

## **Demonic 2231**

Chapter 2231: 2231. Love

"Naïve and pitiful king of the ants," Euclio's voice echoed through the very void. "You dare to step on realms before obtaining the right to look at them. Now, you will pay the price for your stupidity."

Daniel inspected his surroundings, but he couldn't find anything able to answer his doubts. He didn't understand what was happening. It seemed that Euclio's voice was coming out from the emptiness around him, but the sinister aura didn't reveal any clue.

"You don't understand, do you?" Euclio continued. "Don't blame yourself. Your knowledge of the cultivation journey is good, but it doesn't quite involve the peak. You simply aren't there yet."

The sinister aura condensed at some distance from Daniel until a humanoid figure appeared. Euclio rebuilt his body, but his skin revealed far darker shades now. His edges were also blurry and felt on the verge of fusing with the void.

"Your idea wasn't bad," Euclio admitted as the sinister aura expanded once again and enveloped Daniel. "Using the innate features of my world to defeat me was smart. Your ability also suited the task perfectly. Still, you failed to understand that I already represent the apex of emptiness."

The explanation didn't clear Daniel's doubts, and the sinister aura didn't allow him to focus too much on those words either. His body started to turn ethereal again, but that change affected him deeply at that time.

"I imitate the void," Euclio announced. "However, rank 9 cultivators can't gain a complete understanding of this endless blackness since it belongs to a superior realm. I improved through Heaven and Earth's tools, but my mind has always remained limited by my poor level."

Traces of understanding finally dawned upon Daniel, but he decided to ignore the matter to focus on his ordeal. He felt his world was slipping away to reach distant locations that his mind couldn't even begin to comprehend.

"You know," Euclio continued. "Fusing with the void isn't actually possible for experts at my level. Even imitating it only leads to a weaker version. After all, the universe is stuff for beings past the cultivation journey, and you can't have a will while being empty."

Daniel struggled to expand his purity and assert his presence on the higher plane, but everything seemed pointless. Euclio's attack was simply unstoppable. It dealt with realities and dimensions that even Cursed Reality would have a hard time studying.

"The form I had was almost perfect," Euclio revealed. "I could still tweak some aspects, but it was the closest existence to the void that a cultivator at my level could create."

Plans and ideas flooded Daniel's mind, but he couldn't deploy any of them. He was exhausted, and his world barely had energy left. He didn't know if those tactics would work, but he couldn't even try them out.

"Then, you and your purity arrive," Euclio exclaimed. "The nature of your power forced my world to strive to a state that I couldn't reach on my own. I couldn't comprehend the realm that I had to obtain on my own, but you solved that issue."

Daniel could only give up on trying to escape the sinister aura. His attention inevitably went on Euclio and his explanation, which finally made complete sense in his mind.

"I didn't do anything wrong," Daniel sighed. "You managed to retain your power even after I turned you into the real void. I can praise your ability, but I won't blame my lacking knowledge."

"That's correct," Euclio smirked. "I only wanted to add some fun to this victory. Enjoy spending the rest of your life in my void."

Daniel briefly inspected the battlefield before closing his eyes. He had given his everything to reduce the number of casualties on his side, and he had even bought time for his stronger allies.

Euclio probably wouldn't have enough time to disrupt the balance of the battlefield. Daniel felt sure that Noah or someone else would stop him soon enough. That thought reassured him. He could consider his sacrifice as a success.

"Heartless until the end," Euclio commented. "Truly commendable."

Euclio stretched his hand forward to make his aura work faster. Daniel was about to disappear, but nothing affected his calm expression. He appeared at peace, but something eventually affected his emotional state.

Euclio couldn't avoid feeling surprised when he saw his aura changing direction on its own and flowing toward an incoming bright figure. The latter dispersed Euclio's power through its influence as it reached Daniel's left side and revealed its appearance.

"What are you doing here?" Daniel weakly scolded as the break from Euclio's attack allowed his world to shine again. "Your place is on the battlef-!"

Daniel couldn't finish his line since a slap landed on his newly condensed cheek. He didn't feel any anger after that gesture. Instead, faint traces of love and helplessness appeared on his face as he stared at the newcomer.

"I really hate this part of you," Faith announced as she delivered another slap. "You and your damned purity make you disregard your companions' feelings so easily."

"That's how my path works," Daniel sighed. "Now, go away. You are burning yourself only to survive under his influence."

Faith was only in the gaseous stage of the ninth rank. Her world could barely survive Euclio's pressure, but she was letting it suffer injuries without showing any hesitation.

"I refuse," Faith declared. "Do you think you are the only one who can throw his life away?"

"I'm sacrificing myself for a higher purpose," Daniel explained. "Adding your death won't change anything in the grand scope of the final battle."

"It will change something for me!" Faith shouted. "I know you understand this."

Daniel sighed again and took Faith's face in his gentle grasp. His purity didn't make him unable to understand human emotions. He actually couldn't ignore them in his weak state.

"I understand you will have a chance to survive if I do this," Daniel whispered.

"Can't I just decide to die with you?" Faith asked. "That's what my love wants."

"How did you even fall for me?" Daniel half-suppressed a curse. "I've been an awful partner."

"You can say all the lies you want," Faith giggled as she reached Daniel's hands on her cheeks, "But I know the truth. You could have left me long ago, and you probably should have. After all, I am your flaw."

Daniel couldn't stop the warm smile appearing on his face. His purity was at its weakest now, so he couldn't hide his emotions, and that reaction confirmed Faith's words.

Daniel was a being that strived for purity and pure selflessness. Someone like him couldn't have something as personal as a relationship. It would simply go against his nature.

However, Daniel had never shed away his love for Faith. He had the chance to do it countless times, but he had never done it.

"How could I see something so beautiful as a flaw?" Daniel eventually dropped the pretenses. "I'll accept a slow and flawed journey if that means making you happy."

"And you even wonder why I fell for you," Faith uttered in a sweet tone.

"Won't you allow me to die before you?" Daniel asked.

"No," Faith firmly rejected, even if her smile never left her face. "I can have you as my Daniel, without all the leader stuff. I can't think of a better final moment."

"I can't win against you, can I?" Daniel wondered.

"Oh, shut up now," Faith chuckled as she lowered Daniel's arms to pull him closer. "You are the only one I ever allowed to win against me."

Chapter 2232: 2232. Delay

"Touching," Euclio commented after Daniel and Faith ended up close enough to kiss.

"You aren't like the others," Daniel announced while diverting his attention from Faith to focus on Euclio. "Why didn't you kill us already?"

"I wanted to see what your display of emotions caused inside my new being," Euclio explained as he pointed a hand toward the couple. "As expected, I felt nothing."

Daniel disregarded the treat to look at Faith again, and she smiled to reply to his gesture. Neither of them showed fear. They were at peace since they could die in each other's arms. Actually, both felt slightly relieved that their intense struggle was ending on such a happy note.

Euclio's sinister aura shot forward and enveloped the couple. Faith could use her world to slow down the attack, but she suppressed her power. Daniel didn't have the strength to fight back, and she didn't want to die after him.

Daniel and Faith turned ethereal quickly since they didn't try to resist their opponent's attack. Their worlds instinctively summoned defenses, but they couldn't last long under the assault of a privileged cultivator in the solid stage.

The couple didn't divert their eyes during the process. Daniel and Faith were fine as long as they could die looking at their lover's face. Still, the assault suddenly faltered and forced the two to focus on Euclio again.

"I didn't want to ruin your moment," Euclio laughed as he inspected his hand. "I don't have such poor taste. I only need a moment to get used to this power."

"Okay, I should be there," Euclio eventually cleared his throat and pointed his arm at the couple again. Daniel and Faith reestablished their eye contact as the sinister aura enveloped them, but that power abruptly disappeared for no apparent reason.

"Is he playing with us?" Faith wondered in an annoyed tone.

"I'm not really sure," Daniel replied. "My world is even regaining power. I might not be in the mood for all this romance if he keeps delaying our deaths."

"Don't even try to ruin our deaths," Faith glared at Daniel. "I deserve to get your full attention in my final moments after remaining with you for all these millennia."

"I'm doing my best here," Daniel promised, "But I can't go against my world."

"Hey, you!" Faith angrily called while turning toward Euclio. "Hurry up. My partner will turn back into an idiot at this rate."

"I swear," Euclio responded as he inspected his hands and entire figure. "I don't understand what is happening."

"We can't even get a proper final opponent," Faith sighed.

"Don't tell me that we are going to survive," Daniel exclaimed.

"Why do you sound disappointed?" Faith asked.

"Well," Daniel diverter his gaze, "I'd have to find a form of purity that accepts you as a flow if I survive."

"I really want to smack you again," Faith cursed.

"I think you have enough time for that," Daniel stated while glancing at the struggling Euclio.

"I'll do it if we survive," Faith declared. "Actually, I'll claim you all for myself for five hundred years."

"What about the landmass?" Daniel wondered.

"I'll tell the Demons to take care of it if you behave," Faith uttered. "If you don't, I'll claim you anyway and leave the landmass to the rats."

"Not the rats," Daniel gasped.

"Or the pigs," Faith threatened.

"Anyone but the pigs," Daniel begged.

"Is he really not killing us yet?" Faith questioned.

"I don't know what to say," Daniel replied. "You even ran out of awful replacements to my rule."

"I can ask the pigs and the rats to rule together," Faith giggled.

"You are a monster," Daniel exclaimed.

"That's right," Faith snorted, "And it's your job to keep me happy."

"Alright, alright," Daniel gave in as he pulled Faith even closer. "Five hundred years just you and me it is."

The two resumed their silent and loving stare, but Euclio kept failing to activate his technique correctly. The sinister energy enveloped them and disappeared multiple times without ever killing them, and the couple eventually understood that the event had far deeper problems.

"Should we just run?" Faith wondered.

"What if he regains control of his world and lashes out at the others?" Daniel responded.

"We can come back and let him kill us," Faith suggested.

"Is everything okay up there?" Daniel shouted as he and Faith started to hover away from the area.

"What is even happening?!" Euclio cursed as his figure darkened and brightened without listening to his commands.

Daniel and Faith accepted that the situation was working in their favor and made a run for it. They found no reason to remain near their opponent, but their escape was cut short when a massive torrent of silver energy enveloped the whole area.

The silver energy had every intention of eradicating Faith and Daniel from the higher plane, but it stopped targeting them right after their skins opened in multiple spots. The two didn't even realize when the attack had reached them, but they didn't care about that since they recognized the owner of the aura.

"That's not possible!" Euclio shouted since he also recognized the owner of the area.

Euclio's situation was no different from Faith and Daniel's. He found himself immersed in the massive torrent of silver energy. He stood at its very center, and a mixture of fear and awe filled his mind when he realized how much that familiar power had changed.

Of course, Euclio was far more resilient than Faith and Daniel, so his body didn't suffer any damage even if the silver energy continued to treat him as an enemy. Still, his shock only intensified as the aura grew clearer and hinted at the return of a troublesome character.

A fissure suddenly opened on Euclio's torso. The wound ran from his neck to his waist and released a blinding silver light that added more power to the heavy energy that had filled the area.

The wound expanded until an even brighter figure flew through it. The glowing being darted left and right as if it felt confused about its new location, but it stopped once its senses stabilized.

"I'm back!" Sword Saint proudly announced as the sky appeared in his view.

Sword Saint didn't take long to notice that Daniel and Faith were stuck under his heavy silver energy. The expert frowned when he saw that the two were exchanging a loving hug, and the situation made even less sense in his mind at the sight of Euclio's new form.

"Imitating Defying Demon is a good idea," Sword Saint exclaimed, "But you shouldn't aim to replicate that part of his behavior."

Faith and Daniel exchanged a glance before turning toward Sword Saint again. Daniel only inspected the silver energy one last time before asking pressing questions. "You can handle this on your own, right? Can you open a path for us?"

"That's impossible," Sword Saint laughed as he spread his arms. "A blade should run freely, especially after getting further on the path. Though, I can cut you away from this battle."

"Wait!" Daniel complained when he understood what Sword Saint meant, but the latter acted too quickly. The expert waved his hand, and a blinding sword shot toward the couple.

The blade enveloped Daniel and Faith before pushing them all the way back to the landmass. Most of the defenses had to act to protect the immense creature, but the couple didn't find the strength to complain after realizing that their landing had gone well.

"What have you done inside my void?" Euclio asked now that he had remained alone with Sword Saint.

"You put me into the void," Sword Saint explained, "So I learnt to cut the void. Still, the breakthrough came as a surprise."

Euclio could only reveal a grim face, and the same went for all the experts on his side who noticed that scene. Instead, Sword Saint's companions experienced very opposite reactions. It was impossible to remain calm when an expert in Noah's core team had reached the solid stage.

Chapter 2233: 2233. Blades

Euclio couldn't see the shape of the immense torrent of silver energy from his position, and he couldn't unfold his consciousness either since his mental waves shattered soon after leaving his body. Yet, he could imagine what Sword Saint had created.

The situation was different for the rest of the battlefield, especially for Daniel and Faith, since they could inspect everything from the safety of the landmass. A massive silver blade had appeared in the middle of the void, and its sharpness resonated with the dark ground standing under the couple.

The landmass began to tremble, and Daniel and Faith witnessed multiple inscriptions lighting up to prevent its awakening. Vast energy reserves vanished to quell the immense creature's desire to understand what that distant calling was.

Daniel and Faith dropped their previous conversation to get back into battle positions. Daniel shot toward one of the formations' cores, while Faith reached a different significant point in the defensive array to spread her aura.

Daniel knew something about inscriptions, especially when it came to the landmass since he had overseen it for many years. However, his expertise didn't allow him to improve the defenses at work there. He could only use the little energy he had regained to push the formations to express the peak of their power.

Faith found herself in a similar situation. She wasn't June. She couldn't come up with vast waves of energy capable of helping the defenses planted to halt the landmass' awakening.

Nevertheless, Faith's aura carried heavy appeasing properties, and those effects reached their peak when her life was in danger. She put herself in a location that could hurt her deeply if the landmass woke up to call upon those empowered abilities, so her influence expanded farther than usual.

The efforts of the two experts and the defenses prepared by the various inscription masters slowly interrupted the landmass' awakening. The ground stopped trembling, and everything went back to normal, except for Daniel and Faith.

The two found themselves exhausted after the recent struggle. Daniel was even worse off since he had emptied his world twice in such a short time. The couple reunited on the surface to sit on the ground and fall in each other's arms.

Daniel and Faith were too tired to be of any use to the battlefield. They didn't know how long the final battle would last, but they felt sure that their fight was over, at least for now.

Meanwhile, the battlefield continued to rage. Only a few key experts sensed that the landmass had come close to awakening since the massive silver blade had claimed almost everyone's attention.

The chaos on the battlefield also prevented most experts from focusing too much on events outside of their individual fights. The silver blade was impossible to miss, and its magnificence hid the dangerous sensations that the landmass had radiated for a short time.

Sword Saint obviously didn't miss that the landmass had reacted to his return, but he didn't care either. He was busy laughing and bathing in the new connection to the sword path developed during his trip inside Euclio's void.

As for Euclio, he managed to keep himself in one piece inside the silver storm, but he still failed to summon his new power. In theory, he had a chance to defeat Sword Saint even after the breakthrough due to Daniel's actions, but he couldn't get access to his abilities. They felt impossible to reach even if they stood inside his world.

"Performance issues?" Sword Saint mocked when he managed to bring his attention back to Euclio.

Euclio was no idiot, and Sword Saint's behavior only proved his silent guess right. Sword Saint wasn't the type to indulge in jokes on his own unless they involved special situations or King Elbas. There had to be a reason behind his words, and the excitement caused by the breakthrough only covered part of it.

"What did you cut while you were in my world?" Euclio asked in a calm tone. "I don't contain anything. You couldn't have cut anything."

"I told you that I learnt how to cut the void," Sword Saint announced. "You might think to be empty, but emptiness is also something you contain."

"Your friend purified my existence until I could fuse with the void itself," Euclio revealed. "Don't try to lecture me about my power. You know nothing about it."

"That's both true and false," Sword Saint exclaimed. "I don't necessarily have to know something to cut through it, but the void is quite special in that regard."

"What?" Euclio snorted. "Are you an expert in the void now?"

"Your understanding is shallower than I thought," Sword Saint sighed while raising his hand. "Do you know what this is?"

Euclio inspected that gesture thoroughly. He couldn't use his consciousness, but his eyes were more than enough to reveal the truth behind Sword Saint's hand. He didn't do anything.

"This isn't the situation to talk about our paths," Euclio sneered. "I thought your side was short on time."

"I guess you can't see it," Sword Saint sighed again.

"See what?" Euclio angrily reprimanded. "You fill the whole area with your energy, and then you ask me to look through it. Are you having fun mocking me?"

"You should be able to see it through my energy," Sword Saint claimed. "After all, this is something necessary to your power."

"Do you expect your tricks to keep me busy?" Euclio wondered. "You didn't do anything. Even your energy stayed still during your gesture."

"That's both true and false," Sword Saint repeated. "I didn't do anything, but I still did something. I did nothing."

"Did you forget how to use words?" Euclio joked, but the silver energy above his silver shoulder suddenly disappeared, and part of his body vanished with it.

Euclio didn't know how to describe what had just happened. He could only watch his left arm leaving his body and disappearing from his world. He became unable to protect the limb with his energy, so the silver fuel destroyed it.

"Your path is formidable," Sword Saint stated, "But it's not omnipotent. It couldn't cut away my connection to the sword path, so I could study a new power."

Heaven and Earth had done extensive studies on all the experts in Noah's organization. Still, Sword Saint was so unique that the privileged cultivators knew about his power even without their leaders' help.

Euclio knew that Sword Saint had created a connection with the sword path. He had actually turned into an avatar that expressed its essence, so it wasn't surprising that he could talk with it even inside someone else's world.

However, the issue remained. Sword Saint had cut something that technically didn't exist. In theory, that was impossible even after acquiring the knowledge of a superior entity. Heaven and Earth would also struggle to find ways around that.

"What new power?" Euclio asked.

"I needed a blade that could cut the void," Sword Saint explained. "The sword path gave me nothing, so I understood. The only blade that could cut the void is the blade that doesn't exist."

"No one can achieve something like that," Euclio declared. "Summoning a power that doesn't exist simply goes beyond common reason."

"You don't summon it," Sword Saint stated. "You create it by destroying. I sacrifice a blade to create a blade that doesn't exist."

Something connected in Euclio's mind. He finally understood what Sword Saint meant, but the implications of that power were too insane even to consider them.

"You said that I could never cut you," Sword Saint continued. "That's terribly wrong. I'm the only one who can cut you. I can destroy parts of my world to create blades that don't exist freely since the sword path will always refill those missing parts."

"You!" Euclio cursed. "Wait!"

"Too late," Sword Saint announced. "I've already destroyed enough to kill you."

Euclio's eyes widened, but the whole silver torrent vanished before he could speak. He only had the time to glance at the sky in anger before disappearing and leaving no trace of his existence.

Chapter 2234: 2234. Fear

Sword Saint didn't come out of the exchange completely unharmed. Euclio's statement had been on point. Destruction was necessary to create something that didn't exist, which involved Sword Saint's world in that specific case.

The massive silver blade that had appeared on the battlefield during Sword Saint's return represented a part of his world. Its size didn't even make justice to the amount of energy in its insides, and Sword Saint had to remove that power from his existence to create something vast enough to kill Euclio.

The effort wasn't only massive. No rank 9 cultivator could usually recover from such a deep and giant injury. The few who could retain their lives would see their level fall drastically and have no chances to claim their power back.

That's how serious deep injuries to worlds were, and Sword Saint had even made things worse for himself since he had chosen to suffer that damage. Only he knew how to destroy his existence properly, so it was obvious that his actions had been thorough.

An intense wave of exhaustion swept Sword Saint's world and destabilized his power. He felt weak beyond reason, and his cultivation level grew unstable as his face began to lose its liveliness.

Nevertheless, Sword Saint didn't show any regret for his recent actions. He didn't even worry about his current situation. His expression revealed pure confidence as he straightened his back to glance at the scenery above him.

Many ignorant about Sword Saint's power would think that he was looking at the sky. Still, most assets from the sky and the landmass' leaders who had the time to inspect the scene knew that Sword Saint's gaze didn't even try to stop at the white layer.

Only the core members of Noah's team knew that Sword Saint couldn't even see the sky from his position. His gaze was always pointed at something far deeper into the universe, something that even existences past the cultivation journey would struggle to locate.

Sword Saint immersed himself in the sensations that his gesture caused. His devotion allowed the existence of a deep connection with the sword path, which sent knowledge to refill what he had sacrificed during the battle.

It would have been different if Sword Saint had committed a sin against his path. Yet, his actions had been entirely in line with his world. He had created blades that his level couldn't fully comprehend, so he obtained a reward.

A deep and foreign silver radiance started to seep out of Sword Saint's figure. That light belonged to his world, but it was also different. Its true source came from something far vaster than him, but most of that power fused with his world to fix its injuries and improve it.

Sword Saint had just stepped on the solid stage, but his position in that realm slowly advanced as knowledge filled his injuries. He was bound to gain even greater strength once the process was over, but no one knew how long it would take.

Some privileged cultivators tried to assess the new threat whenever they found the chance. Sword Saint wasn't resorting to any defensive ability during his healing process. He merely floated among the battlefield.

The privileged cultivators probably couldn't find a better chance to attack Sword Saint, but none of them dared to make their move. The reason didn't even come from their powerful opponents, not always, at least.

Some experts had the chance to disappear for a few seconds and deliver a significant blow to that defenseless expert. Others could even decide to suffer injuries to reach Sword Saint while wielding enough power to kill him. Yet, everyone opted to focus on their battle anyway.

Fear was the main reason behind that decision. Sword Saint was the only expert in the entire higher plane who had access to a variable that even the timeless beings from the sky couldn't comprehend or predict.

The paths or arrays of worlds deep into the universe were structures beyond what beings stuck in the cultivation journey could understand. Even Heaven and Earth could only gaze at those deeper meanings without fully comprehending them.

Many privileged cultivators were loyal to Heaven and Earth or Caesar's plan, but they didn't want to mess with things they couldn't predict. The landmass' leaders were already a big problem, so the experts unanimously decided to leave Sword Saint to the next reinforcements.

Before Sword Saint could inflict the final blow on Euclio, Alexander and his opponent were entangled in exchanges that carried no grace or strategy.

The young-looking woman that had chosen Alexander as her opponent had claimed that their physical prowess was on par. The declaration had turned the battle into a messy exchange of punches, kicks, and direct attacks that no ordinary cultivator could endure for so long.

Alexander didn't hold back even once. He empowered his body with suitable abilities that pushed his physical prowess to incredible peaks, but his opponent always matched his blows. Moreover, the woman used the same moves, which showed the mocking nature behind her attacks.

"I'm not even close to reaching my limit," The woman laughed after the impact between the duo's punches created a violent shockwave that made the two shoot in opposite directions.

"You have the greatest hybrid as your opponent," Alexander announced. "You won't live to find my limits."

The break didn't last long enough to let the echoes of Alexander's words vanish from the battlefield. He and the privileged cultivator soon shoot forward to engage in their violent battle again, but neither seemed able to prevail over their opponent.

The matter was beyond odd, but Alexander didn't try to find any deep explanation. It was clear that the young-looking woman had access to a strange form of power that allowed him to match his blows, but he didn't care enough to look for potential weaknesses.

Alexander expressed superiority, and a mere cultivator had challenged his physical strength. Nothing could insult him more than that, so he planned to achieve his victory through a barbaric show of power.

Of course, the idea that the privileged cultivator might have challenged Alexander on that specific field to buy time had crossed his mind. Alexander thought about that after every exchange ending in a draw, but he dispersed those worries whenever they appeared.

It didn't matter if the privileged cultivator had a personal agenda. Alexander would still win through his superior power, even if that involved remaining stuck against the same opponent longer than necessary.

Truth be told, Alexander barely consumed energy in that kind of fight, so the approach would benefit him in the long run. He had also sensed that Sword Saint had reached the solid stage, so he didn't feel the need to worry about the other parts of the battlefield.

"So much power," The woman praised when another exchange forced Alexander and her to fly in opposite directions.

"Are you jealous?" Alexander mocked.

"Very much so," The privileged cultivator admitted without showing a single trace of shame. "I had to work hard to gain the slightest grain of strength while you were simply born with it."

"You could have come to the hybrids' side," Alexander revealed. "Many cultivators decide to imitate the magical beasts at some point in their journey. There is nothing wrong in pursuing superior forms of power."

"The thought crossed my mind many times," The woman admitted. "However, where's the value in inborn strength? I can only accept what I claim with my hard work. That's why I can't lose against someone like you."

Chapter 2235: 2235. Fas

"That's quite funny coming from a privileged cultivator," Alexander sneered. "You know how Heaven and Earth's balance works. You know what drawbacks I had to face for my superior abilities. How do you justify that in your view?"

"There is no need to justify it," The woman announced. "If I win, I'm right. If I lose, you are worthier than me."

"I like this," Alexander chuckled. "Shall we continue?"

"Why don't we get serious already?" The woman asked. "I know you can use far more than mere punches."

"You have never forced me to use more than that," Alexander stated. "By the looks of it, I'll win as long as you don't show something stronger."

The woman didn't answer right away. She reviewed the past exchanges and compared the condition of their bodies before heaving a sigh. "Probably."

Alexander didn't expect that confession, but he didn't let it distract him. He was ready to unleash everything he had if his opponent tried something funny, but his instincts told him that nothing complicated would happen.

"I didn't want to lose on sheer strength, and I didn't," The privileged cultivator exclaimed. "Still, I would need to rely on my higher level to trump over your endurance. That won't prove anything."

The woman took a few deep breaths before bending her legs and raising her arms to enter a fighting stance. She seemed ready to use proper techniques, but no power accumulated on her limbs.

Nevertheless, Alexander understood that something was off. He didn't know where that sensation came from, but his instincts warned him anyway. His opponent would be able to hurt him from now on.

Alexander wasn't scared of pain, but he didn't know how to face the new stance properly. Usually, he would inspect his opponents' abilities and come up with counters or superior versions of their attacks. Yet, the woman seemed to have every intention to rely on her body.

Veins popped out all over Alexander's body. Multiple abilities aimed to enhance his physical prowess activated at the same time and turned his body into a proper weapon. He could match the effects of Noah's unstable substance with the right number of skills.

"That's even better than before," The woman exclaimed as a confident smile appeared on her young face. "You were holding back."

"I really wasn't," Alexander revealed. "Using the exact number of abilities necessary to achieve victory is also a skill. You showed me a new power, so I need to do the same to remain on that path."

"Caesar gave you the wrong idea," The woman sighed. "Don't think that all the privileged cultivators here are expendable. Some of us have claimed spots among the core team of the sky."

"Let me guess," Alexander laughed. "You are one of them."

"Not at all," The privileged cultivator declared. "I, Ulpia, stand alone at the peak of the sky."

A tremor ran through Ulpia's feet, and Alexander's eyes widened when he realized that she had suddenly teleported in front of him. He couldn't notice her movements even with many innate abilities enhancing his body and overall senses.

Ulpia's movement technique was only the beginning of her offensive. Her ankles, waist, and shoulders rotated in perfect harmony as she stretched her right arm forward. Everything was so smooth and fast that Alexander found himself unable to react.

A torrent of power slammed on Alexander as soon as Ulpia's knuckles landed at the center of his chest. Alexander's thoughts couldn't move fast enough to study the situation, and his instincts soon took over his standard reasoning due to the danger they felt.

At first, Alexander only experienced utter surprise. Ulpia had unleashed an unreasonable attack that went beyond anything Alexander had ever witnessed. His body became unable to move as soon as that power touched his world.

The shock vanished once the survival instincts managed to replace it. Alexander saw different abilities activating on their own as Ulpia pushed her arm forward. Even his superiority understood that mere physical strength wouldn't be enough to stop what was crashing on him.

Darkness and confusion eventually replaced the survival instincts. Alexander regained control of his body and senses only when the back of his head slammed on a familiar white layer. It took him an instant to realize that he had ended up on the sky, and shock filled his mind again when he noticed his actual location.

Ulpia's attack had sent Alexander to the other side of the battlefield. She had unleashed enough power to make him cross the entire higher plane, and that wasn't even the worst aspect of the matter. The blow had rendered Alexander unconscious for the whole flight.

A fist-sized scar had appeared at the center of Alexander's chest, but his skin had endured the blow. However, part of his internal organs had suffered injuries, while others had directly exploded under the might that had engulfed them.

Blood accumulated in Alexander's mouth as he relied on multiple innate abilities to contain and heal his injuries. Still, his instincts suddenly kicked in and interrupted that process since Ulpia materialized in front of him again.

Alexander opened his mouth to voice a roar that contained multiple cries. Blood came out of his mouth in the process, and flames began to accumulate in his throat.

However, Ulpia disregarded everything happening in her surroundings to focus on her offensive. Her eyes seemed unable to move away from her target. Even her senses had stopped studying Alexander as she used her full attention to launch her attack.

Flames tried to come out of Alexander's mouth, but Ulpia's attack turned out to be faster. She delivered a precise uppercut on Alexander's chin that made him interrupt his ability and sent him flying away.

The flames exploded in Alexander's mouth, but he couldn't assess the damage since his consciousness wavered again. His back never left the sky as the power unleashed by Ulpia's attack made him fly around the whole battlefield.

Alexander didn't panic. When his consciousness stabilized, he disregarded most of the inputs captured by his senses to focus on a single task. Ulpia reappeared in front of him to deliver another punch, but he managed to be fast enough to deflect it with his arm.

Ulpia hesitated for an instant. Alexander had broken her pace by deflecting her attack, and he didn't even let the matter end there. His eyes lit up to send an ethereal attack aimed at her mind, but she restored her concentration in time to avoid that ability.

Ethereal waves of power converged toward Ulpia's mind, but she delivered a kick at the center of Alexander's waist. The impact made him slam on the sky and allowed her to push herself away from the mental attack.

Alexander's consciousness wavered, but he recovered faster than before. Anger and excitement fused in his expression as he understood that he was getting used to Ulpia's offensive, but the latter didn't let that small achievement influence the trend of the fight.

Ulpia materialized at Alexander's side before he could summon an ability before punching his arm. The attack sent Alexander flying along the sky, but he managed to stop himself before Ulpia's power vanished. A smirk even appeared on his face as his eyes followed the incredibly fast figure converging toward him.

Chapter 2236: 2236. Injuries

Ulpia was truly incredible, but Alexander didn't fall too behind. He had to give up on his idea of saving power and proving himself superior with his sole body, but that decision didn't affect his world.

Ulpia wasn't relying only on her body anymore. She was expressing the full power of her world, so Alexander could do the same to prove his superiority. Still, he had to accept that he couldn't surpass her techniques.

Alexander understood that Ulpia's hard work led to results far deeper than mere physical prowess. Her moves escaped reason. Her attacks were so fast and powerful that Alexander struggled to consider her only as a privileged cultivator.

Ulpia really seemed powerful enough to claim a spot at the sky's peak. She wasn't Caesar, and her influence didn't involve deep realms or meanings. Yet, her individual strength was genuinely unfathomable.

Alexander didn't think all of that. Ulpia didn't give him the time to study the situation thoroughly. Still, his instincts were incredible, so those considerations filled his mind as he focused everything he had on facing the incoming offensive.

The fast figure reached Alexander instantly, but the latter managed to follow it with his eyes. Ulpia became clear in his vision as she performed her battle stance to deliver a punch aimed at the center of his head.

The world in Alexander's eyes slowed down as multiple innate abilities fused to enhance his senses far beyond their normal limits. Tears of blood started to run down his cheeks due to his great effort, but his smirk never left his face.

Alexander didn't care if his body suffered from using too many innate abilities simultaneously. His incredible endurance could take care of those issues. He was happy as long as he could follow Ulpia and react to her offensive.

A dark spark exploded under Alexander's left arm and made the limb shoot upward. The detonation opened an injury on his forearm and elbow, but it also allowed him to intercept the incoming punch and deflect the attack.

Ulpia didn't hesitate at that time. Her leg shot toward Alexander's chest, but fire came out of his side and pushed him out of the attack's trajectory.

Ulpia's feet landed on the sky, but she followed with another quick attack. She used her other leg to deliver a circular kick aimed at Alexander's side, but winds shot out of the latter's shoulders to push him forward.

Alexander could barely follow his own movements, and he was even injuring himself to perform them. Yet, some instinctive parts of his mind allowed him to come up with attacks.

Alexander's offensive was the very opposite of Ulpia's. She embodied perfection and smoothness, while he only used raw power to keep up with her.

The sudden charge caught Ulpia off-guard. Alexander had dodged three attacks in a row and was shooting directly at her. He didn't have the time to raise his arms or summon other abilities, but that ferocious advance could become a technique when he used his incredible body as a weapon.

Ulpia crossed her arms right before Alexander slammed on her. The impact flung her in the distance, but she quickly restored her balance to resume her offensive.

Alexander didn't try to challenge Ulpia in raw speed. He could win if he relied on enough innate abilities, but that would deplete his energy reserves quickly.

Instead, Alexander decided to wait for Ulpia to approach him so that he could focus his full attention on winning small exchanges. Ulpia didn't seem to have ranged abilities anyway, so the tactic felt more than sound.

Ulpia reappeared in front of Alexander in less than a second, but the latter attacked before she could enter her battle stance. A shockwave came out of his right elbow and made his arm shoot forward to intercept his opponent.

Alexander's fingers transformed into claws that gained metallic properties as they approached Ulpia. Scarlet sparks also came out of their sharp tips to enhance their destructive abilities, but part of the skin underneath shattered due to the massive amount of power accumulated in such small spots.

Ulpia disregarded the incoming threat to pour more power into her attack. Alexander's clawed hand pierced Ulpia's shoulder, but she used that blow to rotate on herself and deliver an incredible punch to his face.

The exchange saw Ulpia and Alexander shooting in opposite directions. Blood flowed out of Alexander's nose, and his face trembled due to the damage to his skull. As for Ulpia, she noticed that her left arm had stopped moving according to her commands.

Alexander and Ulpia stopped themselves at the same time. The sky shone at their side, and battles raged everywhere around them, but their eyes remained on their opponent.

A single second of hesitation could lead to severe injuries due to how quickly each exchange happened. Outsiders wouldn't even understand who was gaining the upper hand, but that didn't apply to Alexander and Ulpia.

"You hit hard," Alexander commented as he tried to keep his bleeding nose still while his skull mended itself.

Alexander would never waste time talking in similar situations, but the matter was different now. He had to wait for Ulpia to charge at him to express his superiority, and his innate abilities allowed him to recover faster anyway.

"You are a tough opponent," Ulpia sighed as she glanced at her pierced shoulder. "It has been a long time since someone hurt me so deeply."

"You should have come out of the sky more often," Alexander mocked. "You can't expect solitary training to match the benefits of an adventurous life."

"You were too weak to be a worthy challenge back then," Ulpia revealed. "I had to be patient and see if Caesar could deliver as promised. I must admit that he was right all along."

"Did you cut a deal with Caesar just to get a good opponent?" Alexander wondered. "That sounds extreme."

"No deals," Ulpia stated. "He just told me that I would find a good training dummy during the final battle."

"This training dummy hurt you deeply," Alexander laughed as he pointed his eyes on Ulpia's injured shoulder. "I wonder if you can even fight me in that state."

"Do you think I didn't prepare for a similar situation?" Ulpia questioned as a faint white aura seeped out of her back. "My world focuses on physical attacks. I'm obviously able to keep moving as long as life burns inside it."

The white aura transformed into a tall avatar that carried Ulpia's features. It resembled a big copy of her that took its spot behind her back. Yet, the faint puppet soon stepped forward to envelop her in its dim light.

Tendrils shot out of the avatar's edges to land on Ulpia's body and fuse with it. The dim figure began to shrink once it established a connection, and it soon disappeared under her skin.

Alexander inspected the scene carefully. He knew that the avatar didn't carry any unique ability. It was nothing more than energy expressing the results of Ulpia's hard work.

The injury on Ulpia's shoulder also remained open after the avatar fused with her. However, a pale halo came out of the wound to reveal that the copy didn't simply disappear. It only stood right below her skin.

The ability of the avatar became evident when Ulpia stretched her left arm. Blood leaked from her injury, but she didn't seem affected by that, and the same went for her movements. She had regained complete control over that part of her body.

Chapter 2237: 2237. Monstrous

"You can force yourself to keep moving," Alexander commented, "But your body will reach its limits faster than mine anyway."

"We won't know until we try," Ulpia smiled before a shockwave replaced her figure.

Alexander's eyes widened in surprise, and a layer of metallic skin promptly grew over his body, but the ability turned out to be too slow. Something slammed at the center of his torso and made his consciousness go dark.

Alexander couldn't sense anything, but his instincts did their best to send him vague inputs captured among the darkness of his consciousness. They mostly carried pain, but they also indicated specific locations at times.

A vague conclusion made its way among Alexander's dizzy consciousness. Ulpia's offensive was going on while he was in that weakened state. She had grown faster and stronger after fusing with her avatar.

The new strength unleashed by Ulpia stretched the duration of Alexander's weakened state. He slowly learnt how to sense again in the middle of his mental dizziness, but he remained unable to react to the attacks landing on him.

Ulpia's offensive was relentless, but Alexander only felt slight consequences. He was in no condition to sense what was happening to his body, and his attention was also elsewhere.

Alexander trusted his body and innate resilience deeply, so he disregarded any worry involving his condition to focus on the only topic that mattered. He had to regain control of his senses and movements before Ulpia had a chance to kill him.

Innate abilities unleashed their effects and fused, but none of them seemed able to do much against Ulpia's offensive. Alexander couldn't even pour more energy into the process since he had to rely on his instincts to handle everything.

The situation felt desperate, but Alexander didn't give up. He couldn't even have those thoughts in that situation. His mind almost went back to a primitive state as his survival instincts took control of his body and did everything in their power to save him from that condition.

The greatest difference between Alexander and Ulpia didn't involve their bodies. The two experts were pretty similar in that field, even if the reasons behind their power were quite diverse.

Instead, what put Alexander and Ulpia apart was how they used their power. Ulpia relied on techniques perfected throughout the eras, while Alexander used abilities inherited from the magical beasts' world.

It was only normal that Alexander couldn't match Ulpia's sophisticated attacks. He had never aimed to do that. Still, his brutal and relatively reckless approach fell short now that Ulpia had shown herself able to wield a superior power.

The situation worsened as Ulpia kept Alexander locked in a torrent of attacks. The primal mindset achieved in the middle of that darkness couldn't come up with a combination of abilities that could save him. It didn't have the intelligence to find flaws in the enemy offensive.

Alexander's instincts could only opt for a different approach. They couldn't save him by being smart, so they grew even dumber. They dropped any attempt to create something stable and just empowered what they could.

Among Alexander's countless innate abilities, many of them involved temporary mindless states capable of generating immense power. His survival instincts activated all of them simultaneously due to the troublesome situation, and Ulpia didn't miss that event.

Ulpia was punching Alexander all across the higher plane. Her attacks left deep marks in his body and flung him away, sometimes even forcing him to crash on battles handled by weaker beings.

Of course, Alexander's arrival turned those battles into a gory scene, and Ulpia's chase only worsened the situation. The issue became so significant that most underlings interrupted their fights to abandon their spot whenever the two experts got too close.

Ulpia did her best to inflict as much damage as possible. She was suffering in that empowered state. The injury on her shoulder expanded due to the extra effort, but her entire body also started to crack.

Her body couldn't endure that state for too long, but she had to press forward. Something inside Ulpia told her that Alexander was about to regain control of his movements. He was about to show a new power, so she had to damage him deeply to pave her way toward victory.

That moment arrived far before Ulpia's expectations. She had just reached Alexander, and an incredibly fast punch was about to fall on his face, but a clawed arm suddenly grabbed her wrist.

Ulpia was ready to deliver a second attack that could knock Alexander down again, but her wrist shattered under the massive strength unleashed by the grip. Moreover, she noticed that Alexander wasn't awake at all. His eyes had opened, but they carried no reason.

A monstrous roar left Alexander's mouth and created a soundwave that slowed down Ulpia's second attack. She still managed to kick him on his chest, but he had the time to wave his other hand.

Alexander shot far away, and Ulpia disregarded her injuries to chase him. She had lost her right arm, and a long cut had appeared on her torso due to the last attack, but she couldn't stop. That would mean death.

Another wave of surprise swept Ulpia's mind when she noticed that Alexander stopped himself before the energy from her kick could vanish. Alexander's face had long since abandoned its old features due to the many bruises, cuts, and holes on its surface, but Ulpia could still see a monstrous expression behind all of that.

Alexander seemed to have turned into a mindless beast that reeked power from every inch of his maimed body. He was filled with injuries, and some patches of his skin had disappeared to reveal his internal organs. Yet, he appeared stronger than ever.

That unexpected recovery didn't stop Ulpia. She reached Alexander and used her maimed arm to deliver an uppercut. Sadly for her, Alexander voiced another deafening roar, and her movements slowed down.

Alexander instinctively waved his hand to take care of the uppercut, and Ulpia saw her whole arm leaving her body. She couldn't stop Alexander's clawed fingers, but her leg was already up, and her foot soon landed at the center of his chest.

Another chase started, but Alexander recovered even faster than before. Ulpia saw another severe injury opening on her body when she tried to launch an attack, and her expression flickered when Alexander blocked her second blow.

Alexander was getting quicker, while Ulpia's condition continued to worsen. Yet, she still managed to come out of the exchanges. She only didn't know for how long she could keep that up.

The limits of the empowered state stopped being a problem. Ulpia realized that her body would shatter even before she ran out of energy. Her resilience wasn't an issue either. Alexander's attacks were far more troublesome.

The situation turned tragic when Ulpia saw a spark of intelligence flashing in Alexander's bloodshot eyes. She was in the process of throwing a punch when he grabbed her. She expected to lose her arm at that point, but Alexander decided to pull her instead.

A simple pull from Alexander could move entire regions. Ulpia didn't even realize when her body crashed into the sky. The event had been too fast, and what followed also fell in that category.

Alexander instantly landed on Ulpia. His feet crashed on her chest and shattered it. A few chunks of flesh still connected her to her lower body, but Alexander severed them by pulling her from her ponytail.

Chapter 2238: 2238. Helplessness

Ulpia reviewed the previous exchange countless times to find his mistakes, but she failed to put the blame on herself. She had been perfect both in her movements and attacks. Alexander had simply been better.

Alexander had lost his reason for a good part of the last exchanges, but thoughts had managed to make their way inside his chaotic mind. His instincts had stepped down long enough to grant him partial control of his body and perform a smarter offensive.

A pull had been more effective than a mere cut. Alexander had pinned Ulpia down through that action, which had allowed him to inflict deadly injuries.

Ulpia was only a shadow of her former self now. She had lost her right arm and her lower body. A long injury ran through her torso, and Alexander kept her head still from her ponytail. Her battle appeared over.

"You are a tough one," Alexander commented as blood flowed from his mouth. "I can't remember the last time I suffered so many injuries."

Alexander's state was far from ideal. His face had lost its original shape since his nose, mouth, and skull had endured countless attacks. His head actually appeared flabby, but he kept it together through his energy.

Holes, bruises, and far more gory injuries covered Alexander's body. He seemed on the verge of falling apart, but his immense resilience kept everything together. He could still stand and fight at his peak power, but he could sense his energy reserves vanishing quickly to retain that level.

"You had me for a bit," Alexander admitted as growls fused with his human voice. "I didn't think you would force my survival instincts to come out. That was some feat."

Alexander was gradually regaining the entirety of his mental faculties. His instincts still raged loudly, but he was almost entirely in control. The only feeling he couldn't disperse was the constant dizziness caused by the many blows he had suffered.

"Why would I take pride in something so meager?" Ulpia weakly sneered. "Don't try to add beauty to defeats."

Alexander tried to smirk, but his muscles didn't follow his orders. Still, Ulpia seemed to recognize his expression from behind his wounded face. She could feel it even with her eyes closed.

Alexander had every intention to end the battle quickly. He had lost enough time getting beaten throughout the higher plane, and he even needed to rest for a bit. Wasting time talking would only hurt his side.

However, when Alexander threw his clawed hand toward the center of Ulpia's wounded chest, he heard a clanging noise accompanied by a white radiance. His fingers had pierced Ulpia's skin, but they couldn't dig past that.

"Did you forget what I said?" Ulpia chuckled as her white avatar grew under her skin and gave her a humanoid shape. "I'll fight as long as life burns inside me."

Alexander mustered multiple abilities to push his arm forward, but a shining right hand grabbed his wrist and slowly pushed his clawed fingers back. Ulpia's new arm shone with power and allowed her to match her opponent's sheer physical might.

A kick faster than anything Alexander had experienced before landed on his waist and flung him away. Multiple abilities still empowered him, so he stopped himself after flying for a while. His consciousness didn't turn dark either, which allowed him to inspect Ulpia's transformation.

Multiple cracks opened on Ulpia's skin until what remained of her body transformed into a mess of tiny shards laying on a white avatar. It seemed that her energy was reaching levels of power that her flesh couldn't withstand, but the transformation didn't end there.

The various chunks of flesh began to melt and fuse with the avatar. Ulpia soon transformed into nothing more than pure energy that shone with power but carried no solid form. She retained her features, but she was only power kept together by her will.

Alexander didn't need to use any of his many abilities to know that Ulpia wouldn't survive that transformation. That form was a desperate attack that exchanged her very life for a burst of power.

Running away was the best tactic. Alexander didn't know how strong Ulpia had become, but he was confident the many innate abilities accumulated throughout his life. He could escape and force Ulpia to deplete her energy until she turned into nothing.

In theory, Ulpia should have never resorted to something so easy to counter, especially when she was against someone like Alexander. That was a dumb move from a strategic perspective.

Nevertheless, Ulpia and Alexander had reached a deep understanding of each other while exchanging blows through the entire higher plane. They knew what kind of maniac they were fighting, so Ulpia felt beyond confident that Alexander wouldn't run away.

As Ulpia expected, Alexander's aura burst forward, and his laugh spread through the void. Roars and human cries came out of his mouth as he expressed his anticipation for the incoming clash.

Instincts and thoughts fused inside Alexander's mind to bring out the best innate abilities accumulated in his world. Dark strands of energy came out of his injuries during the process, and chunks of his body exploded due to the massive amount of energy flowing inside him.

Alexander was also going all-out. He wouldn't achieve victory by running away. Even if the effort would worsen his condition, he had to prove his superiority.

"Maybe it was fate that put us on opposite sides," Ulpia spoke through her bright figure. "Today, the world will witness the peak of the fighting arts against the apex of brute power."

"You shouldn't waste that little power you have left," Alexander mocked. "Come at me with everything you have."

"You are right," Ulpia stated. "Let's talk through our fists."

Ulpia disappeared, and torrents of dark energy shot out of Alexander. Ordinary experts would fail to follow to understand when the exchange started, but the shockwave that spread through the entire higher plane made sure to tell them when it ended.

In an instant, a giant chunk of the battlefield saw white and dark energy taking control of its space. The two attacks unleashed waves of power that filled the area with their respective shades before dispersing among the void.

Everything had happened so fast that no one could understand who had won. Moreover, the void's space-time array had suffered enough damage to make inspections impossible. Even peak rank 9 inscribed items would struggle to gather details in the areas involved by the clash.

The space-time array quickly stabilized and revealed two maimed figures. Alexander stood proudly, but he was impossible to recognize from his figure.

The muscles on Alexander's chest had disappeared, leaving his fuming rib cage in the open. That damage also expanded on other parts of his body, involving his neck, shoulders, and abdomen. His skin reappeared only in his arms, waist, and chin.

Meanwhile, Ulpia appeared quite fine. Her radiance had dimmed, and holes had opened on her figure, but her new state prevented anyone from understanding how serious her injuries were.

A tremor ran through Alexander's body and forced him to bend forward. A violent cough took control of his lungs, which only made his maimed figure spurt blood in every direction. His resilience tried to fix some injuries, but he wasted most of those efforts during his spasms.

"I can barely float," Ulpia sighed in a cracked voice, "And you are still alive."

The cough made Alexander unable to answer. His spasms also affected his consciousness, which struggled to remain awake.

"Congratulations, you win," Ulpia announced. "I guess I can consider my debt to the sky paid since you'll need to leave the battlefield for a while."

The holes on Ulpia's body started to expand. In a few seconds, her bright figure turned into nothing more than a floating head that stared at Alexander. She appeared slightly annoyed, but helplessness eventually replaced that feeling.

Chapter 2239: 2239. Phoenix

Alexander felt odd, and that didn't come from his awful state. He struggled to regain control of his injured body and suppress his cough, but strange thoughts filled his mind once he could focus on the scene.

Ulpia seemed to have lost interest in her surroundings. She was nothing more than a floating head immersed in her thoughts. She probably wanted to speak, but she found it pointless since her death was coming.

Alexander forced himself to straighten his back and improve the efficiency of his healing abilities. A layer of metallic skin grew over his figure to contain all the new blood and flesh that his body was generating, but his attention soon moved elsewhere.

Ulpia had expressed the power of a completely different field during the battle, and she had almost managed to overcome Alexander. She could also show superiority, but Alexander had managed to seize victory due to his incredible body.

'What am I even thinking now?' Alexander wondered as he sorted out his jumbled thoughts.

Ulpia's head was disappearing quickly. Her face remained in one piece since her will still kept it together, but her light never stopped dimming. It wouldn't take long before she stopped existing in the higher plane.

Alexander found himself glancing at different spots of the battlefield. He felt deep respect toward all his companions, but there was someone that he put even above them.

It was safe to say that Noah had saved Alexander's life. The latter would have remained a crazy mess of innate abilities without Noah's help. He had also allowed Alexander to reach higher realms of the cultivation journey, and the current battlefield only proved how incredible he was.

Moreover, Noah was a being that stood beyond hybrids. Alexander almost saw him as the natural evolution that every member of his kind had to strive to achieve and surpass.

Their connection went beyond normal feelings. Noah's pride could affect Alexander, but that didn't come from a difference of power. Alexander had acknowledged Noah as his leader, so his orders could influence his mindset.

Alexander ended up looking for June at that point. She had turned her side of the battlefield into a mess of lightning bolts and sparks. Her body was full of injuries, but her face expressed pure ecstasy. She was crazy, but Alexander found similarities between her and Ulpia.

The details behind Noah and June's relationships weren't exactly a secret. Noah never spoke too much about it, but he had been together with his core allies for entire millennia. Even random short statements could depict a relatively complete picture after so long.

Noah and June were quite different, but their paths were suitable for each other. They could draw out the best of their aspects when they were together. That part actually was quite necessary for their relationship.

Alexander respected Noah so much that he felt the need to imitate that part of his life. He obviously wouldn't have come up with that idea randomly. He had to meet a suitable expert to consider that option.

"You said that your debt with Heaven and Earth is no more," Alexander commented as he tried to retain a human voice.

"What?" Ulpia asked when Alexander pulled her out of her helplessness. "They have given me time and resources to perfect my techniques. I used those arts to damage you. The rulers can't ask anything else from me."

"I see," Alexander sighed as a scarlet vortex appeared at the center of his right palm.

"Do you plan to eat me?" Ulpia wondered. "Hurry up. I don't have much energy left."

"I wouldn't have hesitated to take a glimpse of your determination if you were a magical beast," Alexander explained.

"What are you doing then?" Ulpia asked.

Alexander didn't answer. His concentration was far from ideal, and his injuries only worsened his efforts. Still, he could spare some attention for a single innate ability.

The scarlet vortex shrunk until it transformed into a dark-red pebble that contained the energy generated by the innate ability. Ulpia couldn't understand its purpose, but her consciousness was too weak to perform a thorough inspection.

Alexander moved the pebble on his forefinger before reaching for Ulpia's vanishing head. She couldn't oppose the process, but understanding dawned upon her when the item fused with her disappearing light.

The pebble reached the center of Ulpia's head before sending scarlet tendrils that expanded throughout her vanishing fabric. The item resembled a seed feeding off her energy, but she found it odd how her thoughts remained clear.

The seed wasn't hurting her. Actually, Ulpia noticed how her consciousness stopped striving toward dark areas. A warm and cozy sensation filled her thoughts and made her feel safe, but that also brought answers to her doubts.

"That's," Ulpia gasped. "Why?"

"Superiority isn't an eternal power," Alexander revealed. "I stand on a sea of innate abilities gathered during my long life, but that might not be enough after leaving the higher plane. I need something else, someone else."

"I won't become a slave," Ulpia coldly remarked.

"You won't," Alexander stated. "It would be pointless to remove your free will. I want you to keep improving without the limits of your human body."

"You know who I am," Ulpia uttered. "You know the nature of my world. I will fight you again to test the limits of my hard work."

"And I will defeat you again," Alexander replied. "I will defeat you as many times as I need to remain superior to everyone else."

Ulpia fell silent. Her head started to disappear as the tendrils absorbed her energy, but the process didn't hurt at all. It was actually pleasant. Ulpia felt as if she was going back to the safety of a womb.

"I'll have a lot to learn about hybrids," Ulpia eventually continued. "I'll have to review all my arts and adapt them to my new form. It will take me a long time."

"That's the only thing existences like us have," Alexander declared. "You'll be reborn through the fire of the ancestral phoenix without losing your memories or world. Who knows? I might even decide to learn something as you adapt your techniques to your new form."

"I'll let you see them if you teach me how to be a hybrid," Ulpia responded.

"That should be a good deal," Alexander laughed. "I bet even Heaven and Earth couldn't offer something so good."

"They can," Ulpia corrected. "Their power is immense and stretches past what you can imagine. Still, I might prefer this deal."

"Did you finally acknowledge the hybrids' superiority?" Alexander proudly asked.

"No, I acknowledged yours," Ulpia replied. "Though I won't let it stand unmatched."

"You'll have to work hard to overcome me," Alexander sneered.

"That's not a problem," Ulpia smiled before her mouth completely vanished.

Alexander could only see Ulpia's eyes at that point, and they seemed to express some conflicting emotions. They glanced at the sky, at Noah, and at June before falling back on Alexander.

"Don't think that I'll be overwhelmed by instincts," Ulpia's voice came out of the pebble as the last traces of her face vanished. "You won't win me over so easily."

"I didn't expect anything less," Alexander announced. "I wouldn't have chosen to do this otherwise."

"Good," Ulpia's voice resounded again as the tendrils returned inside the pebble. "I guess I'll consider you if I wake up in a world without Heaven and Earth."

Alexander wore a smirk as he retracted the pebble. Ulpia's consciousness went silent as the rebirth started. It would take her a while to generate a suitable hybrid body, but that was fine. Alexander had far different matters to handle now.

Chapter 2240: 2240. Boring

Divine Demon's battle had been quite odd compared to the others. He didn't move much, and the same went for his opponent. The two mostly remained in their original position as they let their energy fight.

The blood-red energy created marvels as its waves rotated around Divine Demon and refilled his cup. He appeared utterly relaxed, but it was clear that some annoyance was making its way into his expression.

As for his opponent, the middle-aged woman had decided to imitate his stance. She sat cross-legged among the void as columns of grey energy shot out of her figure to meet what Divine Demon threw at her.

Divine Demon's offensive wasn't something normal methods could oppose, especially in the long run. His world always came up with new ways to pierce his opponent's defenses, but all of them seemed pointless against the privileged cultivator.

It didn't matter how complicated and powerful Divine Demon's attacks became. The privileged cultivator's energy seemed able to disperse those blood-red attacks easily, without even resorting to any specific technique or method.

The event didn't need any specific explanation. Anyone would understand the reason behind that odd interaction between the two types of energy. It was something that went beyond the counters created by Heaven and Earth. It was something so evident that Divine Demon had accepted the truth after the first exchange.

"You aren't the brightest of your group," The woman announced after another exchange unfolded in her vision. "You don't even try to think too much during a battle, but you should have understood what is happening."

Divine Demon snorted without adding anything. His blood-red energy gave birth to another massive technique, but the privileged cultivator easily defeated it by sending seemingly casual torrents of power forward.

The clash ended in an instant. The grey energy made the blood-red techniques disperse as soon as they touched. The privileged cultivator's power carried something that went deep against Divine Demon's attacks and made them disintegrate immediately.

"What's even the point of this?" The privileged cultivator asked. "Did you really think that your power was omnipotent? Natural counters exist in this world, especially for abilities like yours."

Divine Demon sighed. He appeared annoyed by the hindrance. He didn't show his usual ardor, even if the opponent won every exchange.

"Your power is indeed miraculous," The woman stated while spreading her arms, "But I can destroy those miracles easily. It doesn't matter what you send forward. I only need to make your energy touch my power to render it useless."

"I've seen that," Divine Demon sighed again. "It's quite boring."

"You didn't really expect Heaven and Earth to let go of this power," The privileged cultivator announced. "They weren't in the best state back then, but they prepared countermeasures anyway. They had partially predicted that someone like me would be born after severing ties with the "Breath"."

The privileged cultivator's explanation was perfectly in line with Heaven and Earth's behavior, and it was also reasonable. The world naturally gave birth to counters, and their power reached extreme levels in the presence of another extreme.

Heaven and Earth had ditched the "Breath" to move to the chaotic storms, but that didn't prevent the world from creating a natural counter. The expert basically claimed to be something similar to the four dragons, but in the form of a privileged cultivator under Heaven and Earth.

"Yes, yes," Divine Demon sighed for the third time. "Everything makes so much sense that it gets boring."

"What can you even do about it?" The woman asked. "You can drink and complain all you want, but I'll remain here to hinder your path."

Divine Demon glanced at the sky behind the privileged cultivator before moving his attention toward the rest of the battlefield. Most fights were about to reach their end, and Noah's side seemed on the verge of achieving a general victory. Still, that didn't bring any happiness to his mind.

"You know," Divine Demon exclaimed. "The final battle should be the peak of a demon's life. It should be the culmination of a lifetime of struggles against the greatest monsters of the sky."

"What do you think this is?" The privileged cultivator smirked. "Heaven and Earth are sending their best warriors to stop you. You might win this exchange and maybe even triumph in the next, but you will lose in the end."

"I heard this already," Divine Demon pointed out. "Still, you are wrong. You aren't Heaven and Earth's best warriors. You are a mere tactic hidden in another tactic that belongs to a broader strategy."

The privileged cultivator didn't like that comment. Divine Demon wasn't wrong, but she still had her pride as an expert who had reached the peak of the journey to defend.

"We aren't stepping stones," The woman exclaimed as her face grew cold. "Caesar might have his plans, but our orders are to kill all of you."

"You said that we would win the next exchanges," Divine Demon snorted.

"Victory is relative," The privileged cultivator stated. "How many of you will be too injured to keep fighting after this round of battles? How many of you will last until the end? How many of you will actually win?"

The privileged cultivator's statement also made a lot of sense. The other battles were reaching their end, so it was already clear that many leaders on Noah's side would be too tired or injured to join the next round.

Even experts like Sword Saint would probably have to skip the next round to solidify his gains. His breakthrough was incredible news, but it would take him some time to gain access to the entirety of his new power.

"Boring," Divine Demon sighed again.

"To quote your friend," The privileged cultivator continued, "We aren't mindless brutes. Heaven and Earth are using their best advantage to wear you down and ensure their victory. Whoever survives the process will live to see the rulers paving the way toward new heights of power."

"How can I even get interested in something like this?" Divine Demon wondered.

"It's not my problem if you find basic battle tactics boring," The woman mocked.

"That's not it," Divine Demon explained. "This is the final battle, but it feels like a mere gathering of pawns. You are the worst part of all of this since you decided to face me only due to your innate advantages."

"That's a standard tactic," The privileged cultivator repeated. "Emotions are useful, but we can't allow them to get in the way of victory."

"What victory?" Divine Demon asked. "Are you talking about your victory? Do you mean Heaven and Earth's victory? I don't get you, all of you. The cultivation journey has given you the chance to go beyond godhood, but you use it to serve the safest bet."

"We can't all fly around and shout like idiots," The privileged cultivator declared. "Besides, if you have problems with our path, you only have to defeat us to prove that you are right. That's how the cultivation journey works."

"I know," Divine Demon replied while glancing inside his empty cup before throwing it away. "I'm only disappointed. I thought that moment would arrive sooner. Instead, I have to force your hands."

"You can't even defeat me," The woman laughed. "What makes you think you can force Heaven and Earth's hands?"

"Oh, defeating you isn't a problem," Divine Demon revealed. "I simply didn't want to do this against such a boring opponent."

