. Still, its desire to complain and the anger that filled its instincts didn't care about that.

June had understood the nature of the situation right away, and she didn't hesitate to prepare herself for the imminent battle. Part of her even wished that the upper tier turtle would jump at Noah.

Noah was completely unaware that the tension among the group was reaching a critical point. He had predicted something like that to happen, but his condition prevented him from addressing the issue.

His senses weren't dark, but a buzzing noise filled them and made him unable to focus on his surroundings. Noah even failed to inspect his condition in that state. He had pushed his mind too far, so he had to wait for the ethereal blackness to produce more potential and quell the drawbacks.

Luckily for Noah, the sole success in stabilizing the teleport was an incredible achievement that quickened the production of potential. The Cursed Labyrinth was an astounding structure that most likely had solid stage experts behind it. The fact that Noah had been able to tamper with its functions and fix eventual errors spoke for his ability and added value to his feats.

June and the three cultivators weren't alone in their desire to protect Noah. Night, Snore, Duanlong, and the Demonic Sword had left his figure and had taken their place around him. The Cursed Sword was also sending its bloodlust forward, and everyone could sense that something far bigger was ready to come out of his body.

No one dared to make the first move during that tense situation. The upper tier turtle was angry, but it couldn't deny that Noah had saved as many specimens as possible. He also was the very reason behind its own survival, so its instincts slowly calmed down.

The sight of its small pack tried to add fuel to its anger, but the new environment helped suppress those feelings. Only a few rank 8 turtles had survived the culling, but Noah had made sure to save all the specimens in the ninth rank, and they also felt faint happiness rising inside them when they inspected their surroundings.

The long imprisonment had finally ended. The pack had almost forgotten that the world could be far more than a green sea and a purple sky, but memories returned while the turtles inspected the fourth floor.

The area resembled a piece of the Mortal Lands. The sky had no stars, but its azure color was bright, and its clouds sent shadows toward the surface. Soft winds also ran through the area and made the short grass of the prairie move gracefully.

However, the many living beings roaming through the prairie remained the most surprising aspect of the fourth floor. The pack of turtles remained speechless in front of the many magical beasts in the human ranks walking peacefully on the surface and eating its grass.

The higher plane had made that sight almost impossible to experience. Creatures in the human ranks didn't belong in that superior environment, and even the various human organizations had to come up with separate dimensions to groom their weaker descendants.

The reason behind that feature was pretty simple. The radiance of the sky and the general pressure that filled the higher plane due to its valuable material were too heavy for beings in the human ranks. The magical beasts could solve the issue by giving birth to specimens in the heroic ranks, but the cultivators had to rely on safe areas.

Yet, something strange immediately became evident. The pack had lost many members during the teleport, but it still contained many divine specimens. The same went for Noah's group. In theory, their pressure had to kill every magical beast on the surface, but they appeared completely fine.

Chapter 2125 - 2125. Filter

June suffered from that strange phenomenon more than her companions. None of the turtles had ever seen the Mortal Lands, and the three cultivators were too old. Gabrielle wasn't born in the higher plane, but too long had passed since her time in the human ranks.

Only June still retained vague memories concerning the power of the magical beasts in the human ranks, and seeing them surviving the presence of multiple rank 9 beings left her speechless. That simply couldn't happen. It went against the sheer weight of her existence.

Still, an explanation soon appeared in her eyes, and the others didn't take long to find the same answer. June followed the expansion of her group's influence and noticed something astonishing and scary at the same time.

Their auras were spreading as always, and they obviously tried to fall on the surface. Usually, even the faintest strands of power released from a rank 9 being would be enough to turn the magical beasts on the prairie into puddles of blood. However, something was hindering the heavy influences in the sky.

The matter wouldn't be too surprising if the floor had a barrier that blocked the auras completely. The creator or creators probably were experts in the solid stage, so they had enough power to pull off something like that.

Nevertheless, the situation was far different. June noticed how the floor seemed to have a filter above the surface. Her group's auras transformed into tiny tendrils that barely carried any power as soon as they went through that invisible structure.

The filter wasn't a simple barrier. It could transform auras in the ninth rank. It could affect powers coming from worlds without showing the faintest ripple in its ethereal surface.

The tiny tendrils turned into nutrients for the prairie when they reached the surface. Most of their power vanished so that the magical beasts wouldn't suffocate due to the massive energy falling toward them. The separate reality cut away a lot of fuel and teleported it away from June's senses.

The source of the filter was clear, but that detail surprised June and the others again. They could easily follow the structure of the ethereal filter to find what was generating it, which turned out to be a small house placed at the center of the prairie.

It was hard for divine cultivators to miss details. A simple glance could give them a complete idea of a vast area. Yet, June and the others knew that they didn't see the house during their first inspection of the fourth floor. They had noticed it only after they had followed the filter to its source.

The filter wasn't only strong enough to transform rank 9 auras into a cozy rain that could improve the environment for the magical beasts in the human ranks. Its source could also remain hidden from strong beings' perception until it became impossible to miss.

June tried her best to study how something like that was even possible. She could understand and inspect the nature behind powers in the last stages of the ninth rank, but the filter made no sense in her mind, and the matter was even worse with the house. She only confirmed that the small structure contained a powerful being.

June instinctively glanced at Noah when her inspection ended. He was the only one in the group who could uncover something, but he was still in the middle of his drawbacks. His eyes remained closed, and his frown flickered whenever his mind tried to relax. It was clear that he would need a bit to recover.

The rest of Noah's group soon reached June's conclusions. They couldn't find anything about the filter except for its source and the powerful being living inside it. The level of the experts also felt easy to guess. Only someone with power in the solid stage could take their auras and turn them into nutrients for those weak magical beasts.

June, Fiery Mountain, Gabrielle, and Old Tyrant had retrieved their energy when the turtles began to calm down. Their attention had almost completely gone on the floor, and they silently agreed to wait for Noah to wake up before making any move.

Yet, the upper tier turtle didn't agree to that silent agreement. The leader hissed when it noticed the presence of a being that could match its sheer power. The creature wanted a challenge to settle the ownership of the floor right away, but June's figure filled its reptilian eyes before it could charge ahead.

"What are you trying to do?" June asked as crackling noises mixed with her voice.

"Move away," The leader shouted. "I'll be the first to face that strong presence. You'll have your chance if I die."

"Do you want to mess up the state of the floor again?" June questioned.

"What if defeating that presence is the key to leaving the floor?" The upper tier turtle responded.

"What if challenging it sends us back to the previous one?" June continued. "You don't understand anything of these matters, and I'm quite lost too. We can only wait to see if Noah can uncover more than us."

"What are you asking me to do?" The leader snorted. "My pack is exhausted, and the same goes for your group. Do you want us to wait here while our condition worsens?"

"That's better than risking to go through the previous events again," June replied. "I believe you don't want to see your pack suffering huge losses for a second time."

The upper tier turtle didn't know what to say. It wanted to complain that Noah was to blame its pack's losses, but that would only bring the tension back, which wouldn't help anyone.

"Besides, it's not your pack and my group," June continued. "We are all members of the same organization now."

The leader didn't like the comment, but it let it pass. June wasn't exactly insulting the creature, and her words also spoke the truth.

"Though it's a pity," June laughed. "I would have liked to have a round or two with you, but our battle would probably mess things up for the floor. The surface won't survive if even a thin strand of our presence reaches it."

The upper tier turtle could only agree with that statement. The prairie had only materials in the human ranks. The magical beasts wouldn't be able to eat it otherwise. The chunk of weak matter existed in one of the most powerful and complicated structures the higher plane had ever existed, and no one could find the reason behind that strange event.

"You are one crazy human," The leader sneered before voicing a soft hiss that made its underlings retreat inside their shells.

"And my man spent countless years studying creatures like you," June sighed when she saw that the upper tier turtle had also retreated inside its shell. "I guess we are perfect for each other."

June ended up smiling after voicing those words, and she crossed her legs to cultivate right after. Old Tyrant, Gabrielle, and Fiery Mountain followed her example and began to wait with everyone for Noah to wake up.

Years passed while the group floated among the azure sky. No one moved or made a sound. Everyone tried to remain perfectly still to avoid affecting the fourth floor with their power.

Eventually, a smile appeared on June's face. She interrupted her training only to inspect Noah opening his eyes for the first time in years.. He groaned in annoyance since his mind had yet to recover completely, but he still managed to use a loving tone when he questioned June. "What did I miss?"

Chapter 2126 - 2126. Tea

June updated Noah on what she had found, and he performed another inspection of the fourth floor afterward. Sadly, he couldn't uncover much. He found a vague connection between the filter and the area's edges, but that was it.

The house had managed to trick Noah too, and he had remained stunned in front of that feature. His superior senses were something that even the best hybrids envied, but he still failed to see the small habitation during his first inspection.

It was clear that the house was a central spot on the whole floor. The powerful presence inside it might even have something to do with the key, but Noah hesitated. He didn't know how to approach the habitation without destroying the prairie.

'We can't just stay here,' Noah thought after finding himself out of options.

"I'm going down," Noah revealed, disturbing the silence that had filled the group.

The upper tier turtle suddenly came out of its shell, and its underlings imitated it. The leader wanted to say something, but Noah preceded it. "I won't fight, probably. I want to have a talk with that being."

"What if you can't talk with it?" Fiery Mountain asked.

"There are really few things that can't understand my roars," Noah reassured.

"And we will destroy everything if it starts causing a mess," June added as a broad smirk appeared on her face.

"I'm surprised you managed to hold back," Noah joked. "You even interrupted a fight. Are you sure you didn't lose something during the teleport?"

"You can check if you are worried," June teased.

Noah's reptilian pupils sharpened as he kept his eyes on June, and she also wore a knowing smile. The two stared at each other for a few seconds, but Fiery Mountain cleared her throat before they could do anything.

"Boring," June complained while diverting her gaze.

Noah chuckled and turned to begin his descent, and his underlings took that chance to exchange whispers. Old Tyrant even sounded quite pissed about Fiery Mountain's behavior.

"Why did you interrupt them?" Old Tyrant scolded.

"Maybe she wanted to give me a chance," Gabrielle joked.

"I have just saved the entire floor," Fiery Mountain proudly announced.

"From what?" Old Tyrant asked. "The boss deserves some fun after what he had pulled off."

"Trust me on that," Fiery Mountain tried to explain. "I have never seen anything like that. I bet that our turtle friend here would have run away too."

"I can hear you," June sneered. "Don't sound so jealous."

"Can I sound jealous?" Gabrielle asked while wearing a sweet smile. "Also, a great being like Defying Demon deserves more than one-."

Gabrielle completed her line, but deafening crackling noises filled the sky and made it impossible to hear its last part. June didn't move, but her aura alone began to darken the white clouds on the floor.

"June!" Noah scolded from his position near the filter, and the crackling noises immediately went quiet.

"Do you have a death wish?!" Fiery Mountain questioned as she dispersed the fear caused by June's short outburst.

"You should stop pretending that you are still an outsider," Gabrielle declared while wearing a stern expression. "Besides, she would have already killed me if she thought that I was serious."

"You should stop holding back, especially in front of the boss," Old Tyrant added while glancing at Fiery Mountain. "It will only hurt your growth to refuse to accept your new state."

"Even the turtle is accepting it," Gabrielle explained. "It might pretend to be grumpy and everything, but I'm sure that part of its mind has already submitted to Defying Demon."

The three cultivators weren't trying to keep their conversation a secret, and they wouldn't be able to do that anyway. The floor was too small, and everyone's auras mixed in the sky to create a faint membrane that allowed instant communications. A barrier might interrupt that connection, but Noah, June, and the upper tier turtle could pierce it easily.

Noah heard everything the three cultivators said, but he didn't give those words much importance. It was only normal for rank 9 experts to hate the idea of submitting to strangers, no matter how powerful they were. They wouldn't have reached that level otherwise.

Noah soon arrived right above the filter, but his distance from that structure didn't change the amount of energy that reached the surface. Its efficiency was incredible, and it even made him desire to test its limits.

Still, Noah held back from doing anything reckless. His mind had yet to recover completely, and the turtles' condition was far from ideal. He wanted to avoid creating problems even if he could fix them later since it would prolong their stay inside the fourth floor.

'How do I even get to the house without breaking everything?' Noah wondered as he flew until he was right above the small habitation.

The existence inside the house could very well be another trapped being, and the magical beasts in the human ranks might be a consequence of its power. Yet, that felt unlikely since the entire floor seemed to want to portray the scenery that only the Mortal Lands could have.

In the end, Noah felt forced to perform a few risky tests. He created a small version of the dark world and activated the workshops to make them divide his dark matter countless times. There was a limit to how weak his higher energy could get, but he relied on his potential to go past them.

The ethereal blackness didn't like that project. Its purpose was to empower. Noah could find a loophole by improving the workshops, but the potential stopped giving power after they managed to divide the higher energy past its limits for a while.

The seventh rank was the lowest Noah could reach, which remained far from ideal. A tiny part of the prairie could survive if he could contain the influence released by that weakened energy, but most of the environment would still crumble due to its sheer weight.

'This won't do,' Noah sighed before dispersing his creation and changing approach.

His dark matter left his figure and flew down to create a thin layer that began to hover right above the filter. Noah carefully pushed it to make it touch the incredible structure, and his higher energy started to imitate its functions.

The filter transformed part of the dark matter in the tiny tendrils that reached the surface, but most of the black layer remained in place to study the structure. Little by little, Noah's higher energy fused with the ethereal blanket that covered the entirety of the prairie.

Noah would be able to take control of that strange structure soon, but something suddenly began to move. A hole opened on the filter, and the edges of that cavity stretched downward to land on the prairie. The house soon remained outside that layer, which allowed Noah to reach it without resorting to challenging approaches.

'Is it inviting me?' Noah wondered. 'What if I never threatened to take control of the filter?'

The answers to Noah's questions probably were inside the house, and he didn't hesitate to approach it. The small entrance opened on its own when Noah landed in front of it, revealing an almost empty room.

Noah stepped forward, and his eyes immediately fell on the figure sitting at a short table placed over a praying mat. The old man there was playing with a tea set, and Noah noticed that a fuming cup was already on his opposite side.

"Were you waiting for me?" Noah asked as he walked toward the table.

The house remained in one piece because its insides featured materials in the divine ranks. That detail had been impossible to sense from the outside, which made Noah curious about the inscriptions required to prevent that valuable fabric from making the magical beasts on the prairie go crazy.

"Only after you decided to respect the floor," The old man replied calmly, and a faint laugh even followed those words.

"What would have happened if I destroyed everything?" Noah asked.

"I would have disappeared only to return after many years," The old man explained and responded to one of Noah's questions.. He was part of the floor, so one of the steps to clear to find the key.

Chapter 2127 - 2127. Eyes

Noah sat, but his senses scanned the room and the areas on the fourth floor during the process. Everything was highly peculiar. The house had two layers separated by a wide array of inscriptions that worked as glue. Its insides featured materials in the divine ranks, while its outsides' fabric was in the human ranks.

The array of inscriptions between the materials at different levels prevented them from affecting each other. It even blocked the pressure and smell of the fabric in the divine ranks to avoid unleashing chaos among the magical beasts when the house was under the filter.

The house was now outside of the filter, exposed to the heavy auras of Noah's companions, but a barrier had appeared over its exterior surface to stop that pressure. The building could exist on both sides of that incredible structure, and Noah was only starting to appreciate its qualities.

The tea set, the mat, and even the table were divine items capable of enduring his pressure. Yet, the actual liquid inside his fuming cup and the teapot was a material in the human ranks. Moreover, the array of strange inscriptions that Noah had seen in the house's walls didn't exist there.

'How can it even remain in one piece next to divine items?' Noah wondered as he picked up the cup and looked at the brownish liquid.

The scent that reached his nostrils was pleasant. Noah could sense his instincts telling him to drink the tea, but that only made him more suspicious about the whole situation.

How could a liquid in the human ranks even tingle his instincts? How could it survive in his presence? Noah was a being that radiated destruction with his sole existence, but the tea seemed immune to his influence. It didn't even shake as his aura continued to escape his figure.

"How do I get past this floor?" Noah asked after putting the cup down.

"You should drink the tea now that it is hot," The old man suggested.

Noah had no intention to follow those orders. The Cursed Labyrinth was too strange, and it had already proven that it was capable of subverting his expectations and the knowledge accumulated throughout countless years in the higher plane.

The magical plants on the second floor could infect rank 9 cultivators even if their power couldn't touch those high realms. The infective energy came from an upper tier creature, which gave sense to the whole event, but Noah didn't know whether the Labyrinth had something similar there.

Noah had obviously checked the dimension hidden under the fourth floor. There was nothing there. He had only seen the same azure sky and fewer clouds, which would generally eliminate the presence of a hidden threat. However, he didn't trust the Labyrinth enough to believe it had such fixed rules.

"I'm not here for tea," Noah responded as he tried to inspect the old man again.

The mysterious figure inside the house had been the first target of Noah's inspection, but he couldn't discover anything. The old man had a gentle face covered with wrinkles, an almost bald head with few strands of white hair, and an unkempt grey beard. The color of his eyes was impossible to guess since he kept them half-closed all the time, and his green robe matched the color of the prairie.

The old man's appearance was clear, but his presence felt ethereal. Noah wouldn't have problems inspecting beings in different dimensions or realms at his current level, but that figure was strange. He barely existed, which made it impossible for him to discern his actual state.

"Why are you here?" The old man asked. "The Cursed Labyrinth attracts beings for various reasons, and you are definitely interesting."

"Interesting how?" Noah asked without giving any answer.

"Why did you come here looking for allies?" The old man continued as a gentle smile appeared on his face.

Noah's reptilian pupils sharpened, but he remained calm. He had already understood that the old man was a force that belonged to the Labyrinth. It felt almost normal for him to know a lot about the situation.

"How do I get you?" Noah eventually questioned as a cold smile appeared on his face.

"Me? Why would you even want me?" The old man laughed.

"I like tea," Noah joked. "I need someone who can make it in my organization."

"That's a lie," The old man continued to laugh.

"You haven't been honest either," Noah stated.

Silence fell between the two. The tea in Noah's cup eventually became cold and stopped releasing its tempting scent. The old man sighed at that sight, but he promptly took another cup from the set and poured the warm drink.

"You should drink the tea when it's hot," The old man suggested.

"I can't get to the next floor by destroying everything, right?" Noah wondered.

"I'm afraid that will only slow you down," The old man explained. "You should probably avoid that."

"Why?" Noah asked.

"Some of your companions aren't too happy about the wait," The old man revealed.

"I can always kill all of them if they stir some trouble," Noah declared.

"I'm sure you could," The old man replied, "But that would go against your goal."

"You said that I was looking for allies," Noah corrected. "I never confirmed that."

"But that's the reason behind your trip to the Labyrinth," The old man stated. "The world knew that Heaven and Earth were becoming too strong. Their opponents needed a chance to improve to restore the balance."

"What do you know about Heaven and Earth?" Noah asked.

"That's the wrong question, young monster," The old man replied.

"I haven't been called "young" in ages," Noah chuckled.

"But you are young in my eyes," The old man declared.

"Show me your eyes," Noah requested.

"No, they must remain like this," The old man explained. "They lose themselves in reality when they open, and they create too many dreams when they are closed. Like this, I can explore the realm between the two."

"But you'll never be anywhere," Noah added as his arm rose.

Noah wanted to force the old man's eyes open, but he interrupted his movement right away. Destroying the whole floor wasn't a solution, so using his brute strength wouldn't help either.

"You aren't a brainless monster," The old man commented.

"What happens if you open your eyes?" Noah asked.

"The path to the next floor becomes real," The old man revealed.

"How do I open them?" Noah questioned.

"You can't open them," The old man explained. "Only I can."

"Open your eyes," Noah ordered through a growl that used a tinge of his pride.

"No," The old man refused. "Everything can exist as long as I remain between reality and dreams. I can serve tea in the human ranks inside cups in the divine ranks, and I can live among rank 1 magical beasts as if they were divine beings."

"I don't see any benefit in that," Noah commented.

"Because your eyes are firmly fixed on reality," The old man declared. "You don't see dreams, and you can't even comprehend the realm between the two states."

"How do I open your eyes?" Noah repeated.

"You can't open them," The old man replied.

"How do I make you open your eyes?" Noah asked.

"You must make me desire to abandon my dreams and watch only reality," The old man explained.

Chapter 2128 - 2128. Dream

Everything made little sense, but Noah tried his best to study the situation anyway. He had vaguely understood what was happening, but many doubts still filled his mind, and a few of them were too important to ignore.

"What's your name?" Noah asked.

"Why would I have a name?" The old man replied.

"Because you aren't a creation of the Cursed Labyrinth," Noah stated.

"And what would I even be?" The old man asked.

"I don't know," Noah admitted. "The Labyrinth is powerful enough to contain powerful beings, but its environments are too diverse to come from a single expert. The existence of multiple creators can explain this feature, but why would various rank 9 cultivators even decide to build something like this?"

"So?" The old man asked.

"So, you probably are a real existence," Noah explained. "I don't know if you are one of the creators, a shadow of that powerful expert, or a cultivator they have trapped here. Still, I think you are a real living being, but your world prevents me from studying you."

"I don't see your point," The old man stated.

"I didn't hear your name," Noah repeated.

"What if I forgot it?" The old man questioned.

"Recall it then," Noah ordered.

"It doesn't work like that," The old man explained.

"Dream about recalling it," Noah continued.

A flicker ran through the old man's half-closed eyes. They didn't open nor close, but something definitely happened, and Noah didn't miss it.

"You are interesting," The old man announced. "I did recall it."

"What's your name?" Noah asked.

"What's yours?" The old man responded.

"Noah Balvan," Noah exclaimed without showing any hesitation. "A good friend granted me the title "Defying Demon", so you can use that too. Still, I'll also accept boss, leader, and chief."

The old man laughed, but he ignored the last part of Noah's statement. Still, he didn't forget to reply to his previous question. "I'm Dream Lord Pellio. Nice to meet you."

"The pleasure is mine, Pellio," Noah exclaimed. "Now, open your eyes."

"It doesn't work like that," Pellio responded.

"How does it work?" Noah questioned.

"I need to decide to watch only reality to open them," Pellio explained.

"I don't want you to stop dreaming," Noah revealed.

"Why is that?" Pellio asked.

"The dreams are part of your world, right?" Noah declared. "I need a valuable ally, not an injured pawn."

"Why are you so sure that I can help you?" Pellio laughed.

"I'm not," Noah admitted. "I'll just have you make tea for my entire organization if this doesn't work out."

"That's flattering," Pellio exclaimed.

"It's far from flattering," Noah chuckled, "Except for the part when you'd belong to my organization anyway."

"You are arrogant," Pellio stated.

"Among other things," Noah joked.

"You still haven't changed my mind about my eyes," Pellio reminded.

"I don't want to do that," Noah declared. "There must be a reason behind your current state. I want to hear it first."

"What if I don't remember it?" Pellio questioned.

"Dream about the reason," Noah ordered.

Pellio's half-closed eyes flickered again, but his gentle smile darkened afterward. His face moved away from the table and Noah for the first time since the beginning of their conversation. He pointed his gaze at the ceiling, but Noah knew that he wasn't actually trying to see.

"You can't look at the creators with your eyes in that state," Noah commented.

"How did you know that I was searching for the creators?" Pellio asked.

"You have started to leak killing intent," Noah stated.

"No, I didn't," Pellio corrected.

"My tea became hot again," Noah explained. "I guess your dreams can't suppress your power, not completely."

Pellio's gentle smile returned when he noticed Noah's fuming cup. He appeared amused to see that his aura could still affect the material world.

"You won't force me to open my eyes by prying into my history," Pellio stated.

"How did you end up here?" Noah asked.

"I didn't," Pellio revealed. "The creators put me here."

"So, there's more than one," Noah commented.

"That's obvious, isn't it?" Pellio declared. "I would have dreamt a way out of here already otherwise."

"I won't let you kill them," Noah pointed out.

"I might open my eyes for the chance to kill them," Pellio teased.

"Why would I care?" Noah chuckled. "I need them too. You alone aren't enough against Heaven and Earth."

"Do you only care about Heaven and Earth?" Pellio questioned.

"They have forced me to prioritize them," Noah explained. "I didn't initially care too much, but the final battle is coming, and I need allies to fight it."

"Some might see your search for allies as an expression of weakness," Pellio mocked.

"Maybe," Noah admitted. "However, none of you would have even dared to stand before me if I had the chance to cultivate for so long. The sole fact that I can play a role in the final battle is an expression of my power."

"You are arrogant," Pellio stated.

"I'm also the strongest type of being in the whole world," Noah added.

"Arrogant might not be enough to describe you," Pellio laughed.

"That wasn't arrogance," Noah corrected. "There is no arrogance in truth."

"Why can't you defeat Heaven and Earth by yourself then?" Pellio wondered.

"I don't have enough time to reach their level," Noah explained.

"So, are you gathering allies to buy yourself some time?" Pellio asked.

"Something like that," Noah admitted. "Heaven and Earth are strong, and their assets go beyond my knowledge. I will surpass them, but I can't win on my own."

"You might be a good leader," Pellio commented.

"Why did the creators put you here?" Noah asked.

"We used to be enemies," Pellio revealed. "I think we killed each other's bloodlines multiple times, so our grudges didn't fade in front of Heaven and Earth."

"Well, you are allies now," Noah exclaimed.

"How can you decide that?" Pellio questioned.

"Because you all belong to the same organization now," Noah stated, "My organization."

"You couldn't force me to open my eyes," Pellio commented. "You won't be able to make the creators join you."

"You won't know unless you open a path for the next floor," Noah teased.

"Will you leave if I open it?" Pellio asked.

"Yes, but only if you come with me," Noah declared.

"I don't want to leave," Pellio stated.

"I don't care," Noah chuckled. "I need your power, so you'll come. The same goes for the creators. The final battle is upon us, so everyone has to play a part."

"You can't force others to fight for you," Pellio sighed.

"I can force you," Noah responded. "I will force the creators."

"How would you force me to fight?" Pellio questioned.

"You lost your dream, so I'll give you mine," Noah explained as he pressed two fingers on his forehead and took out a lump of black mental waves.

"How do you know that I've lost my dream?" Pellio asked.

"Because you would be out of here otherwise," Noah stated.

"I told you that I couldn't get out even with my dreams," Pellio reminded.

"They were the wrong dreams then," Noah commented.

"How would you know that?" Pellio asked.

"Take my dream, Dream Lord Pellio," Noah ordered.

Pellio hesitated, but a strange force attracted him toward that ethereal black lump. Noah's mental energy was radiating something that he had long since abandoned and forgotten. It carried a primordial desire to improve that didn't listen to reason or pain.

Pellio ended up reaching for the lump of mental energy, and his eyes closed completely as a simple dream filled his vision.. He saw a small black blade shooting toward the sky and creating a hole in its white fabric.

Chapter 2129 - 2129. Intentions

"That's too much," Pellio exclaimed as he lost himself in Noah's dream.

The simple scene of the sword piercing the sky had accompanied Noah for a long time. It had been the foundation behind the Elemental Forging method and one of the strongest expressions of his ambition.

Noah could have tampered with the scene given to Pellio. He could have added his mature view of the world, his experience, and the various improvements he had made to his existence to add more power to his dreams.

However, Noah didn't change anything in that vision. Dreams were supposed to be unreasonable. They didn't need any attachment to reality, so Pellio could experience the simple form that Noah's ambition had taken when he was a mere human cultivator.

The dream didn't make any sense, but it didn't need to. Noah had dreamt about piercing the sky when he didn't know anything about the actual structure of the world. He wasn't even aware of the existence of a higher plane. Yet, he had desired to create a hole in what he saw as nothing more than a prison anyway, and Pellio experienced that seemingly boundless will.

"You were only a mere human," Pellio commented.

"That's the point of dreams, isn't it?" Noah laughed.

"But this isn't a dream," Pellio exclaimed as his eyes remained closed. "This is a curse applied on someone with no power."

"I have power now," Noah replied.

"How did you even survive?" Pellio asked. "How did you avoid being crushed by the weight of your ambition?"

Noah shrugged his shoulders. He wasn't there to talk about his life. He had gone through so much, but he had survived through sheer determination and ruthlessness. Describing that would take too long, and Noah preferred Pellio to reach his own conclusions.

After all, Noah had given Pellio his dream to trigger a reaction inside the expert. Noah didn't really care about the eyes' state as long as his new companion remained useful. He wasn't there to help anyone. He only wanted allies.

Pellio played the dream multiple times. He couldn't explain how someone in the human ranks could give birth to such a strong feeling. It felt impossible, but Noah was right in front of him.

Noah saw Pellio's eyes moving left and right under his closed eyelids. He sensed the expert's desire to open them, but he didn't say anything. Pellio had to make that decision on his own.

"Do I really have to hold back against the creators of the Labyrinth?" Pellio eventually asked as his gentle smile replaced his surprised expression.

"At least until I shatter the sky," Noah exclaimed. "Besides, I have the vague sensation that you aren't the same expert they have imprisoned here."

"I have indeed changed," Pellio sighed. "I should consider myself lucky to be alive."

Pellio sighed again before pointing his face at Noah. His eyelids trembled, and he slowly began to lift them. Noah soon became able to see Pellio's eyes, and the changing color of his irises immediately attracted his attention.

Pellio's eyes didn't have a fixed color. His irises weren't even circular either. They had the shape of an uneven mass that launched tiny flares on the sclera. They resembled small tentacles that changed shades every second.

"How is reality?" Noah joked.

"Limiting as always," Pellio responded while moving his eyes across the room, "But also true."

"What do you want to make true then?" Noah asked.

"I still have your ambition running through my head," Pellio admitted. "I think I want to destroy the sky."

"That's good," Noah stated, "But that's my dream. I think it's time to recover yours."

"My dream lies outside the Cursed Labyrinth," Pellio explained.

"Let's get out then," Noah ordered.

"Yes, boss," Pellio exclaimed, and the house instantly vanished.

June and the others didn't miss that change. Noah and Pellio appeared in the open, but the environment continued to transform. The sky and the prairie started to flow toward Pellio's eyes, leaving nothing but black areas on the fourth floor.

The magical beasts, the clouds, the filter, and even the dimension hidden under the floor vanished. The group found themselves among complete blackness, and only the separate reality's edges remained in their place to remind everyone that they were still inside the Cursed Labyrinth.

"Why did you even create such a strange environment?" Noah asked as he straightened his position.

"It was an old memory," Pellio revealed. "I could only lose myself in better times after remaining stuck here for so long."

"You aren't free yet," Noah laughed.

"That's why I've decided to follow you," Pellio exclaimed. "I need you to retrieve my dream."

"Are you using me then?" Noah asked.

"Of course," Pellio admitted. "Do you have a problem with that?"

"Not at all," Noah stated. "I would have found it strange otherwise."

"I'll decide if I want to join your organization after leaving the Labyrinth," Pellio explained.

"You don't get it, do you?" Noah chuckled. "You have already accepted my ambition. You are part of my organization whether you want it or not."

Pellio smiled but didn't answer. He knew that Noah was probably right. His dreams couldn't find a way out of the floor back then, but he could see it clearly now. He only needed to glance at the blackness to understand what to do.

"What's happening?" The upper tier turtle asked while shooting toward Noah.

June and the others imitated the upper tier turtle, and Pellio's figure inevitably attracted their attention. They wanted to study the expert, but they found themselves unable to uncover anything about his power.

Noah was in the same situation as his companions, but he knew the reason behind that strange feature. Pellio wouldn't regain his world until he left the Cursed Labyrinth. Still, he could call upon part of his power since his influence spread far past reality.

"He is opening the path," Noah limited himself to explain. "He is Pellio. He makes tea."

Pellio laughed loudly as his eyes closed. The blackness started to tremble, and the iconic force of the Labyrinth began to envelop the group. The structure tried to teleport everyone in different places, but Noah unfolded the dark world to keep everyone close.

The dark world struggled to gain a grasp of Pellio's figure, but the latter fixed the issue. The edges of his body condensed into the fabric of reality and allowed Noah to contain him through his technique.

'He definitely is a solid stage cultivator,' Noah commented in his mind as he inspected the transformations of the floor. 'The same should go for the creators of the Labyrinth. I guess I need to reach the liquid stage before leaving this structure.'

Noah had no intention to fall prey to the whims of stronger existences, and his solution was pretty simple. He would improve before meeting the creator so that they would be forced to follow him.

A piercing gaze fell on his figure while he remained immersed in those ambitious thoughts. Noah turned toward the source of that sensation and smiled when he found June wearing a confident smile.. She had understood what was going through his mind, and she had every intention to follow him.

Chapter 2130 - 2130. Tunnels

The Cursed Labyrinth's teleporting force led Noah and the others into a narrow environment that forced him to tinker with the laws of space inside the dark world. He could only see rocky brownish walls when the environment in his vision stabilized, and a single turtle was enough to fill the available space that they encircled.

Noah's understanding of space allowed the pack and his companions to fit inside the condensed dark world, but the exploration of the area remained a problem. June and the others couldn't move freely inside his technique even if he stretched the space-time array differently depending on who occupied a specific spot. Also, the upper tier turtle didn't hesitate to voice complaints.

"What are these constraints?" The upper tier turtle hissed. "How can I help if I can't cross this short area quickly?"

"You can't help," Noah responded as he tried to ignore the hisses echoing throughout his dark world.

"You won't even fit inside this tunnel. How do you plan on following us?"

"I will expand the tunnel," The leader proudly announced.

"Don't you remember the talk about destroying the floors?" Noah asked. "Do you really want to risk starving for more years?"

"Surviving these restrains only makes me hungrier!" The upper tier turtle declared.

Noah sighed in front of that statement. His understanding of space fused with his dark world created an almost perfect environment. It would be hard to tell the difference from the outside world due to how seamlessly he had stretched the space-time array.

However, the leader was a magical beast in the upper tier. Its very body opposed that foreign force since it applied adverse effects on its ability to move freely.

"I have a solution, but you won't like it," Noah eventually offered.

The turtles tested Noah's suggestion, but their complaints immediately reached his mind. He had absorbed them inside the space created by his black crystal, the same area he used as a storage device. The place was very similar to the separate reality, so the creatures didn't suffer from his suppression, but they didn't like to be inside Noah.

Snore, Night, Duanlong, Shafu, and the Demonic Sword did everything in their power to convince the turtle that their current location was the best solution to their problems. However, the upper tier leader was too stubborn and prideful to accept its new situation.

Noah didn't have other options, so he sent waves of dark matter toward the pack to appease their hunger. The horned turtles didn't even try to hold back, which ended up weighing on Noah's ethereal world, but he preferred that over having to hear their relentless complaints.

After the turtles were dealt with, Noah retrieved the dark world and let his companions roam freely through the area. They were inside a narrow tunnel that seemed to stretch endlessly, but branches eventually appeared as the group moved forward.

The layout of the fifth floor was rather messy. The direction of each tunnel seemed to have a deeper meaning, but Noah and the others couldn't uncover anything from their short exploration.

The tunnels were empty, and the laws inside their rocky fabric didn't carry anything specific. Still, that was a hint that the four cultivators and Noah didn't miss. Only formations and similar structures could have those incomplete true meanings.

The dark world helped Noah and the others keep track of their path, which eventually brought worries. The Labyrinth's floors didn't have fixed sizes, but they had never been too big. Still, the tunnels stretched in multiple directions, and they often forced the group to return on paths already crossed numerous times.

The experts' speed and the tunnel's emptiness allowed the group to move quickly, so the structure's size failed to scare them away. Still, it soon became clear that the fifth floor was bigger than the previous, and other problems also appeared as the exploration continued.

Pillars made of a metallic material unfolded on the group's path from time to time. Noah and the others exchanged ideas whenever they found them, but the lack of clear clues always left them unable to reach proper conclusions.

Noah initially used the pillars to make his map of the tunnels more accurate, but he soon realized that they didn't work in his favor. The exploration often forced the group to go back on their tracks, but that put them in front of a different layout at times.

It took the group a while to understand that only the pillars remained still, and reaching them even triggered the changes in the layout. The tunnels moved whenever Noah and the others approached one of the metallic structures, and those transformations spread in every direction. They tested that aspect multiple times in the hope of finding a pattern, but the floor didn't have anything similar.

The theory behind the fifth floor was relatively simple. Tunnels seemed to fill the whole area, and pillars stood in fixed spots among that array of rocky passages.

Finding a pillar changed the layout of the entire floor, making the creation of an accurate map pointless. Noah still kept track of his path through the dark world, but his focus moved from the tunnels to his current position since the former were unreliable. Of course, he made sure to mark the location of each pillar since they were the only fixed structures in the area.

Noah eventually felt the need to break everything and see what remained intact after his destruction. The pillars were upper tier items, while the tunnels had fabric at various levels. All the rocks were still in the divine ranks, but they couldn't block an eventual attack launched by the group.

June and Gabrielle prevented Noah from moving to violent approaches, and Fiery Mountain soon joined them in that request. The three experts had started to make some sense out of the various tunnels after crossing them for a long time. They had begun to see a pattern in a structure that did its best to modify its layout.

"The pillars must be the cores of a formation," June explained when Noah questioned her about the matter. "They are obviously unusual as core since they don't carry or spread energy useful for the array. Still, their general behavior belongs to that category."

"What about the tunnels?" Noah asked.

"They must be the lines of the formation," June guessed.

"How can a formation remain active after modifying its structure so many times?" Noah continued.

"That's the peculiarity of this formation, at least in theory," June declared. "There are actually two formations in place, and the pillars are enough to keep the first always active. Look."

June took the small crystal of dark matter hovering above Noah and put it between them. Noah enlarged the structure to make the map inside it more visible, and June created a copy with her sparks.

"We know that getting close to the pillars causes a change in the layout, right?" June stated. "Yet, the combinations aren't infinite. We have seen some tunnels repeating themselves even after forcing the layout to transform a few times."

Noah understood what June wanted to say. Similar ideas had appeared inside his mind after witnessing a repetition in the tunnel's layout. There could be a winning combination, but his lack of knowledge in the field would still force him to test every possible version until he found a solution.

June was different, and the same went for Gabrielle. Fiery Mountain eventually saw herself overwhelmed by the task's difficulty, but her two companions continued the exploration and tried to make some sense out of that chaotic environment.

As for Pellio, he spent most of the time on a floating mat right behind Noah. The expert poured tea non-stop, and he seemed to have no intention to help with the exploration.