

Demonic 2151

Chapter 2151 - 2151. Impossible

Vesuvia had already revealed some inconsistencies with the ninth floor's structure. The place had to exist inside Heaven and Earth's domain, which required something more than formations or inscriptions to remain hidden.

The different space-time array and Cursed Reality's power could probably do the trick, but Heaven and Earth would eventually notice the Labyrinth anyway. After all, as long as something existed, the rulers could find it, especially if it remained in their domain.

Still, countless years had passed, but the Cursed Labyrinth had remained hidden. It didn't matter how many powerful experts had ended up on its floors. It didn't matter how much energy Cursed Reality stole from the higher plane. Heaven and Earth didn't find the imposing and spectacular structure.

There had to be an incredible power at work to keep everything hidden. Cursed Reality's world seemed to deal with the space-time array, so Noah viewed him only as a partial culprit.

Emperor and Queen were on the list, and Noah had even considered them, but the reactions triggered by his attacks showed different conclusions. The starry sky was beyond peculiar, and Noah felt to have found an explanation beyond its nature.

Noah had seen many things in his long life. He had studied the various states that the "Breath" could take, and he had even found himself in front of the non-world. He knew a lot about energy, laws, and matter in general. Many experts would kill to have his knowledge.

That knowledge allowed Noah to understand that the starry sky had something that went beyond separate realities, dimensions, and formations. The non-laws would clash with the nature of the Labyrinth, so he didn't consider them.

Only one possibility remained after exploring every option. The faint familiarity that Noah had experienced during his offensive also helped him reach that conclusion. Cursed Reality had most likely used Pellio's power to hide the Labyrinth from Heaven and Earth.

The power of dreams was unclear, and Noah couldn't claim to know much about it since he had never studied Pellio's world. However, he had seen what the expert could accomplish in his weaker form. Pellio could find truths out of nowhere and even create matter without requiring energy.

In theory, dreams could accomplish everything. They weren't a power connected to an expert imagination, but they had clear mental limits. Also, their fusion with someone specialized in separate realities could give birth to wonders.

"You are sharper than I thought," Cursed Reality commented, and Noah felt that a smile had appeared on that unclear figure hidden among the starry sky.

"It was only logical," Noah coldly replied. "Heaven and Earth are too powerful. You said so yourself. The world of a single solid stage expert isn't enough to keep such a giant structure hidden. Yet, two of them might do the trick."

"Don't think so little of the rulers," Cursed Reality snorted. "An army of solid stage experts might not be enough to hide my creation from Heaven and Earth."

"So, what exactly did you do?" Noah asked.

"That's simple," Cursed Reality exclaimed. "An army of experts can't pull it off, but a small group with specific powers working in harmony can."

"There's far more than harmony here," Noah contradicted. "You are using a stolen world to keep the Labyrinth in a realm that Heaven and Earth can't reach."

"That's quite insulting," Cursed Reality scoffed. "Do you think a mere stronger version of a separate reality would have been enough? It might work for a single cultivator or a small group, but my creation is far grander."

"You are dying to explain it to me," Noah laughed. "Just do it already."

Cursed Reality snorted, but he didn't contradict Noah. He let a few silent seconds pass before revealing the nature behind his blueprint. "I separated part of my world and fused it with Pellio's dreams to create a stronger power."

Noah couldn't hide his surprise. The answer actually left him speechless. He believed that Cursed Reality had simply permeated the whole Labyrinth and the separate reality with Pellio's power, but that explanation surpassed his expectations.

Fusing two different worlds was impossible. Noah and many other existences had different aspects, but their existence remained clear. Even the edgeless ethereal blackness only had the chance to expand. Annexing different meanings would only destabilize its power.

Heaven and Earth had succeeded in that project, but they had paid a hefty price, and they didn't even manage to obtain stable results. Moreover, the rulers had to fuse two different systems to force everything together. They were both part of the universe and existences that grew at its expenses.

However, Cursed Reality claimed to have succeeded in the impossible. He had fused two different worlds without creating instabilities or losing his true self. That achievement would put him above Heaven and Earth if he had told the truth.

"Don't look so stunned," Cursed Reality scolded. "The process has been more troublesome than you think, and even the results have been quite disappointing. That path is flawed, but I decided to keep it since it fulfilled my requirements."

"How can you remain yourself?" Noah asked. "You should be riddled with instabilities and personality issues."

"I didn't fuse Pellio's world to my existence," Cursed Reality explained. "I took a piece of my world and forced it to infect Pellio's power."

"Did you ruin two worlds just to keep the Labyrinth hidden?" Noah questioned.

Worlds were deep but relatively simple structures. They were the culmination of an expert's journey. Still, they were also frail.

Cutting away part of a world would make it lose all the experiences that had led to the creation of that chunk of power. The experts could refill those gaps, but they would never be able to achieve something identical to what they had severed.

Of course, that led to instabilities. Cultivators and hybrids couldn't add random powers or aspects to their world, even if their level and laws suited their existence. Those added pieces would always lack the initial harmony achieved with the breakthrough, and no amount of training could restore it.

Cursed Reality didn't only sever part of his world. He had also forced it to fuse with Pellio's power. He had ruined his journey and prevented Pellio from regaining his previous level for the sole sake of keeping the Labyrinth hidden.

"I didn't ruin anything," Cursed Reality shouted. "I won't hide it. I had to overcome my limits multiple times to complete the project, but I'm a genius, the greatest genius in the higher plain, so I eventually succeeded."

"How?" Noah couldn't contain his curiosity.

"I've created a separate reality with specific rules," Cursed Reality explained. "Well, multiple separate realities with different rules. The first had to preserve the integrity of my world even if I severed part of it. The second had to contain Pellio's power. The third had to make sure that the fusion was possible. The fourth had to create the conditions for the fusion. The fifth..."

Cursed Reality's explanation went on for a long time. In short, he had piled on multiple separate realities with simple rules to make sure that his insane project wouldn't backfire.

The dark world couldn't accomplish the same feats. Noah could create similar conditions when he used his technique inside Shafu, but Cursed Reality didn't stop to a single environment.. He had bent the very nature of the universe to make the impossible possible.

Chapter 2152 - 2152. Hole

Noah's respect for Cursed Reality only increased as he reviewed the explanation. The expert had piled on various environments with different rules to make sure that the Labyrinth remained hidden, but his efforts didn't stop there.

According to the explanation, Cursed Reality had preserved the state of his world through his creations' rules. Still, he had also made sure not to ruin Pellio's power in the process. It seemed that he had some plans for the tea-brewing maniac, and Noah decided to use that point to his advantage.

"Why did you preserve Pellio's world?" Noah asked. "I'm sure you would have obtained a far stronger effect if you just sacrificed it."

"I don't need to explain my reasons anymore," Cursed Reality snorted. "You are hopeless if you still fail to understand my magnificence."

"I do understand it," Noah corrected. "That's the issue. You could have avoided the trouble of creating two to three additional separate realities if you gave up on Pellio's world. Yet, you didn't."

"So?" Cursed Reality asked.

"So, you want him to retrieve his world at some point," Noah answered. "You want Pellio to join the final battle."

Silence fell in the area, but the interest of the army intensified. Vesuvia also felt curious about the matter. After all, she knew that the relationship between Pellio and the other creators was complicated.

"My goals are noble," Cursed Reality eventually announced. "Petty grudges have no place in the final battle. We must go past them to win against Heaven and Earth."

"There is nothing noble in imprisoning entire armies of experts," Noah contradicted.

"My Labyrinth isn't a prison," Cursed Reality repeated. "It's pointless to go out in your current state anyway. You would only become cannon fodder for Heaven and Earth's forces right now."

"That's not up to you to decide," Noah coldly replied.

"And what can you do about it?" Cursed Reality asked. "You are stuck here now. I suggest you start thinking about how to use the next years. The final battle is upon us, so I wouldn't waste time complaining."

Noah obviously didn't like the situation. He studied his surroundings and relied on the entirety of his superior senses to find flaws. He even called upon his violent thoughts to find openings to exploit, but his inspection led nowhere.

The starry sky wasn't only seamless. It was also firm, resilient, and boundless. Its power didn't come from defensive arrays or special formations. Noah was simply in front of a higher plane, and he lacked the strength to pierce it.

"Don't appear so lost, Defying Demon," Cursed Reality sighed. "This is for your own good. I'm sure you have the potential to reach our level and maybe even go past it. Yet, the higher plane is too dangerous right now. Heaven and Earth would stop at nothing to kill you."

"I'm not lost," Noah stated as he scratched his head with the handle of the Cursed Sword. "You have spent a lot of time creating this environment, and its power is also incredible. I can't destroy it with a single attack, but I can probably create a hole."

"No, that's impossible at your current level," Cursed Reality declared. "This is my masterpiece. It's the creation of a solid stage expert who has broken past the limits of his level. You can't affect it right now."

Noah didn't need Cursed Reality's explanation to understand the power of the ninth floor. He had already faced a similar strength. The expert was like the privileged cultivators, and his state in the solid stage put him outside Noah's reach.

"Let's make a bet then," Noah suggested. "You let everyone out if I can affect your creation. How does it sound?"

"Why would I even make a bet with you?" Cursed Reality asked.

"Well, I will make a hole in this starry sky," Noah announced. "Yet, this environment is too big to crumble with that little damage. I would need to dig holes for entire millennia to pierce the ninth floor, and I don't want to remain stuck here for so long."

"You are talking as if you could affect my creation," Cursed Reality sneered.

"I definitely can," Noah declared, "Which is why it would be pointless to keep me here after proving it."

Cursed Reality fell silent, but a whisper eventually came out of his hidden figure. "That makes sense."

"I would also do you a favor," Noah continued, "You have no idea what those pigs can do to this floor. I can even force them to have their conversations in the starry sky. You wouldn't last a single year."

"I have endured that bickering couple for far longer," Cursed Reality responded.

"You are greatly underestimating the Foolery," Noah sighed. "Anyway, that's only the plan B, which I won't need as long as you accept my bet."

Cursed Reality fell silent again, but an answer arrived quite soon. "If you can cut a hole in this starry sky, it means that your power can touch solid stage cultivators. Forcing you to remain here would have no meaning in that case."

"I hope you are as noble as you claim to be," Noah laughed as he raised his swords.

"The greatest genius in the higher plane can't be a lying fraud," Cursed Reality declared.

"About that," Noah commented while potential started to flow toward his centers of powers and companions. "You, me, and a few others need to have a proper challenge for the title of the greatest genius, but that can wait for when you become my underling."

"Such arrogant words from a hybrid who has yet to prove his worth," Cursed Reality said, but Noah had stopped listening to him. The time for words was over.

Noah summoned the entirety of his power and let his ambition run freely. His companions also unleashed everything they were capable of and let the potential from the ethereal blackness fill their bodies.

The battle against Artamo had just ended, so Noah wasn't exactly at his peak. He would typically need to rest and let the drawbacks disperse to be ready for another long fight, but he had no intention to prolong that trial.

The adverse effects of the drawbacks dispersed as potential filled every corner of Noah's body and companions. He was forcing himself to ignore his limits, and the punishment for that would be heavy, but he didn't care about that now.

Noah knew his limits better than anyone else. He was aware that his world had yet to reach the weight needed to affect the universe. He was close to that level, but he remained one step short.

Waiting a few millennia would bring Noah to the realm that only privileged cultivators in the solid stage could touch. Still, a safe path to the peak had never been in his plans. Noah wanted to get out now, so he disregarded his current and future drawbacks to explode with his full power.

Noah didn't need a series of attacks. He didn't even want to wear down the ninth floor slowly. He knew that his destruction would eventually accumulate to a critical point powerful enough to affect the Labyrinth. However, that wouldn't prove anything.

Noah had to dig a hole in a single attack to prove that he could fight at the same level as the privileged cultivators in the solid stage. He couldn't achieve that result through the weight of his world, but he had something else that similar experts lacked.

Night, Duanlong, Snore, the parasite, and even Shafu came out of his figure as their ambition resonated with his potential. Their power increased and intensified, bringing all of them to the utmost limits of their current level. The fabric of space around them bent and twisted due to the immense might unleashed during the process, but that wasn't enough for Noah.

Noah called upon the entirety of the potential stored inside the ethereal blackness and sent it to all his assets. His centers of power and companions grew beyond their structural limits without reaching the weight necessary to affect the universe.

Noah and his companions couldn't turn themselves into privileged cultivators in the solid stage. Even his incredible potential couldn't achieve that feat since the ethereal blackness had yet to reach those levels.

However, the gap before that level was short, and Noah planned to break through it forcefully. His world contained far more than a single hybrid. The ethereal blackness was the home of fearful creatures that had no match inside the higher plane.

"Such a brutish method won't work against my creation," Cursed Reality commented, but his words ended up claiming the attention of the rank 9 Foolery.

"Brutish?" The Foolery exclaimed while munching one of Pellio's cups. "You have a long way to go, my future underling. Even Xavier had to acknowledge brutes, and he is the most boring cultivator in the world."

"What would that even mean?" Cursed Reality asked, but a massive wave of power suddenly filled the starry sky and forced him to divert his attention.

Noah didn't do anything special. He had simply brought the power of everything he had beyond their limits and unleashed it toward a single spot of the starry sky.. A slash, feathers, cuts, and much more had fused into a single attack that created a darker area in the starry sky.

Chapter 2153 - 2153. Result

The starry sky seemed perfectly fine. The massive discharge of energy didn't destroy anything and left the environment in its previous state, except for a small spot that stood out among the blackness.

A mere spot was nothing significant among that vast blackness. The ninth floor could probably get rid of it in no time. However, that wasn't the point of the whole event.

Cursed Reality remained silent as he inspected the darker spot that had appeared in the starry sky. The damage was barely visible, and he struggled to call it a proper hole. Noah had only forcefully affected the structure of the ninth floor.

Still, the result of the attack was undeniable. It didn't matter if the damage was insignificant. It didn't matter if Noah didn't actually reach the level of power of the solid stage privileged cultivators. He had managed to touch that realm with his blow. He had won the bet.

"I'll rest now if you don't mind," Noah casually exclaimed while his companions and swords returned inside his figure. "I'll be in my lover's arms if you want to talk."

Noah's existence had grown extremely thin after using the entirety of his potential. Yet, his world quickly realized what he had accomplished, and new energy began to fill it.

A wave of power exploded inside Noah's ethereal blackness. New potential appeared out of nowhere and began to target the heavy drawbacks falling on his body and companions. He felt tired beyond reason, but he also knew that he had taken another step forward.

"You have gone overboard," June sighed as she spread her arms to let Noah sit on her lap. "Don't you dare think that you can leave me behind because of this."

"I'll think about it if you keep the Foolery away from me," Noah joked.

"That's impossible!" The rank 9 Foolery shouted after it reached June's side. "It's my job to protect you during your weakened state."

"It isn't wrong," June commented.

"It still feels strange to see the pig being reasonable," Noah admitted as he slid down to use June's lap as a pillow.

"I know that you are to blame for that," June stated as she began to play with Noah's hair.

"My leader can't stop talking about me," The Foolery proudly exclaimed as its gaze went on the starry sky. "I must be the most important member of our organization."

"Pellio!" Noah growled, and Pellio flew at his side in an instant.

The tea on the table on Pellio's mat distracted the rank 9 Foolery and allowed June to bring Noah on the surface without getting followed. Still, Vesuvia, the turtles, and other members of the army eventually landed around the two of them.

"Did you want some privacy?" Vesuvia teased.

"We aren't that shy," June snorted.

Old Tyrant, Fiery Mountain, and Gabrielle diverted their gazes as memories resurfaced. June and Noah weren't even close to being shy.

"I must admit that I didn't expect you to succeed," Vesuvia continued. "You are quite resourceful."

"They aren't resources," Noah corrected as Night and Snore came out of his figure. "I have promised them the sky. They will see it crumble."

Night and Snore didn't say anything, but Vesuvia saw the intelligence behind their strange eyes. Their power was also different from Noah's, which gave insights into the depth of his world. It was rare for experts to carry proper living beings as part of themselves into the ninth rank, but Noah had a series of them.

"Is this the source of your power?" Vesuvia asked. "Did you survive because they gave you the strength of multiple cultivators?"

"I've created them," Noah exclaimed. "They are my power, even if they aren't properly me."

"I thought your tendencies were more destructive," Vesuvia commented while glancing at the darker spot in the starry sky. "I noticed part of your creation, but I can't understand how an existence like you managed to develop it."

Noah didn't need to add details to his power, but he found no reason to keep them hidden from a future companion. Still, he limited himself to raising his hand and pointing at June.

"We have gone far past that," June announced without suppressing the sweetness of her tone. "You have also limited that part of you."

"I didn't have other options against the Crystal City," Noah sighed. "Besides, it's better like this. I've reached the ninth rank, so I was right."

"I remember," June shook her head. "We are almost there now."

"Almost isn't enough," Noah responded.

"Of course," June agreed, "And the sky won't be the end."

"I'd have to create a better world otherwise," Noah laughed.

"I'm sure we'll have fun without that," June immersed her hands in Noah's hair as she glanced at the starry sky. "There is too much that we don't know. We can't be the only maniacs out there."

"I'm afraid that there will be only maniacs from now on," Noah said in a helpless tone.

"Noah, it's been like this for millennia by now," June declared. "Even this old hag is hitting on you just to see our reactions."

"We'll have to see what the other couple says about us," Noah continued.

"Are they coming down?" June asked.

"No, but they will soon," Noah stated. "Cursed Reality has already lost. If the others force him to keep the Labyrinth closed, I'll just have to dig holes for a few millennia."

"No one can force me to do anything," Cursed Reality's loud voice resounded in the area as a figure began to take form among the starry sky.

An old man with short white hair and a well-kept grey beard slowly descended from the sky. His eyes were completely black, but stars shone inside them. His robe was the same. It depicted the same scenery as the ninth floor's ceiling, but the distant lights on it moved according to the expert's gestures.

A dense, heavy, and haughty aura enveloped the cultivator. His face had no wrinkles and expressed pure confidence. His cultivation level was also unmistakable. He was in the solid stage.

"So, you'll honor your part of the deal," Noah replied.

"Don't take me too lightly either," Cursed Reality snorted as he landed in front of Noah and June. "I've spent countless years perfecting the Labyrinth. Do you have any idea how long it takes to create a single separate reality? Imagine all of those needed to make this environment possible."

"I don't care," Noah said in a cold tone.

"What?" Cursed Reality complained. "Do you really want to give up on this epitome of perfection?"

"I don't care," Noah repeated. "Take this place apart and make its remains explode on the sky. I won't remain here only because you have grown too attached to your creation."

"The bet only involved your departure from the Labyrinth," Cursed Reality declared.

"You forgot my army," Noah explained. "Pellio is part of my army, and he needs his world. You can't keep the Labyrinth running without his world, can you?"

Cursed Reality didn't answer. The stars in his strange eyes converged toward a single spot and seemed to give birth to white pupils pointed at Noah.

"You know I'm right," Noah sighed as he stretched his arms to wrap them around June's waist. "Let's get this over with. The other two will want to talk to me, right? Call them already."

"There is no need for that," Emperor's voice resounded throughout the ninth floor.

"Let's have a chat, young man," Queen's voice followed.

Chapter 2154 - 2154. Chance

Emperor had the aspect of a middle-aged man with long black hair combed in a ponytail. The lace that kept it still had a few blue jewels embroiled in its fabric. His robe carried the same shades of those gems, and a perfect short beard covered his cheeks.

Queen wore similar colors, and the same went for the jewels in her blonde hair. She had a youthful appearance, but her face carried evident traces of maturity, especially when it came to her deep black eyes.

The two experts had descended from the starry sky after Noah's request, and they had taken their spot next to Cursed Reality. The area now had four solid stage cultivators at the peak of their power, but Noah and June remained at the center of that meeting.

"You are interesting, but the existence of the Cursed Labyrinth is more important," Emperor stated before anyone could say anything.

"Are you using him to protect the Labyrinth?" Noah mocked while looking at Cursed Reality. "I have overestimated you."

"I'm not hiding," Cursed Reality snorted. "This is a conversation, and the Cursed Labyrinth is a project developed by all of us. It's only normal for the others to have a chance to speak."

"I'm really curious about what she has to say," June commented while inspecting Queen. "I don't like your hair."

Queen's hair expressed a noble aura. The jewels acted as clasps for the various braids combed to create an intricate hairstyle. Instead, June's hair was the very opposite due to its messy state. The two women clearly had opposite preferences.

"Your lack of taste isn't surprising," Queen responded in a proud tone. "What do you even have on your head? Is that a spiderweb?"

"Hey, I love her hair," Noah stated.

"I can imitate it if you want," Vesuvia chuckled.

"No one asked for your opinion," June scoffed.

"She likes to do that," Queen continued. "Find your own partner in your next life."

"Please, there is no need to fight over me," Emperor sighed while ignoring the cold stare coming from Queen.

"Can we go back to the Labyrinth?" Cursed Reality asked.

"The tea is ready," Pellio stated.

"Food!" The rank 9 Foolery squealed, and the entirety of its pack amassed around Pellio's mat to drink the tea.

Old Tyrant, Gabrielle, and Fiery Mountain didn't know what to say. They had never seen so many powerful experts gathered in the same area, but their behavior was completely unexpected.

Rank 9 cultivators in the solid stage represented the very peak of the cultivation journey. Noah and June had also proven themselves to be worthy of their presence, but the group couldn't stop bickering. The final battle could arrive at any moment, but they wasted time teasing each other.

"Is idiocy the secret behind the higher ranks?" Fiery Mountain whispered.

Fiery Mountain immediately regretted voicing her question since Queen, Emperor, and Cursed Reality glared at her. They seemed ready to destroy her world, but Noah cleared his throat and claimed their attention before the situation could worsen.

"Do you let your underlings insult you so brazenly?" Emperor laughed.

"Why would I stop them?" Noah wondered. "We are idiots. The pig right there is one of my best underlings. Do you think a sane person would allow that?"

Queen wanted to crack a joke, but the Foolery suddenly began to take dumps without interrupting their tea time. The scene disgusted the expert so much that she teleported back into the starry sky in an instant.

"You definitely have poor taste," Emperor commented.

"They are a peculiar species," Cursed Reality contradicted. "The entire ninth floor will soon turn blue."

"I know," Emperor sighed, "But I wouldn't want them around anyway."

"Shall we start a real conversation now?" Noah asked.

"You made my lovely Queen run away," Emperor shrugged his shoulder.

"I'm sure I can make her come back in no time," Vesuvia giggled.

"Don't you have any mercy for your old friend?" Emperor asked.

"You do realize you are only making it hard for me, right?" Cursed Reality questioned.

"Can't I have some fun?" Vesuvia asked. "I have felt lonely during the past millennia. One of you should have stayed behind with me."

"I had the Labyrinth to handle," Cursed Reality exclaimed.

"I like to be alive," Emperor announced without showing any shame.

"Queen can be scary," Cursed Reality shook his head.

"I've had drawbacks more pleasant than this conversation," Noah cursed.

"Your woman isn't playing around either," Emperor commented.

"What are you even saying?" Noah laughed while snuggling closer to June's waist. "She is the epitome of sweetness."

June smiled, but her intense stare at the two solid stage experts carried far different feelings. There was no sweetness in that gesture. Her eyes only featured battle intent.

"Love does make you blind," Cursed Reality whispered.

"Are you done down there?" Queen's voice suddenly came out of the sky. "Get up here. I have finished the meeting room."

"You heard her," Emperor stated while turning to fly toward the source of the voice.

Cursed Reality and Vesuvia followed Emperor, and Noah and June did the same after exchanging a glance. The couple approached the sky before witnessing a sharp change in the scenery. The starry sky disappeared to make room for a vast hall with praying mats and a single short table.

The ninth floor had disappeared even if the group didn't teleport. Noah couldn't explain how Queen had achieved that feat, but he didn't shy back from approaching the table. Of course, June helped him out since he was still in the middle of his drawbacks.

"So, you want us to dismantle the Cursed Labyrinth," Queen exclaimed while taking out a jug and pouring wine into a series of cups.

"Dismantling it is only a consequence of what I want," Noah explained. "Pellio is part of my organization now. I need him to get back his world."

"Dream Lord Pellio is a vile monster," Emperor stated. "We have been enemies for countless years. He has changed after his time here, but we aren't ready to let go of our grudge."

"I'm also a vile monster," Noah declared. "Anyway, your enmity with Pellio has nothing to do with me. Hand his world back and start following me like good underlings."

Vesuvia couldn't hold back her laugh, and Cursed Reality also had to admit that the scene was quite funny. Noah had merely touched the solid stage, but he was already trying to order stronger experts around.

"The Labyrinth is a priceless resource, especially during these troubled times," Queen revealed without addressing Noah's rude words. "Heaven and Earth are doing their best to isolate and kill every force, no matter how small they are. This isn't the right time to get out."

"It doesn't sound like that to me," Noah announced. "Saving and uniting those forces should be our priority."

"Amassing an army of ants won't help against Heaven and Earth," Emperor responded.

"Let's not go after ants then," Noah suggested. "You aren't the only solid stage cultivators out there, right? Let's find the others and create a united front against Heaven and Earth."

"And you need Pellio for that," Emperor continued.

"Indeed," Noah replied. "His power can ignore reason. Finding the others will be easy with him."

"I'll be blunt," Queen sighed. "Even if we gather powerful experts in the solid stage, we would have no chance against Heaven and Earth. I'm afraid they are too strong."

"These old experts sure are scared," June said in a disappointed tone.

"Your man is one of the main reasons behind their recent surge of power," Queen scoffed. "Heaven and Earth were strong, but their confused and messy state worked to our advantage. We lost that now."

"You are seeing the situation from the wrong perspective again," Noah complained. "I have forced Heaven and Earth to evolve, so I have a chance to defeat them."

Chapter 2155 - 2155. Stance

"That might be true," Cursed Reality declared. "Your sole existence is an interesting flaw. You ignore the limits of the ranks more than others, and your influence can make your companions achieve similar results."

"But all of that takes time to show clear results," Emperor continued. "You can touch our realm, but you can't defeat us. Waiting until you get a bit stronger is the best path."

"I won't ignore the bet," Noah stated. "Your words make sense, but I didn't get so far by being reasonable. You might have forgotten how the cultivation journey works, but I didn't. I have to face dangers to improve."

"That's the issue, isn't it?" Queen asked. "The higher plane doesn't have dangers anymore. There is only Heaven and Earth now."

Noah wasn't unaware of that problem. The issue was the main reason behind the travel to the Labyrinth. The death of the life dragon, the state of the higher plane, and the lack of other areas to explore created a grim scene devoid of opportunities.

It made sense for an expert like Noah to be out of options. After all, he had touched the peak of the cultivation journey. Only exceptional solid stage cultivators, Heaven and Earth, and beings outside the sky could pose a threat to his life.

"Let's face Heaven and Earth then," Noah exclaimed. "I know the rulers. They have yet to stick to their fairness. They won't be able to express the entirety of their power, so we have a chance to win."

"Don't you care about the losses that your approach will bring?" Cursed Reality asked before turning toward Vesuvia. "I thought humanity's future would have chosen to follow a different type of leader."

"He doesn't belong to humanity," Vesuvia declared, "But he can bring changes to its future. That's the best I have achieved in the years spent trying to find solutions."

"It will be bloody," Emperor commented.

"We are no strangers to blood," Vesuvia replied. "We didn't reach these heights by playing nice."

"Artamo's experiment also failed," June joined the conversation. "It's clear that you can't stay hidden here forever."

"We aren't hiding," Emperor scoffed.

"You aren't building a force capable of going against Heaven and Earth either," Noah continued. "The turtles and Vesuvia's city are valuable assets, but you almost ruined them."

"I think he likes me," Vesuvia chuckled.

"Not now!" June and Queen shouted at the same time.

"We might be similar in the end," Emperor stated while nodding at Noah.

"Can we get this over with?" Noah almost pleaded.

"Right, you must have paid a hefty price for your previous attack," Cursed Reality exclaimed while stretching an arm above his head.

The expert's hand pierced the fabric of space in the room to reach a distant area. Noah could try to send his mental waves through that passage, but he suppressed his curiosity.

Cursed Reality quickly pulled out an old-looking jug that radiated a dense aura. He opened the item and poured its contents into a new cup before handing it to Noah.

"This isn't as tasty as Queen's wine, but it can heal most injuries," Cursed Reality explained.

"My current state isn't the result of injuries," Noah whispered while taking a sip from the cup.

The ethereal blackness began to refill its insides with potential faster than ever as soon as Noah's tongue touched the liquid. The item didn't have healing properties, but it appeared able to help any process connected to that field.

"I thought similar treasures were almost extinct," Noah admitted.

"We didn't stay still during these long years," Cursed Reality proudly announced. "It's almost impossible to find drugs or similar items capable of affecting rank 9 existences, especially those near the peak of the cultivation journey. Yet, our long lives give us a chance if we are patient."

"How much of this potion do you have?" Noah asked while gulping down the entire cup and straightening his position.

June pulled Noah back on her lap, and the two exchanged a meaningful glance. Vesuvia began to chuckle, but Cursed Reality's answer prevented the imminent crisis. "Not much. Its effects also worsen after repeated use. It can save lives, but it shouldn't."

The reason behind that statement wasn't hard to guess. Rank 9 experts were worlds. The only severe injuries that they could suffer involved the integrity of their power, so stabilizing them might lead to a weaker state.

The liquid was better for relatively mild injuries since they didn't involve actual damage to worlds. That lowered its value, but Noah still acknowledged it as a priceless resource.

"How many resources did you accumulate throughout the years?" Noah asked as he straightened his position without leaving June's torso. He basically sat between her legs while ignoring the awkward gazes of the others at the table.

"Many," Queen responded. "You might call this hiding, but we prepared for the final battle. We didn't charge ahead without a plan."

"Why didn't you attack before the situation became so troublesome?" Noah asked. "I'm sure you weren't waiting for someone like me to appear."

"Your arrogance isn't misplaced, but you are wrong," Emperor sighed. "How can we even fight Heaven and Earth unless they decide to come out of the sky?"

Noah immediately realized that the matter would be more than troublesome. The sky was immense, and its insides were under Heaven and Earth's control. The various paths and cities contained countless experts and avatars, but they weren't even part of the main problem.

An army could have the power to invade the sky and seize initial victories against Heaven and Earth. However, defeating the rulers was impossible since they could hide in an immense environment and continue to throw assets at eventual invaders.

A long siege would obviously benefit Heaven and Earth since they had accumulated resources for far longer than any other force in the higher plane. It was also unclear whether the rulers had a core that could be destroyed, so killing them couldn't be easy.

"What did you plan to do?" Queen asked without hiding her amused tone. "Did you want to charge at the sky and break everything until Heaven and Earth showed up?"

"Pretty much," Noah admitted. "They would have to come out if I make a mess. It has always worked until now."

"You are quite brutish," Cursed Reality commented.

"What's your great plan then?" Noah asked.

"That should be obvious," Emperor declared. "Heaven and Earth will be completely exposed one day. The scales of fairness would also be against them at that time. I don't have to describe the event, right?"

"The breakthrough," Noah responded.

"Exactly," Queen exclaimed. "Heaven and Earth will have to come out that day. The whole world will also be against them. It will be the perfect time for an attack. I'm sure other forces are thinking the same, which is why everyone is waiting."

Truth be told, Noah couldn't find proper reasons to reject that idea. The plan was sound. His character and requirements weren't in line with it, but he understood its perks.

"I can't remain here," Noah eventually stated without showing his previous arrogance. "I'm not ready for the final battle. I have to keep facing dangers to grow. I'll give you the time to modify the Cursed Labyrinth, but I'll leave with Pellio and the others afterward."

"Leaving to go where?" Emperor asked. "There is only sky outside of the Labyrinth."

"I want to face the other forces waiting for the final battle," Noah explained. "Also, I have valuable companions out there. I also want to have a talk with the old Heaven and Earth."

"The old Heaven and Earth?" Cursed Reality frowned.

"The orange city," Noah exclaimed. "I'm sure you have seen it."

"Of course," Queen announced. "Still, what's your relationship with it?"

"Well," Noah scratched his head, "I guess we are allies."

Queen, Cursed Reality, and Emperor remained slightly stunned to hear that. The three fell silent as they exchanged meaningful glances.. Something seemed to have changed in their stance.

Chapter 2156 - 2156. Agreement

"Why do you care about the old rulers so much?" Noah asked, even if the question was relatively self-explanatory.

The old Heaven and Earth were a powerhouse in the higher plane. Their knowledge about the rulers was only one of their strong points. They also had an entire city full of powerful inscriptions at their disposal, and their experiments with the magical beasts had only increased their overall power.

Moreover, Noah could guess that Cursed Reality would be interested in how the old rulers kept the orange city hidden from Heaven and Earth. An alliance would benefit both sides, even if the experts had to sacrifice the Labyrinth to achieve it.

"Are they dangerous?" Emperor asked.

"Of course," Noah announced. "They have even retrieved a personality. They might easily become the real final enemy."

"How did you even make them cooperate with you?" Queen questioned.

"Because I probably had something to do with the return of their personality," Noah laughed.

"Why are you so reckless?" Cursed Reality sighed.

"What can I say?" Noah shrugged his shoulders. "That bet turned out to be fine. The old rulers have been more than useful up until now."

"What happens when they betray you to take over the world?" Emperor asked.

"I kill them, obviously," Noah stated without any hesitation. "Still, they are rather promising. I'm only scared about a potential reunion with Heaven and Earth. They must also aim at something similar."

"I still have to test their lightning bolts," June reminded.

"Right," Noah exclaimed. "You might be able to reach the liquid stage if the old rulers create the right environment."

"I can do the same with the worms," June continued. "The higher plane doesn't lack chunks of the sky that we can steal. It shouldn't be hard to create the perfect training area."

"That beats chasing after Tribulations," Noah announced. "Though I'm sure something will happen once we leave the Labyrinth."

"Maybe Heaven and Earth will throw some avatars at us," June commented.

"Not really at us," Noah responded while glancing at Vesuvia. "They won't let her reappear so easily."

"Can you even fight?" June asked.

"I will challenge you if you put your partner at stake," Vesuvia chuckled.

June's eyes lit up, but her expression turned into a pout when she noticed Noah's glare. She limited herself to sigh before placing her head on his shoulder.

"Was she really going to accept?" Queen asked.

"Never give the chance to fight to a battle maniac," Noah stated. "So, I guess we have a deal. You'll dismantle the Labyrinth, and I'll lead you to the old rulers."

"You sure can't wait to leave," Emperor said.

"And you can't wait to meet the old Heaven and Earth," Noah laughed, "Even if you have yet to tell me why."

"They are valuable assets," Cursed Reality explained. "I bet every real expert would like to talk with them."

"Or add them to their army," Emperor continued. "They have definitely earned a spot as cannon fodder after putting all of us in this mess."

"You can handle all of this with them," Noah declared. "It's time, isn't it?"

Noah and June instinctively moved their gazes on Cursed Reality, and the other experts did the same. It was clear that the expert had an important role in that matter, so it was up to him to say the last word.

"Give me some time to prepare," Cursed Reality sighed. "I'll also need Pellio. I will be easier to separate the two worlds with him ready to receive his power."

The meeting ended on those lines. The experts didn't need to say anything else after everyone was on the same page. The Cursed Labyrinth would crumble, and the group would leave to find the old rulers.

Cursed Reality and Pellio had important matters to handle, so they left right away. Emperor and Queen didn't expect the departure to arrive right away, so they abandoned the ninth floor to prepare.

Vesuvia, the Foolery, the pack of turtles, and the other experts took the chance to bond a bit during the wait. Artamo's dimension and Vesuvia's city contained many cultivators, hybrids, and magical beasts that had been away from the higher plane for too long, so it didn't hurt them to exchange information with their new companions.

Noah and June didn't stay with the rest of the army. Assessing everybody and starting to influence the group's growth was probably the best option, but they wanted some privacy now that they could get it. Moreover, Noah had yet to recover completely, and June's arms were his favorite spot for that.

The couple didn't end up caught in their passion. Noah and June didn't suppress their urges, but they avoided destroying the ninth floor. The sudden appearance of the dark world told everybody that they were up to something, but no one investigated.

Time passed. The ninth floor was peaceful, but the Foolery managed to ruin it. Its resources fell in their stomachs, and blue bushes soon covered the previous variegated environment.

No one cared about that transformation, and Noah didn't bother to address the matter either. His drawbacks vanished quickly after experiencing Cursed Reality's drink, so he could focus on improving his level.

Noah knew that the breakthrough was close. Time or a relatively important feat would make him cross the narrow gap that separated him from the liquid stage.

June was in a similar situation. Her level depended on what her body could endure, and she had managed to improve it significantly in the dimension with the worms. She only needed a little more before triggering the breakthrough.

Needless to say, both Noah and June couldn't wait to get out of the Cursed Labyrinth. They liked having moments when the problems in the higher plane were only a distant thought. However, their worlds had urges, and they couldn't appease through their passion.

Emperor and Queen were the first to return to the ninth floor. Nothing had changed in their aspect, but they appeared lonely and nostalgic. It was clear that abandoning the Labyrinth was a big deal for them, but they did their best not to show that.

With the Foolery keeping Vesuvia and the others busy, Noah, June, Queen, and Emperor finally had the chance to have an earnest conversation. A few jokes still flew among them, but most of their topics remained serious.

Emperor and Queen were far different from Noah and June, but both couples had managed to make their relationship survive for countless years. That feat alone made them similar and created a friendly atmosphere.

The four spoke about their paths and shared some funny stories. It turned out that Emperor and Queen had initially been enemies in the Mortal Lands. Their feelings for each other had developed through multiple battles, leading them to establish a relationship as soon as the political environment had put them on the same side.

Emperor was relatively laid-back in the couple, while Queen liked to nag him about small things. The jewels in his lace came from her, and the same went for the matching colors of their robes.

Their worlds also had matching features, but they didn't reveal much about them. Noah and June didn't try to probe either since they felt sure that the departure from the Cursed Labyrinth would force the two experts to show their power.

The casual and relaxed conversation ended when two figures appeared in the sky. Cursed Reality had his arms crossed as he inspected Pellio. The latter wore a surprised smile, and his curious half-closed eyes ran through the transformed environment.

"I only need to complete one last step, and the Labyrinth will open," Cursed Reality exclaimed, and his words resounded throughout the ninth floor.

"There is no need for that," Pellio chuckled. "I have already dreamt about the destruction of the Labyrinth."

As soon as his line ended, cracks filled the ninth floor, and everything began to shake.. Even the starry sky started to fall apart as chunks of its blackness crumbled to give birth to a rain of shards.

Chapter 2157 - 2157. Futile

"Damnit!" Cursed Reality shouted before disappearing.

"Why are you always like this?!" Emperor cursed while shooting toward the sky.

Queen followed Emperor, while Noah and June reached the army. Vesuvia had already taken care of protecting everyone. She had created an invisible defensive membrane that the experts struggled to sense. Still, they could see how every shard changed their trajectory when they were about to fall on the occupied areas.

"What do you want me to say, old friend?" Pellio laughed as his eyes opened completely. "You can't stop a dream."

"You damned lunatic!" Emperor gritted his teeth as his aura expanded among the crumbling starry sky.

A battle seemed on the verge of unfolding, but a slash suddenly flew between Pellio and Emperor. Noah reached the area right after the event, and his army was with him.

"So," Noah exclaimed while turning toward Pellio, "How does it feel to have your world back?"

"It feels different but good," Pellio revealed as he inspected his figure. "I've changed, but I can't be anyone else."

"Did you decide where to stand then?" Noah asked as his swords appeared in his hands. "Will you follow me?"

"What happens if I say no?" Pellio wondered.

"Can't you dream the answer?" Noah asked.

Pellio's smirk broadened as his eyes closed. The world around him experienced a strange reaction, even if no energy came out of his figure. The matter and the laws shook for an instant, but nothing changed in their structure.

"I tried to dream about you as soon as I regained my world," Pellio stated. "I closed my eyes and dreamt about my future. I saw many things, but their edges were unclear."

"I thought dreams were supposed to be unclear," Noah replied.

"You are correct," Pellio announced. "However, they usually have limits connected to my existence. Those limits are gone now. I can dream things that are outside my thoughts. I can dream what I couldn't even imagine before."

"What?" Noah continued. "Does it scare you to have lost control over your power?"

"You caused this," Pellio announced as his eyes opened. "You implanted that dream in me."

"You wanted a reason to open your eyes," Noah responded. "I gave you my reason. You can take your revenge if you hate me so much."

Noah pointed his swords forward as he prepared for an eventual clash, but Pellio didn't attack. He kept his open eyes on Noah, and a defying feeling slowly filled his expression.

"I can't dream about your death," Pellio declared, "But I can't see much about your life either. Only a few experts can achieve that."

"What about Heaven and Earth?" Noah asked.

"I can see even less about them," Pellio sighed. "Their existence goes beyond my dreams."

"It seems that we have to get even stronger," Noah commented. "Do you want to see the sky crumble?"

"I have dreamt about it because of you," Pellio replied. "It's the only clear dream that doesn't come from my mind. I can see it happening over and over again, but my power has nothing to do with that vision. It's a flaw in my world."

"It's a flaw only if it doesn't happen," Noah chuckled.

"Indeed," Pellio agreed. "I guess I have to follow you to turn that vision into reality."

"Why didn't he say that sooner?" The rank 9 Foolery scoffed.

"Ooh, my friend," Pellio exclaimed at the sight of the winged pig. "I'm sure I can make even better tea now. I've dreamt about your satisfaction."

"You are forgiven!" The Foolery shouted, and its pack gathered around Pellio as soon as the flying praying mat and the table appeared under him.

"What are you even doing?!" Cursed Reality's voice resounded among the crumbling sky as his figure materialized next to Emperor and Queen. "I could have taken us out silently, but now I can't hide the destruction of the Labyrinth anymore."

The revelation didn't need further explanations. Multiple auras expanded as everyone prepared for the imminent clash. Still, the Foolery and Pellio ignored the matter and continued to drink tea.

"Are you dumb?!" Cursed Reality shouted.

"Leave them be," Noah sighed. "They'll fight if something happens."

Cursed Reality didn't know what to say, but the reaction from the rest of Noah's army partially reassured him. Yet, his worries returned when he noticed June's excited smile.

"Can you ask the old rulers to pick us up?" Emperor asked as white rays began to appear among the crumbling sky and ground.

"What are you even saying?" Noah laughed as Snore, Night, and Duanlong came out of his figure. "We'll have to fight our way to them."

"Do you always fight like this?" Queen complained.

"Pretty much," Noah exclaimed.

"How did brutes like you even survive Heaven and Earth?" Cursed Reality shouted.

"He talks like Xavier," The rank 9 Foolery commented while munching a cup from Pellio's tea set.

"I'd stop arguing now," Noah declared as traces of intense anger flowed into his aura. "They are already here."

Queen, Emperor, Cursed Reality, Pellio, and Vesuvia sensed something after Noah's words reached their ears. Sparks began to come out of June's figure as she raised her head toward a white crack that began to release even more light. The upper tier turtle looked in the same direction, and the army quickly imitated it.

A thick pillar of white light began to punch its way through the glow radiated from the crack. The structure seemed solid, and a second one pierced the starry sky as the fissure expanded.

A third and a fourth pillar followed. They were impossible to miss even if they shared the same shades as the whiteness coming from the other side of the crack. They were too dense, and a crackling noise capable of suppressing the sounds generated by June's sparks eventually seeped out of them.

The four pillars eventually bent to lay on the fabric of the starry sky. More cracks appeared among the blackness, and whiteness soon invaded the whole area. Everyone could sense the nature of that light now. Heaven and Earth were clearly peeking at the insides of the Labyrinth.

The pillars then began to retreat, but their movements only worsened the state of the starry sky. The crack expanded far past its previous edges, giving birth to a massive hole from where the experts could see the weak sky that filled the entirety of the higher plane.

The hole also revealed something else. The army could see a fifth pillar next to the previous four, but a structure far bigger than all of them expanded from their bases. Soon, an immense wall became visible, and many of the weaker underlings trembled when they understood the true nature of that scene.

The pillars were fingers. The wall expanding from their bases was an arm connected to an even bigger structure. A giant avatar was digging into the Cursed Labyrinth with its brute strength. No defenses or formations could stop the immense power contained inside its body.

"It's been a while, Heaven and Earth," Noah laughed as potential started to flow inside his centers of power.

"You ants have remained hidden for too long," Heaven and Earth's androgynous voice came out of the giant and made the whole ninth floor tremble.. "We shall put an end to this futile resistance."

Chapter 2158 - 2158. Battle

"Prepare for battle!" Emperor shouted.

"Brace for impact!" Queen followed.

'Duanlong,' Noah thought as the giant avatar stretched both its arms toward the crumbling environment.

The ninth floor was a crumbling mess, but that went for the entirety of the Labyrinth. Giant cracks ran throughout the starry sky, the land tainted by the Foolery, and the very space-time array that Cursed Reality had created.

The insides of the cracks showed identical scenes. Whiteness and weak sky stood behind those fissures and tried to seep into the crumbling structure of the Cursed Labyrinth. Heaven and Earth were invading what Emperor, Cursed Reality, and Queen had called home in the last millennia.

The giant arms pierced the Labyrinth easily, and the starry sky finally crumbled completely. Even the shards transformed into dust due to the incredible pressure generated by the violent gesture.

The arms didn't stop there. They continued to descend as they stretched their fingers toward the army. Giant white pillars grew closer to Noah and the others as Heaven and Earth's blinding radiance filled their vision.

Emperor, Cursed Reality, and Queen were about to launch an attack to fend off the incoming hands, but Duanlong acted before them. The dragon opened its mouth to activate its innate ability, and the light in the environment immediately dimmed.

Duanlong growled in pain as it returned inside Noah's figure. The dragon had gone overboard, but its help had been incredible. The army and the five solid stage cultivators on the scene remained speechless when they saw the new state of the avatar.

The crackling giant had lost parts of its hands. Part of its arms had also disappeared, and lightning bolts came out from the damaged areas. Duanlong had absorbed as much energy as possible, significantly affecting the avatar's structure.

Of course, that wasn't enough to stop Heaven and Earth's assault. The lightning bolts seeping out of the avatar's injuries expanded and multiplied. Crackling spiderwebs stretched out of the maimed arms and recreated the missing parts.

The giant continued to dive into the ninth floor while its arms regrew. Massive sparks even detached themselves from the healing process and transformed into lightning bolts that shot toward the army. Yet, their trajectory changed when they got too close to some experts.

"Pellio, dream of a way out of this," Noah ordered as Snore and Night remained ready behind him.

Pellio closed his eyes, and the healing process suddenly slowed down. The lightning bolts coming out of the injured spots began to move in random directions, affecting the reconstruction of the arms.

"Cursed Reality, open a passage," Pellio declared. "Heaven and Earth will force my dreams out of their reality in a few seconds."

"Don't order me around," Cursed Reality snorted as he waved his hand.

The lights in Cursed Reality's eyes began to move, and the Labyrinth imitated that process. The energy, shards, and materials falling into the immense whiteness converged in the spot gazed by the expert to give birth to a giant vortex.

Heaven and Earth didn't miss that event. Lightning bolts came out of every inch of the avatar and shot toward the vortex. Many of those attacks ended up flying in completely random directions, but a few converged toward Cursed Reality's creation.

"I got that," June announced as she shot above the vortex.

The lightning bolts in June's range suddenly changed direction and converged toward her figure. They crashed on her body and left deep black marks on her skin, but she seemed to get stronger during the process.

"Queen, you are up next," Pellio exclaimed.

"I hate you," Queen commented, but the crackling noises released by Heaven and Earth's avatar suddenly intensified and gave birth to a soundwave.

The soundwave acted as a wall that destroyed everything on its path as it flew toward the army. Part of the matter converging toward the vortex disappeared due to the attack. Even the fabric of space twisted as the noise advanced.

Queen flew above the army and stretched her hand toward the soundwave. The attack didn't stop, and nothing happened in the area around Noah and the others. Genuine concern for the imminent attack appeared in everyone's minds, but Noah roared to force them to remain still.

Noah didn't know what was happening, and his instincts were as lost as him. They begged him to run away, but he trusted Pellio's dream, and the same went for Queen.

The soundwave eventually reached Queen, but she went through it just fine. Her body remained in one piece, and her aura also didn't experience any change during the event.

June and the portal were the next on the path of the soundwave, but the attack didn't affect them. The lightning bolts converging toward them crumbled, but they didn't feel anything.

Noah and the rest of the army came next, but the same happened. Noah remained stunned to see the attack crossing his figure without dealing any damage. It was as if the soundwave had stopped existing, at least when it came to its destructive power.

The soundwave quickly proved Noah's guess wrong. The space's fabric began to twist under the noise's pressure as soon as the attack crossed the army. The rest of the ninth floor vanished, and the weak sky soon took control of every side of the area.

The army had returned to the higher plane. Noah could sense the familiar space-time array taking control of his surroundings. Heaven and Earth's iconic pressure also fell on his figure, but his focus remained on Queen.

"What exactly did you do?" Noah asked when he found himself unable to come up with an answer.

"Are you interested in my partner's power?" Emperor asked without hiding the trace of pride in his voice. "She is more amazing than me."

"My beloved becomes too humble when it comes to me," Queen sighed while reapproaching Emperor. "I didn't do much. I've only taken away the soundwave's danger for a few seconds."

The vortex stopped rotating and stabilized while Noah tried to understand the limits of Queen's power. Cursed Reality opened his mouth to speak, but Pellio interrupted him by flying toward the portal.

Noah and the others also moved there. June's eyes lit up when she saw more lightning bolts coming out of the avatar, but Snore ate her and forced her to cross the vortex with the rest of the army.

The scenery changed in an instant, but only in its details. The army's surroundings remained white due to the presence of the weak sky, but everyone knew that they had teleported into a different location.

"What now?" Emperor asked only to notice that a series of black crystals had already appeared above Noah's skin.

June voiced a snort as she came out of Snore, and a disappointed expression appeared on her face at the sight of the calm environment. She wanted to complain, but Noah was busy trying to hear the old rulers' voice.

Still, a tremor suddenly ran through the weak sky around the army. Those white crystals began to move as Heaven and Earth's aura intensified. Giant chunks melted and converged toward a seemingly random spot to build the immense figure that Noah and the others had just left behind.

"You can't escape us," Heaven and Earth's declared as a new giant avatar took form and began to move.

Chapter 2159 - 2159. Struggle

The scene didn't surprise those who knew how powerful Heaven and Earth were. The rulers had already filled the higher plane with their sky. Everything under the white layer was within their reach.

That was precisely what Emperor, Cursed Reality, and Queen had warned Noah about. Heaven and Earth were on the hunt, and Noah's army was a valuable target that deserved a real effort.

A rain of white shards fell from the avatar's edges as it left the sky and stretched its massive arms toward the army. Lightning bolts shot out of its fingers, and crackling spheres began to accumulate on its palms.

June stepped forward and expanded her influence to attract the incoming lightning bolts. Her figure retreated as the attacks began to crash on her body, but the excitement on her face never wavered.

Noah knew that June was suffering injuries. The avatar's attacks weren't simple lightning bolts generated by a Tribulation. They were blows that carried the power of the solid stage. June could absorb part of their power to temper her body only due to the peculiarities of her world.

The process obviously couldn't last forever, no matter how much June desired that. The army had to find a solution to the situation, and Noah instinctively glanced at Pellio while the dark matter around him continued to look for the old rulers' voice.

"I can't dream about our next move," Pellio declared when he sensed Noah's gaze on his figure, "But I've seen us making out alive. Sadly, that doesn't apply to all of us."

"It's always the same with you," Emperor snorted. "You claim to see everything, but you can't explain the simplest things."

"My beloved, maybe it's better if you charge me beforehand," Queen whispered, and the couple exchanged a long kiss.

Noah initially didn't understand what was happening, but clues eventually appeared. Emperor and Queen's worlds created a firm connection that hid its insides. Still, the fabric of space around them began to twist, which revealed the tremendous amount of energy moving during the kiss.

'Is he giving energy directly to her world?' Noah wondered, but the battlefield soon reclaimed most of his attention.

Some lightning bolts began to escape June's influence. She unfolded her aura to force them to converge toward her figure, but Heaven and Earth seemed to have found a way to counter her ability.

More and more lightning bolts started to go back into their initial trajectory and fly toward the army. None of them actually crashed on the experts since Vesuvia intervened, but Heaven and Earth had prepared counters to that power too.

Vesuvia had created an invisible shield that went beyond simple protections and defensive arrays. Her aura had seeped into the very fabric of the world, which made the immediate surroundings of the army impossible to reach.

The straight path didn't exist in the lightning bolts' future anymore, so they changed direction and avoided the army. However, some of them began to detonate right above the invisible shield, and that slowly pushed that defense back.

June moved closer to the army in an attempt to exploit Vesuvia's ability to her needs, but the explosions only worsened her injuries. She managed to apply her influence on more lightning bolts in her new position, but she wouldn't last long there.

Night shot forward and began to cut the lightning bolts before they could explode. June gained some room to breathe, but the assault remained too powerful for her. Her injuries were expanding too quickly, and Heaven and Earth's energy even started to seep into her world.

Snore unleashed its feathers at that point. A series of explosions unfolded and gave birth to a storm of destructive energy. Blackness took control of the area between the army and the giant avatar, but a hand promptly pierced it to refill everything with whiteness.

The effects of Snore's strongest attack vanished in a matter of seconds. Nothing could stop the avatar's advance, and its massive arms soon pointed at the army again.

June showed a wide smile when she saw lightning bolts coming in her direction, but everything suddenly disappeared. Snore's black gales replaced the avatar, and the latter returned next to the weak sky.

"I think Heaven and Earth are underestimating us a bit too much," Vesuvia chuckled.

"Can you bring the lightning bolts back?" June complained.

"Your lover sure is reckless," Emperor shouted while leaving Vesuvia's barrier and occupying a spot in front of June.

The scenes from before played out exactly in the same way. The avatar pierced the black currents with its hands and dispersed them as soon as its immense body arrived. It even pointed its arms at the army, and lightning bolts shot forward again.

June wanted to fly past Emperor, but her survival instincts told her that something was off. The whole area past the expert was a dead zone that she shouldn't approach no matter what.

The break in the absorption of lightning bolts forced June to step back and return to Noah's side. Her body was a mess of holes and burns, but she didn't move her eyes from Emperor, and most of the army did the same.

Noah had seen and launched powerful attacks throughout his life, but what happened after Emperor raised his hand surpassed even some of Heaven and Earth's greatest shows of power.

The area between Emperor and the avatar was a mess of cracked space, lingering destructive dark matter, and lightning bolts, but all of that disappeared. A mass of blue energy vaster than the battlefield filled the area in front of the expert and pushed everything back.

Only the avatar survived the massive discharge of energy. Everything else vanished under the sheer power that Emperor had unleashed. Even the battlefield transformed into a mere gorge connected to the void.

Noah could understand that solid stage cultivators had access to powers that went beyond his comprehension. That was only natural. However, the sheer amount of energy unleashed by Emperor surpassed even his wildest predictions.

Moreover, Emperor didn't appear tired after the attack. He had barely even focused on launching it. He acted as if that discharge of energy was nothing more than a casual blow thrown because he felt like it.

The avatar slammed on the weak sky, but the lack of damage on its surface became impossible to miss after the shards generated during the impact fell. It was still in one piece and at its full power after enduring such a powerful blow.

"I can launch hundreds of these," Emperor explained, "But Heaven and Earth will eventually find a way to counter them. Do you have any plan, Defying Demon?"

Noah had yet to join the battlefield. Snore had used its best attack, and Duanlong was in the same situation, but he could launch far more. Yet, he believed that nothing in his arsenal could destroy the avatar unless someone bought enough time to infect it with his destruction.

Two figures appeared next to the army before Noah could come up with a plan. Familiar auras expanded on the battlefield and reached Noah's consciousness. He recognized the time dragon and the space dragon right away, but a teleport activated before he could lay his eyes on them.

Noah instinctively expanded the dark world to cover the entirety of his army. He trusted the dragons, but he feared that Emperor and the others could oppose the technique. They could fight against the dark matter, but he decided to remain still since that energy came from Noah.

The environment changed before the avatar could stretch its arms forward. An orange glow also replaced the whiteness as tall buildings appeared around the army. Noah didn't need to inspect the area to know where he was.. The dragons had brought him inside the orange city.

Chapter 2160 - 2160. Improvements

Heaven and Earth's pressure disappeared as soon as the teleport ended. Noah and the others were in a safe area, and the rulers appeared unable to find them there. However, it was clear that they had traded one powerful presence for another.

'They have become stronger again,' Noah concluded after a quick inspection of the area.

The orange buildings around the army reeked of the old rulers' power. Their influence was a dense aura that covered the entire city and created a personal world isolated from the higher plane.

Heaven and Earth's whiteness still existed outside the thick array of orange lightning bolts past the buildings, but that light appeared unable to reach the vast streets. The city had always been part of the old rulers' power, but it had now fused deeper with their existence.

Emperor, Queen, Vesuvia, and Cursed Reality inspected the area curiously. They had never been inside the orange city, but a proper meeting was bound to happen soon. They wanted to learn as much as they could about the old rulers' power before that event, and what they saw left them quite stunned.

The old rulers weren't only mighty. Their world was immense, and each building could take care of different functions. The similarities with Heaven and Earth were evident, but everything had a personal touch that made the area impossible to compare to the sky.

Things were different for the rest of Noah's army. Old Tyrant and the others remained in awe, but they knew that Noah would handle the conversations. His presence there was reassuring, so they let their curiosity run free.

Pellio had closed his eyes completely, but he didn't stop making tea for the Foolery. Instead, the pack of turtles seemed too focused on the two dragons to care about the new environment.

Noah also disregarded the environment quickly. The two dragons were basically friends, so he didn't hesitate to send a question toward them. "Where is the death dragon?"

"Killed by Heaven and Earth," The time dragon immediately revealed. "Their grip on us is getting tighter."

Noah couldn't help but show a cold expression at that revelation. He had gotten stronger in the Cursed Labyrinth, and his army had also grown. Yet, Heaven and Earth had taken another step toward the final battle while he was gone.

'We must do even better,' Noah cursed in his mind as he left the army and began to walk toward the center of the city.

A few figures followed Noah. June, Pellio, the rank 9 Foolery, the upper tier turtle, Cursed Reality, Queen, Vesuvia, and Emperor left the army to join the imminent meeting. Many were simply curious about the old rulers, while others had something to say.

The time dragon and the space dragon moved with the group, and Noah used that chance to gain an update about the situation in the higher plane.

Heaven and Earth had continued to improve. Their personality had grown clearer as their world stabilized and the higher plane began to favor them. That change had allowed them to put more power in the hunts for small forces, which led to an almost complete absence of packs of magical beasts in the sky.

A few forces had obviously managed to survive the hunts, and Noah's quasi-living workshops had helped in the matter. Thanks to his influence, many magical beasts had improved, and he actually sensed those changes clearly now that he was walking through the city.

Many creatures had benefitted from the quasi-living workshops and had continued to expand their influence. Noah's world stretched as he tuned with all the improvements he had caused. The gap before the liquid stage shortened, but the situation didn't allow him to focus on those happy outcomes.

Everything was too little compared to Heaven and Earth's relentless advance. The dragons had to join forces with the old rulers to improve their position, but even that only limited the casualties on their side.

Of course, the dragons didn't remain still during that period. They had imitated Noah in his gathering of forces, leading many packs inside the safety of the orange city. The old rulers had also worked hard to modify every creature willing to go through those procedures, which created another army that would join the final battle.

"Sadly, I miscalculated how much joining forces would have helped Heaven and Earth," The time dragon explained. "Even the old rulers didn't predict that the death dragon would pay the price for this mistake."

"Bringing a few packs here shouldn't be enough to justify the death dragon's death," Noah commented.

"We went a bit past that," The time dragon stated, and Noah didn't need to question it since answers soon appeared in his vision.

The orange city was alive. It reacted to the conversation and moved its building to answer Noah's silent questions. A series of immense camps appeared in his vision. Their orange grass and tall trees reminded Noah of sceneries from the Mortal Lands, but he didn't have the chance to focus on those details.

Many orange figures ended up attracting the entirety of Noah's attention. Hundreds of rank 9 dragons filled the camps and radiated auras that didn't match their species.

"Did you start to improve your pack?" Noah asked without hiding his surprise. "Won't that affect the laws inherited from the old world?"

"Of course," The time dragon admitted. "Yet, Heaven and Earth had already countered them. We needed to find a different source of power, and the old rulers were ready to help."

The magical beasts' scary strength was the result of Heaven and Earth's actions. Still, the rulers had long since learnt to counter that power, which put the dragons and the various packs on the losing side.

A change was needed, but Noah didn't expect the dragons to throw away what had made them strong in the first place. Accepting the old rulers' modification didn't only affect their species. It also threw away their initial position in the world's system.

"Did you try to modify yourself?" Noah asked after gaining a general idea of the dragons' power.

"We are keeping that for last," The time dragon revealed. "We are special even among the dragons. It's not hard to predict that Heaven and Earth will benefit a lot from eventual changes in our species."

"It makes sense," Noah commented. "I should help with the process. The old rulers are incredible, but my knowledge in magical beasts might surpass theirs."

"We didn't rely only on the old rulers," The time dragon declared, and Noah didn't need to question further since a powerful aura suddenly entered his sense's range.

The dense aura that only a world in the liquid stage could release descended on the camps and enveloped the group. Its power went far beyond the limits of its level, and its scorching nature seemed ready to burn everyone.

Emperor and the others prepared for battle, but they revealed confused expressions when they noticed Noah's smiling face. Even the Foolery had stopped caring about Pellio's tea. The pig lifted its head, and an excited shout left its mouth. "Xavier!"
