

DEMONIC 811

[Chapter 811 811. Relocation](#)

The meeting didn't last too long. The Elders and Chasing Demon just had to decide how to spread the information that the god of the Shandal Empire was very likely to leave his nation during or after God's Right Hand's ascension.

That matter was rather easy. Chasing Demon and the other powerhouses had already exchanged messages during the Heaven Tribulation and expressed their inclination to cooperate against the common enemy.

Of course, the Empire didn't announce its plans, but a nation with two divine beings and a rank 6 cultivator could only be a threat in the eyes of the other forces.

In the end, they simply decided to give away the original tome and let Thirty-seven copy its contents. King Elbas and Great Elder Diana wouldn't be easy to convince to go to war over old records, but the Hive was sure that they would be at least interested in that eventuality.

Giving away the original was just an expression of the Hive's goodwill. It was just a way to make the other nations take its information seriously.

The atmosphere in the world was tense after the Tribulation. Both human and heroic cultivators had witnessed how an entity had defeated the most dangerous hindrance on the path toward the divine ranks!

The human cultivators didn't care that they had been injured because they dared to look at that majestic sight, and the heroic assets felt happy even if the new god belonged to an enemy nation.

They had seen the birth of a god, the pinnacle of the cultivation journey in the Mortal Lands!

Most of them were still too shaken even to cultivate while others had secluded themselves right after the god of the Empire suppressed his underling's aura.

Ambition and dread filled those cultivators. Some of them saw in God's Right Hand's success hope toward their prospects. Others realized how far away they were from such incredible existences and found it hard to start walking again on the path toward the higher ranks.

After all, the Heaven Tribulation had lasted for almost a day, and its area of destruction would have been able to cover an entire continent if God's Right Hand didn't choose to face his breakthrough in the middle of the sea. Also, the appearance of the two rank 6 Scaled Mosasauri reminded the cultivators of how little they knew about the world.

The hidden dangers of the sea shook even Noah, but he felt thrilled rather than scared. The fauna of that environment was even more powerful than he imagined, and the harsh requirements of his body didn't seem too helpless with two worlds at his disposal.

Chasing Demon eventually dismissed the Elders and ordered them to help with the relocation of the essential resources of the Hive. Their presence there was unnecessary since he could deal with the other powerhouses on his own, while his organization needed all the manpower available.

The Elders couldn't relocate the Copying technique, which was by far the most potent weapon in the Hive's arsenal. Yet, they could move all the archives, inventories, and other vital assets inside the separate dimension.

Entire quarters disappeared and left empty spots in the cities under the domes. Even the towers built in the desert vanished in a matter of days.

The shining pools though had to remain on the surface since it was impossible to replicate the environment rich of "Breath" of the new continent. Also, creating a connection between the surface and the dimension where energy could travel would only reveal the existence of their hideouts.

Noah helped mostly with the relocation of the living weapons. Since they were living beings, they couldn't enter the space-rings, and there were heroic cultivators still struggling to suppress their wills. There were even containers filled with other living weapons that had yet to have an owner.

Those weapons mostly had conscious Beast Cores, which made them extremely difficult to control. The others were simply prototypes that Noah and Thirty-seven had decided to keep for future experiments.

Noah had checked his mansion too, but June wasn't even in her quarters on the surface. He expected that though, so he simply continued to help with the relocation at that point.

The Elbas family and the Ultra nation were reacting to God's Right Hand's breakthrough in the same way, preparing for the worst while also studying the contents of the tome shared by Chasing Demon.

The truth was that both the Royals and the Council were organizations built on the remains of old powers. The mystical fog and the mountain chain divided the old continent into three areas that would usually become the domains of three powerful forces.

That was something that had continued to happen throughout history since the appearance of those danger zones. Such natural borders had always allowed the existence and the development of three organizations able to claim those entire areas as theirs.

So, it wasn't hard to imagine that the leading forces of the three areas of influence would have access to past records. Most of them would be just fragments of the knowledge of the previous rulers, but there were times when they retrieved something intact, and that contained interesting pieces of information.

Also, the Council and the Royals had incredible heritages. The orthodox sect of the Papral nation had obtained Divine Elder Tabitha's inheritance while the Royals had King Elbas' as their leader. An existence able to build a portal toward another Mortal Lands would surely own knowledge that covered many millennia of history.

That was why they trusted Chasing Demon's tome rather quickly, even if they still used their methods to ascertain its authenticity.

Of course, that exchange of knowledge had happened only among the powerhouses. The heroic assets of all three forces couldn't join such a conversation.

Yet, Chasing Demon conveyed the results of their discussion to the Elders.

"King Elbas and Great Elder Diana trust our source," Chasing Demon's voice resounded in the minds of the Elders in the fifth rank, "We will pay attention to the sky. If the god follows God's Right Hand during his ascension, we will create a united front and assault the Empire."

Eagerness spread among the Elders after Chasing Demon's mental message. Even Noah felt excited at the prospect of war.

Cultivators had to spend long periods in seclusion to train, but they would just stagnate if they neglected real-world experiences. Noah was the same. Expressing his creation during those peaceful years had improved his cultivation speed, but he felt the need to show even the other aspect of his individuality.

His duality was something that worried him at times since expressing both creation and destruction was rather vague as a concept, but that was his individuality. That duality defined his existence.

The Empire remained silent throughout all that period, and the three forces had to wait three months before a change happened in the sky above the center of the old continent.

A neat crack suddenly appeared in the azure sky and widened, revealing a white light in its insides.

[Chapter 812 812. Ascension](#)

The crack was large, almost as large as an entire region. Also, it was straight, which was quite an unusual sight for that kind of phenomenon.

Heroic cultivators had the power to shatter the air and the fabric of the sky, but they mostly reformed in no time and only showed complete darkness on the other side. Yet, there was an intense white light inside the fissure, which enlarged to form something similar to a wide oval-shaped door.

The light didn't shine on the lands under the crack and remained outside of the Mortal Lands. It seemed that it was unable to cross the now open borders of that world.

The event attracted the attention of all the cultivators once again, but it wasn't violent like the Heaven Tribulation. The sky had opened as if it was a natural occurrence, without releasing shockwaves nor unleashing catastrophes on the lands below.

"God's Right Hand has probably surpassed the Earth Tribulation and is ready to ascend!" Flying Demon said in a mental message directed to Noah. The Demon had recognized that event and had explained as soon as it happened.

'So, this is what an ascension looks like.' Noah thought as he stopped cultivating and flew in the air to watch the event from a better position.

The Hive had completely relocated its valuable resources and buildings by then, so Noah had decided to resume his cultivation in the quarters under his dome. He couldn't just isolate himself in the separate dimension in that period, and it was improbable that June would return to the mansion anytime soon.

Thirty-seven would just notify him of her return anyway, but he needed to stay on the surface in case something peculiar happened again.

"I remember Master cursing when he first saw that light." Dreaming Demon said as she appeared behind Noah. Flying Demon was with her, but he remained silent as he stared at the large fissure in the distance with a reminiscing gaze.

"It feels welcoming." Noah judged as he analyzed the white light inside the crack. Even if they were on the most distant spot from the center of the old continent, they seemed able to sense the aura carried by that glow perfectly.

Noah felt as if the light would lead him to a comfortable and perfect place, away from the struggles of the Mortal Lands. It was a strange sensation, almost addictive, but that was still too far away from his level.

"It's a lie, isn't it?" Noah said.

He didn't trust Heaven and Earth. He knew that they were conscious beings that worked for their interests, even if he couldn't understand them.

The white light gave birth to unreal sensations, to a sense of perfection that couldn't exist in such a variegated world, which meant that it had to have a hidden purpose, one only known to Heaven, Earth, and divine beings.

Both Demons laughed when they heard his remark, and Flying Demon couldn't help but explain the reason behind their reaction. "Master said that it was a scam. No wonder you managed to seize his inheritance. You have the same mindset."

"What did you two think about it back then?" Noah asked.

"Happiness, power, eagerness, and much more," Dreaming Demon answered. "These are the usual emotions felt during your first contact with the divine light of the Immortal Lands."

Noah's eyes widened at her words. He had made the connection between the white world depicted in Divine Architect's sculpture and that light, but he didn't know if his idea was on point. Yet, Dreaming Demon confirmed his guess. That brightness came from the higher plane connected with the various Mortal Lands!

"How does it work?" Noah asked. He couldn't hold back his curiosity. "Do you just cross the fissure, and you are inside? What about the void between the Mortal Lands?"

His curiosity though could only meet the shaking heads of the Demons. Even such old and powerful existences didn't know the specifics behind the ascension.

"According to what Master told us," Flying Demon began to speak, "Heaven and Earth open the portal when a being reaches the divinity with all its centers of power. If you refuse to ascend, the crack will close, and you would have to open it on your own the next time."

"Is it hard to open it on your own?" Noah continued with his questions.

"Master did it quite easily. He said that Heaven and Earth themselves didn't want him in a lower plane anymore." Dreaming Demon answered.

It was evident that Divine Demon didn't explain much to his disciples, but just left a few impressions as he kept advancing.

Noah would have preferred a complete guide and explanation, with personal considerations and descriptions of the true nature of Heaven and Earth, but Divine Demon's character was quite peculiar. In his idea, demons had to find their path and make their discoveries. Handing them everything would just give birth to weak-willed cultivators.

The three of them kept on floating in the air as they stared at the mysterious phenomenon in the distance.

They didn't have any orders. It was up to the powerhouses to inspect the behavior of the and decide on their next move. So, Noah and the Demons simply watched and experienced the aura coming from what was considered to be the finish line of the cultivation journey.

Also, they were too far away from the old continent. They wouldn't be able to see God's Right Hand ascending even if they wanted.

A strange aura suddenly spread from the old territories of the Shandal Empire and reached even the new continent. It didn't seem to have a purpose. That aura was just a natural consequence of a consciousness that had crossed the limits of the heroic ranks.

"They are ascending." Chasing Demon's voice suddenly resounded in their minds. "Both of them are ascending."

His voice was calm, but the Demons knew him too well not to sense the eagerness hidden in his tone. Yet, they didn't say anything and waited patiently for the next update on the situation.

Minutes passed as if they were years. Chasing Demon's next message would declare whether the Hive would join the other nation in an assault to the most potent force in the world.

Then, the fissure suddenly closed, and the sky quickly fixed itself, returning to its normal state. Even the eerie aura from before disappeared once the crack vanished.

More silence followed, but Chasing Demon soon broke it with an announcement that made Noah and the Demons reveal cold smiles. "Both gods have crossed the fissure and left the Mortal Lands. The Empire is currently at its weakest. Rally the troops, we have a nation to plunder!"

Noah and the Demons didn't hesitate to follow his orders and shot toward the domes to give the long-awaited announcement.

It was time to dethrone the Empire from its position as the most potent force in their Mortal Lands.

[Chapter 813 813. Sanity](#)

Noah didn't need to rally the troops personally, and the same went for the other Elders in the fifth rank. They just had to announce the decision of the Patriarch to a few rank 4 cultivators and leave those matters to them.

He had to bring the living weapons outside of the inventories though, and he even had to make sure that the cultivators wielding them were able to handle them properly.

Nevertheless, there was a task that required Noah's presence and that the other Elders had requested him to handle before going to battle.

Noah reached for the underground structure that restrained the creatures needed for the Copying technique together with the two Demons. Roars reached his ears as soon as they crossed the passage at the bottom of the new continent. Still, Noah knew that none of them belonged to his target.

The trio walked through the cave filled by shining lines until it reached a specific branch where chains and formations restrained a familiar mantis.

"Danielle," Noah said as he faced the mantis, "We need to talk."

Danielle slowly opened her mantis eyes and took a long look at the three cultivators standing in front of her. When she realized who they were, she tried to straighten her position and stand up only to realize that her body hurt too much to complete that task.

Noah noticed a series of cracks on her silver body and clear signs of malnutrition. It was evident that she had to pay the price for the studies of the Hive, and those researches didn't stop after Noah began to build living weapons.

Yet, even if Danielle appeared weak, she was still a perfect hybrid in the fifth rank. Her body hid an incredible amount of power, even in her injured state.

"Demon Prince of the Hive," A female voice came out of the mantis' mouth. "Did you come here to kill me? Or do you just want to take away part of my body?"

There were tinges of sarcasm in her voice, but Noah didn't miss the intense helplessness that her words carried.

"I was thinking about making a deal," Noah answered.

There was more than one reason why there weren't conscious Beast Cores in the fifth rank. One of them was Noah's inexperience with materials on that level, but there was also the fear that the revolt of a weapon with that Core would cause serious problems.

However, there was another aspect of the matter to consider. A living weapon in the fifth rank was a potent asset to assign to a cultivator, but it couldn't compare to a perfect hybrid at the same level.

The Hive only had eight Elders in the fifth rank, nine if they counted Amos Udye. The value of assets at that level was incredible. They were the elites among the exceptional talents that had managed to reach the heroic ranks!

So, killing a rank 5 hybrid just to create a clouded or conscious Beast Core could only be a waste when compared to obtaining the creature as an actual ally.

Of course, convincing the hybrids to join their organization after they had to spend decades as guinea pigs wasn't an easy task, but Noah had something that the natives of the other world now lacked. He had the blood of their ancestors, beings that the natives had always worshipped and followed blindly.

Danielle snorted and complained in a low voice. "Do you think I would accept to help you after you spent years experimenting on me and my species? The political system of my world wasn't perfect, but

we were united. We were humans striving to reach the pinnacle of our existence, the highest expression of our beings. You are just humans struggling to seize more resources."

Noah and the Demons knew that Danielle was speaking the truth. The cultivators of their world lacked the unity of the natives. Still, that was also the reason why they had so many talents every century.

It was their constant struggle and their desire to obtain more from the world that pushed many cultivators to escape from the traditions and old schools to invent new ways to cultivate and increase their power. That was also why they had so many inscription methods compared to the natives.

"I went further in the experiments," Noah said as coldness began to spread from his figure. "I turned your species into consciousnesses for weapons. They are quite handy. Sadly, they are a bit unruly."

Noah's words triggered Danielle's instincts, making her struggle and screech as she tried to bite his head off. However, the chains were too short, and she wasn't able to even come near him no matter how she pulled.

The Demons didn't react to her attack, but they started to leak their auras as a form of warning. They wanted to remind her who was in charge there.

Noah completely ignored her reaction and continued to speak even if the drooling face of the mantis indicated that Danielle wasn't fully conscious. "Your people were united, but they had to follow the crazy dreams of their ancestors. Look at you, did you ever think about the consequences of turning yourself into a beast? Do you even remember your individuality? Are you still convinced that exchanging your freedom for that fixed spot in Heaven and Earth's system is a good trade?"

His words seemed to have some effect on Danielle since she retracted her face. She didn't bother cleaning the saliva on her mouth though. It was as if she had fallen deep in thought.

Then, she spoke with a human voice again. "What is your offer?"

Noah hadn't decided the details behind that pact with Chasing Demon or other Elders. They just left the matter in his hands since they trusted him. Yet, he knew that he had to give up on something to add another being in the fifth rank to the assets of the Hive.

"In the other world, I gave you a chance to save your people," Noah said. "Now, I give you a chance to live instead of surviving. Mind you, I don't plan on stopping the experiments on your kind, but we can seal agreements on that topic in exchange for your battle prowess."

Danielle shot an angry glance at him after his words, but she quickly suppressed her emotions. She couldn't hope to obtain complete freedom for her kind with just a promise.

"A war must be drawing near," Danielle said as if trying to gain some edge over the transaction. "What would your fellow humans think of their Prince if they knew that he asked for the help of the monsters?"

Noah revealed a cold smile before replying. "We are a bunch of criminals, traitors, and fugitives. Monsters wholly fit our tastes."

Some seconds of silence passed before Danielle decided to speak again. "I want something specific together with the terms that we'll decide later."

It took an entire minute before Danielle managed to speak her next words. "I want to become like you. I want my sanity back."

[Chapter 814 814. Boundless](#)

Danielle's request wasn't surprising. The faith of the natives came from their ancestors, and their defeat had shown the unavoidable weakness of the transformation.

It wasn't much a matter of losing their individualities. That was just another path that anyone could choose to take. Yet, the mental instabilities were an issue that made the natives behave like beasts, which was something that mighty cultivators simply couldn't accept.

After all, it was undeniable that the lack of control over their instincts was one of the main causes of native's defeats. It was pointless to have a superior power if they didn't have the mental capabilities to use it.

The Demons glanced at Noah. They didn't know if he could promise something like that, nor if he wanted to. It wasn't a matter that concerned him personally in the end, so they would understand if he decided to refuse.

"It will take time, and it won't be my priority," Noah said. "I might do it as a favor if you perform well."

"That won't do," Danielle replied. "We followed our ancestors because they gave us hope in breaking free of the limitations of our species. We won't follow someone who isn't even able to promise us a future."

The Demons felt angry at her words, but Noah only fell deep in thought.

When his body reached the fifth rank, his pride as a hybrid had skyrocketed. He had become an existence meant to rule over other magical beasts at that point, and that part of him had grown stronger as he improved.

It was his pride that had allowed him to contain the primary energy for the first time. It was his pride that had given him the influence to create a tide of magical beasts and uncover the defenses of his family and the other nobles.

The truth was that he had never wanted a throne. He had only given orders when June or his interests were involved, but he didn't plan to do that often.

Yet, his pride was something that inspired other cultivators to follow him, and it even influenced their powers in some way. Those effects were unintentional, and Noah also failed to notice them at times, but they existed, and it was his choice whether to deal with the consequences.

"Very well," Noah answered as soft growls accompanied his voice. "Follow me in battle, and I'll show you how a hybrid should fight. As for your mind, I'll just sever it from your body and put it into another one if I can't find any other solution."

Then, he picked his inscribed notebook and requested for an oath able to restrict Danielle.

"Prince, are you sure?" Dreaming Demon asked. She didn't want to see him bound to a promise that he might not be able to keep. After all, Noah himself had claimed that there wasn't a solution to the mental instabilities of the hybrids.

"I've already created life and destroyed my connections with Heaven and Earth," Noah started to explain. "The fact that I don't see a solution now doesn't mean that I won't find it in the future. My ambition is boundless. I won't let the fear of failing to get in the way of my path toward the stars."

Both Demons fell silent at his words. That was the first time that Noah had expressed his individuality so openly.

"Being too ambitious can ruin any cultivator, Noah," Flying Demon commented after a while, but Noah only shrugged his shoulders.

He remembered the pointers about the individualities that Chasing Demon had given during the banquet, and he knew that his ambition could become a problem in the future. Yet, he couldn't change who he was.

"My life started with my ambition," Noah explained. "If it ends because of it, so be it."

The Demons didn't speak any more at those words. Noah's aura was resolute and sharp, without even a trace of doubt in its flow. It was rare for a relatively new rank 5 cultivator to be so sure of his path, but Noah knew his destination already, even if he didn't know what kind of being he would be at that point.

An Elder eventually arrived, and Noah sealed an oath with Danielle. The Hive would grant some amount of freedom to the hybrids after the assault to the Empire, but it would regulate them too. Also, any criminal that didn't follow the rules would instantly become a guinea pig for some experiment.

Of course, that pact involved only the perfect hybrids and not the magical beasts that had transformed due to the compound. The Hive would still be able to create conscious Cores from them if it invested some time in nurturing the newborn mental spheres of those creatures.

Their freedom would then increase with time, according to their achievements inside the Hive. As for the issue with the mental instabilities, Noah and Danielle didn't set a time limit. He just had to find a solution before leaving the lower planes.

By the time Noah sealed an alliance with Danielle and organized the hybrids kept captive in the Hive, the human troops were ready to march toward the territories of the Empire.

Noah flew toward the central territories past the azure plain together with Elder Austin, Elder Julia, and Danielle. They would be the rank 5 cultivators deployed in the first assault at the central areas inside the domain of the Empire, but they weren't alone.

The Elbas family and the Council had deployed a similar number of powerful assets on their respective borders and were ready to attack the central territories too. They were just waiting for the powerhouses to give the order.

Of course, the rank 5 cultivators wouldn't join the battlefield of the assets in the fourth rank, nor involve themselves among the human cultivators that had yet to invade one of the habitable areas. They had enemies suitable for their level to face.

"I don't like to have her here." Elder Austin said as he glanced at Danielle.

"Her oath is so strict that she would die before even thinking of attacking us." Elder Julia said, uncaring of the tall mantis flying next to them.

"I don't agree with your presence here too, Prince," Elder Austin continued to express his complaints. "You don't need to join the first battle, nor this war in general."

"I want to fight, Austin," Noah said while wearing an eager expression. "I want to see where I stand compared to other rank 5 cultivators."

Elder Austin simply sighed at those words and focused ahead. There were many buildings with the emblem of the Empire ahead and a series of human cultivators between them, ready to defend their city. In the sky, there were twenty or so cultivators in the fourth rank, a number of assets that matched the rank 4 cultivators deployed by the Hive in that battle. Further above, there were four rank 5 cultivators wearing stern expressions.

Both forces seemed equally matched, but that only because the Empire had to defend three fronts.

[Chapter 815 815. Peaceful Storm](#)

There were no warnings before the deployment of those troops. The Hive, the Council, and the Elbas family had simply moved their assets alongside their respective borders with the domain of the Empire, and the latter had answered by showing that it could match all three of them.

It would have been impossible to catch that weakened nation by surprise. The central areas had so many buildings meant to inspect the environment that the Empire had noticed the enemy troops moving before they even exited their respective domains.

There hadn't been any negotiation either. It seemed that the Empire had understood that they had no chances to convince the enemy forces to back down.

That was just the fate that the strongest nation of a world had to face once it lost its advantage over the other forces.

The battlefields on the three borders were similar. All three of them featured four rank 5 cultivators and twenty or so cultivators in the fourth rank on both sides. The only differences were on the ground, where the human cultivators had to fight.

Human cultivators couldn't travel through the wild territories of the new continent due to the suffocating density of "Breath". So, each force had to resort to some method to allow them to travel and fight in those lands.

The Elbas family had its ointment, the Council used a series of floating spheres that absorbed "Breath" and diminished the pressure on its assets, and the city shielded the cultivators of the Empire. The Hive, instead, had peculiarly solved the issue.

Noah suddenly roared, and a series of magical beasts appeared on the ground behind them and charged toward the city of the Empire, only to stop in line with the other troops when he roared again.

Those creatures weren't only magical beasts. There were also perfect hybrids amid that army and Elite beasts that had developed a sea of consciousness.

Most of them were creatures in the third rank that could ignore the suffocating atmosphere due to the inborn advantages of their species. Yet, there were a few hybrids in the fourth rank there that acted as captains.

Noah and Danielle didn't have much time to organize a proper army of hybrids after sealing their pact, but they could exploit the natural fear created by their presence to rule them. However, they still had to put a few creatures in the fourth rank to enforce their orders.

That strategy wasn't casual. Noah had suggested it using the battle strategy of the winged beasts as an example, even if his execution was far cruder.

Since the events in the other Mortal Lands, it was pointless not to use the magical beasts as troops. Noah didn't need to hide that aspect of his cultivation anymore, and the Hive would be able to preserve a large number of human assets by deploying beasts.

Also, the hybrids were simply too powerful not to control their populations. Using them for an entire war as cannon fodder would skim their ranks and reveal those that were worthy of having some sort of control over the organization that would eventually form in the domain of the Hive.

The exchange of stares between the various armies lasted only for a few minutes since a mental message reached the leaders of the invaders at the same time. "Attack!"

The three powerhouses had given the order at the same time, and the leaders of the armies echoed it without any hesitation.

A series of roars and battle cries resounded in the three battlefields as the invaders launched themselves toward the troops of the Empire. The cultivators divided themselves according to their level and set battle formations meant to absorb the first barrage of spells of the defenders.

The fight among the cultivators in the fifth rank though unfolded quite differently from the messy battles below. Each of those assets neared the opponent in front of them slowly and performed greeting gestures.

Noah's opponent was a middle-aged man with short white hair and a pair of blue eyes. He didn't have any beard and appeared quite ordinary, but he had a warm smile on his face that Noah found quite calming.

"The Almighty has given me the name Peaceful Storm." He said, "The Demon Prince of the Hive doesn't need to announce himself."

Peaceful Storm performed a polite greeting after speaking, but Noah limited himself to observe him.

Truth to be told, he had never understood while cultivators liked to speak so much before and during a battle. Words were mostly useless once spells started to fly at you unless some technique needed them. After all, what was the point of speaking when you could focus on killing your opponent?

Yet, the battles had already begun under him, and Peaceful Storm didn't show any kind of battle intent.

Noah tried to inspect his surroundings in search of some sort of trap, but even his instincts sensed nothing. It seemed that the cultivator really wanted to talk while the weaker troops fought.

"Why aren't we trying to kill each other?" Noah asked.

He noticed how the Elders near him had yet to fight too, and Danielle hadn't charged. Noah had become curious at that sight. He felt as if there was something that he was missing.

"Demon Prince, we are elites that have already ventured in our path." Peaceful Storm explained. "Killing one of us is quite difficult. Our accumulation and experience aren't something that you can defeat so easily."

'Is he trying to bait me into charging at him?' Noah thought for a second before denying that idea.

Peaceful Storm appeared really convinced of that idea and even added something in line with it. "We don't even need to fight. Why don't we discuss our individualities and exchange a few attacks after the battle under us is over?"

Noah had to admit that he felt somewhat disappointed to find such an unwilling opponent as his first real cultivator in the fifth rank. Nevertheless, he had come there to fight, and he didn't care if his enemy had spent so much time in seclusion that he had forgotten a battle intent was.

The Demonic Sword came out of his robe, and Noah wielded it only to slash it immediately after. Black smoke in the form of a claw came out of his weapon and flew in a straight line toward Peaceful Storm, but the latter simply sighed, and Noah's attack stopped moving. It was as if it had slammed against an invisible barrier that it wasn't able to pierce.

Of course, Noah had already launched another attack by the time he realized that his casual slash wouldn't be able to cross the barrier.

A barrage of white flames engulfed the dispersing claw and surpassed that invisible blockage to reach for the rank 5 cultivator. Yet Peaceful Storm raised his hand, and the fire converged in his hand to form a bright white sphere.

"See? Really hard to kill." Peaceful Storm said before launching the sphere toward Noah.

[Chapter 816 816. Talismans](#)

Noah's eyes sharpened when he saw the white sphere flying toward him. He had yet to use any of his "Breath". Even the slash from before had only consumed primary energy.

However, it felt strange seeing an opponent manipulating his flames so easily.

Noah slashed toward the sphere, but he chose to use his darkness at that time. The Demonic Sword roared when it felt that energy flowing through its form and released a black line that severed the incoming attack in two and continued to fly toward Peaceful Storm.

There rank 5 cultivator of the Empire felt slightly surprised when he saw that outcome and moved to dodge slash. Yet, right before the black line went past him, it divided and gave birth to a cloud of black smoke. The could then took the form of multiple sharp claws that changed their trajectory to chase after the cultivator.

All of Noah's abilities had changed drastically in the past years. Creating a personal "Breath" had forced Noah to adapt most of his attacks to his new energy, which meant completely reinvent them at times.

His Dragon's Claw martial art had initially been just a tool that made use of his physical might and his spreading destruction. Yet, it wasn't any different from a spell now that Noah used the Demonic Sword as a conduit for his darkness.

The energy that he had created could easily take any shape while also keeping its destructive force since all its particles were small swords capable of high sharpness. Noah could just pour power into his weapon and decide to change the shape of his attacks even when they had already left the sword!

Also, the fact that the Demonic Sword had the corrosive smoke of the Demonic Form as part of its fabric made each of its attacks quite threatening.

Peaceful Storm saw the incoming claws and felt forced to drop his previous behavior. He lifted his arms slowly, keeping his palms toward the sky as if he was trying to create an upward gale.

To Noah's surprise though, his attack suddenly changed trajectory and missed the cultivator's head by a few centimeters.

Peaceful Storm was about to speak again after he blocked that attack too, but Noah had charged ahead as soon as he understood that the claws weren't going to hit him. The rank 5 cultivator realized just one instant too late that Noah was already above him, ready to deliver a kick to his face.

Noah felt the world around him changing at that point. His opponent had been in front of him just now, but he could only see the blue sky a fraction of instant later.

At first, Noah thought that Peaceful Storm had used some kind of movement technique to disappear from that spot, but he soon noticed that his opponent was still in his original position.

The cultivator didn't move at all. It was Noah the one who had been flung away!

Noah didn't feel hurt, but his mind reviewed the scene at high speed as he prepared for another offensive.

'Does he control the space?' Noah thought as he deployed a series of saber-shaped runes from his palm. 'That should be impossible. King Elbas would have made the dimensional portal far sooner if it was possible to create an aptitude able to control the space.'

He activated the Divine Deduction technique to analyze the strange cultivator's individuality, and he found just an explanation that could solve his doubts.

'It's an imitation of the laws connected to space, but he uses the air to put it at use.' Noah concluded in his mind.

His evaluation only covered the most evident effects of Peaceful Storm's individuality, but it would be quite useful if it turned out that he was right.

The saber-shaped runes hadn't changed after his breakthrough since they used the primary energy in the environment to work. Yet, he still used his "Breath" to make them appear in the open, which meant that their destructive force only increased due to his darkness.

Also, they were already on Noah's level when they came out. It was pointless to say how powerful they would become if the battle were to last for a long time.

Noah proceeded on slashing, launching flames, and charging ahead with the split version of the Demonic Sword. However, Peaceful Storm seemed untouchable, no matter how many plans and strategies Noah came up with.

It was clear that the cultivator specialized in defense, but Noah felt that he wasn't using his real strength.

In Noah's mind, that was fine since he was doing the same, but he didn't have all the time in the world since he didn't know how the leaders would act once the battle under them ended.

"The Almighty has left this world," Noah said, "I don't know why do you even keep the name that he has given you."

Peaceful Storm's grin froze at his world. It seemed that Noah had finally obtained some kind of reaction from that elusive cultivator.

Nevertheless, he didn't let that opportunity go to waste and waved his Demonic Swords a few times in seemingly random spots. His slashes created oval black trails made of strange flames that seemed to carry metallic properties.

Peaceful Storm's seemed to understand what was happening and tried to react as fast as he could. The escorts during the crisis of the winged beasts had seen that ability, even if just a different version. So, he could vaguely imagine what was coming for him.

A gale suddenly came out of his body and deflected everything that tried to reach him. However, he had been just one instant too late, and he had underestimated the new power of the Warp spell.

Two trails of those metallic flames appeared behind his back, and a series of claws came out of them. The claws though seemed different from the previous ones since they were surrounded by the same flames that made the spells.

Peaceful Storm's gale managed to block some of the claws, but the others pierced his defenses and stabbed his back, creating a series of deep wounds and spreading corrosive black smoke inside his body.

The cultivator of the Empire cursed and dropped his smile. Still, Noah was already on top of him, ready to deliver the kick that his opponent had dodged for a while.

"I told you that we are hard to kill," Peaceful Storm said as he lifted his arm and showed a cracked talisman at the center of his palm.

A whirlpool appeared on his hand, and its suction force was so strong that Noah didn't manage to escape its area of effect even with his incredible physical strength!

It was at that point that Noah called the saber-shaped runes on the battlefield and aimed them toward the cultivator's arm. Peaceful Storm felt the incoming danger and retreated, taking that threatening vortex away with him and freeing Noah.

The whirlpool eventually ended, but Noah was wearing a stern expression as he inspected his right leg since there were a series of cuts on its skin.

[Chapter 817 817. Draconic](#)

It didn't happen so often for Noah to suffer injuries against cultivators on his same level. His body usually protected him from their most basic attacks due to its natural defenses.

However, Peaceful Storm's talisman had managed to restrain him for a short period and even pierce his skin at the same time. It seemed that the cultivator wasn't only specialized in defense but had a series of effective offensive methods too.

'It's not surprising for such old existences to be so resourceful.' Noah thought as he kept his eyes on his opponent.

Peaceful Storm's aura had condensed around him in a protective stance after the last exchange of attacks. That time, Noah could see how the cultivator's "Breath" affected the air and space around him and was ready to deflect or redirect any form of offensive.

His opponent had finally become serious, and Noah couldn't wait to see how far his power had grown.

Noah charged ahead again, uncaring of the injury on his leg. The resilience of his body couldn't be compared to the human standards, so he was sure that he would win as long as he traded blows in that way.

As for eating to increase his healing speed, that was something that wasn't possible anymore now that his body had reached such heights.

The requirements in terms of energy were simply too high now that he was in the middle tier of the fifth rank. Even if he were to eat a rank 5 magical beast now, it would still take a day for his skin to heal and that only due to the improved healing abilities inherited by the Yin Body.

That was the reason why he had stopped eating during a battle unless his condition was critical, and he had abandoned the idea of creating a suitable secret technique. Taking a few bites would only reveal an opening to his opponents, and he wasn't sure he had enough powerful corpses to make up for the consumption of primary energy that a secret technique in the fifth rank would require.

It would be different if he somehow managed to condense an entire creature in the middle tier of the fifth rank into a pill, but he didn't know any alchemist able to succeed in that task. Also, the product would be a proper rank 5 drug, which was something that cultivators couldn't just produce at will, not in the quantity required by Noah at least.

Peaceful Storm could only decide to contain the corrosive smoke in his body for the time being when he saw Noah launching a series of those threatening black lines as he shot toward him. His expression froze at that sight. He found it unreal that Noah could repeatedly attack with such might without even taking time to prepare his slashes.

The truth was that Noah's martial art had reached a higher level now that the Demonic Sword worked together with him. It was as if Peaceful Storm had to fight against two magical beasts in the fifth rank at the same time!

A series of talismans came out of his ring before the lines clashed with the distorted air that surrounded him. They floated in front of him and created a series of arrows that shot at high speed toward Noah, ignoring his attacks.

Noah's eyes widened when he saw that he couldn't follow the arrows with his eyes. They were so fast that they appeared able to teleport!

However, he didn't back down and ignored the dangerous feeling sensed by his mind as he activated the complete Demonic Form.

Both Noah and Peaceful Storm were confident in their defensive abilities and didn't let the opponent take control of the flow of the battle. The black lines crashed on the area filled with distorted air and morphed, taking the form of dozens of claws that tried to reach for the injured cultivator at its center.

Yet, their trajectory was entirely off, and Noah had to decide to make the claws explode hit the cultivator with his corrosive smoke.

On the other hand, the arrows landed on Noah's body as soon as the armor of black smoke started to form. They pierced the spell and stabbed his skin, reaching even for the dense layers of muscles beneath.

Noah had protected his vital organs with his arms and let go of the Demonic Sword to help him defending from the attacks. However, some arrows still managed to create deep wounds before they depleted their power and returned to be simple air.

'I understand,' Noah thought as the broken armor started to reform. 'These attacks carry his aura, which means that he creates his talismans! He probably focuses all the power of his centers of power to defend himself, while he uses the talismans to attack.'

Noah wasn't worried about his wounds in the slightest and continued to analyze his opponent's power. He had to admit that it was quite a troublesome enemy. He could very well imagine how Peaceful Storm had spent decades honing his skill in the creation of talismans, which meant that his stash of prepared attacks could be endless.

Nevertheless, even if he focused only on defending himself, Noah's darkness fueled his offensive and made them incredibly destructive.

The cloud of smoke inside the area of distorted space vanished at some point and revealed a Peaceful Storm filled with small wounds and red marks. His defensive spell couldn't stop the advance of Noah's corrosive smoke completely, which ended on his body and made a mess of his skin.

Peaceful Storm though didn't seem beaten and heaved a deep sigh as he raised his head to stare at his opponent. Whiffs of black smoke came out of his back when he breathed out. Without that foreign substance in his body, he could express his full power again.

Yet, his expression froze when he saw the form that Noah had taken after the activation of the Demonic Form.

That spell wasn't unknown in the cultivation world. Noah had made it quite famous since it was on the first abilities noted down on his wanted poster. However, what was in front of Peaceful Storm was a completely different shape compared to what the records reported.

Noah was covered with a thick layer of gaseous scales that swayed in the wind as they released trails of corrosive smoke. The scales seemed to have metallic properties as they took the shape of an armor.

His helmet had the shape of a dragon head that had two straight horns coming out from its temples, and a thick tail came out from the bottom of his back.

All in all, the new shape of the complete Demonic Form was humanoid, but it featured many details that only a dragon-type magical beast could have. Also, the corrosive smoke had changed when Noah used his darkness to create it. It was now denser and less chaotic, which allowed it to unleash more precise destruction.

Looking at that monstrous figure, Peaceful Storm accepted that he had to go all out in that battle.

[Chapter 818 818. Pillar](#)

Peaceful Storm felt almost depressed to realize that he had to become serious against a cultivator that had been in the fifth rank for less than fifty years.

He was an experienced warrior that had managed to create a stable battle style that made use of his individuality even if it had mostly defensive features. Yet, he could only go all out in front of such a demonstration of sheer power.

The strands of smoke coming out of Noah's armor resembled sharp blades that shattered the air and created massive quantities of primary energy. The scales over his body were so dense that most cultivators wouldn't believe that they were made of corrosive gas.

It was as if Noah had transformed into a fiend born only to destroy, and Peaceful Storm couldn't even put into words the amount of danger that he felt looking at his figure.

Noah felt a series of gazes landing on him. The Elders and Danielle had started their battles too, but they were startled by the dangerous presence that had suddenly appeared when Noah transformed. Even the other rank 5 cultivators of the Empire couldn't help but glance at him.

However, Noah couldn't care less about their gazes. The only thing that his eyes could see was the distorted area created by Peaceful Storm.

There was something that blocked his path and denied almost all his attacks right in front of him. That was the perfect tool to test how far his destruction could stretch.

Noah took a step forward and wielded the two parts of the Demonic Sword before gathering the saber-shaped runes at some distance from him.

Peaceful Storm saw a fiendish figure surrounded by a sea of small sabers walking toward him and sighed when he noticed that those runes were becoming stronger every time Noah took a step forward. They were nearing the peak of the gaseous stage as they kept on absorbing the primary energy created by the corrosive smoke.

Peaceful Storm understood at once that he had to stop his opponent before even his incredible defenses couldn't protect him anymore.

Nevertheless, Noah's figure suddenly distorted and shot forward at high speed, reaching the borders of Peaceful Storm's defensive area before he could even notice that event.

Noah's weapons were already raised by the time he reached the distorted area, and he used the momentum of his sprint to slash them toward the cultivator of the Empire. Two fuming lines barged inside the distorted space and pressed forward in a straight line, uncaring of the effects that his opponent's individuality was trying to apply to them.

Peaceful Storm saw his defenses falling apart. The black smoke filled his distorted area and destroyed the effects of his spell, while the two black lines continued to aim at him without being hindered in the slightest.

He quickly took another series of talismans from his space-ring and started to cast another spell. A series of humanoid figures made of air took form in front of him and clashed with Noah's attack while he commanded his area to explode outward.

Noah saw that distorted space engulfing him and shredding his armor apart, flinging him away in the process. His body also suffered, and he coughed blood as his internal organs shook under the changes of pressure that they were experiencing.

When Peaceful Storm was in command of his area, the space distorted in a way that protected him. Yet, when it exploded outward, it was so chaotic that it was even able to tear Noah's Demonic Form apart.

Noah stopped himself after being pushed back for a few kilometers and quickly reactivated his Demonic Form. His body radiated waves of pain, but they didn't even manage to occupy a small part of his thoughts.

There was only the ecstasy felt by sensing that his centers of power were able to sustain the consumption of his reckless battle style.

'Finally,' Noah thought as he analyzed the consumption of his "Breath".

His darkness was on the same level of the "Breath" in the environment, but Noah's abilities required less of it when they acted in line with its nature. As for the Demonic Form, no spell in his arsenal expressed his creation and destruction better than it.

Noah had never seen his most powerful spell consuming so little energy. It felt liberating having the possibility of going all out without worrying about emptying his centers of power.

Peaceful Storm appeared in front of him while Noah bathed in the harmony that his existence had reached. The skin of the cultivator from the Empire was even worse off, and there were spots on his body where his bones were exposed. Also, he was missing a few fingers on his right hand.

It seemed that his humanoid figures couldn't completely protect him from the corrosive effects of Noah's attacks. Yet, they were still standing around him in a protective stance, even if all of them had missing limbs.

Noah roared when he saw him and released a wave of white flames that fused with the black smoke as they slammed on the humanoid figures. Peaceful Storm didn't even look at it and threw other talismans that become arrows aimed for his opponent.

Both of them didn't even care about defending anymore. They just used the protections that were already in place and focused everything into their offensive.

The humanoid figures exploded when the white flames and black smoke crashed on them, and Noah felt his body being pierced in multiple spots due to the arrows that he didn't manage to block. The two of them seemed almost on the same level as they kept exchanging blows without taking any step back.

Nevertheless, a blue pillar suddenly illuminated the area. It flung all the invaders away, either injuring or killing the weaker cultivators that were trying to conquest the city on the ground.

Even Noah felt the blue halo radiated by the pillar, pushing him away from the battle against Peaceful Storm. It seemed that the invading forces had triggered one of the defensive measures of the city, which was even able to target heroic cultivators!

Noah flew back for a few kilometers until he landed on the ground at some distance from the battlefield. His mind didn't sense any threat coming for him, but he noticed that the other Elders and Danielle had been flung back too.

In the city and the sky above it, the cultivators of the Empire cheered and shot challenging gazes at the survivors of the invading troops. It was as if they were asking them to attack again.

Noah dispersed the Demonic Form and analyzed the survivors on the Hive's side.

To his surprise, all the rank 4 cultivators were still alive and were either hugging or caressing weapons that he was extremely familiar with. As for the hybrids on the ground, most of them had died when the blue light engulfed them.

"Retreat," Elder Julia said at that scene. They couldn't win unless they didn't find a way around that protection.

[Chapter 819 819. Regrouping](#)

The invading forces didn't expect to take the city at their first attack. The defending side always had the advantage during a war, and the three organizations were attacking the most powerful force in the world. There wasn't much that they could do before they analyzed the battlefield properly.

Yet, the only way to do so was to test the defenses of the Empire and create countermeasures.

Elder Julia and Elder Austin weren't injured. They barely looked tired at all. However, Danielle had a few cracks on her mantis body. As for Noah, his skin had many wounds, and his robe was torn and bloody. The bleeding though had already stopped due to his powerful healing properties and the innate resilience of his body.

Noah didn't feel tired as he stood proudly on the rocky terrain, staring at Peaceful Storm that was eyeing him with an annoyed look on his face. Those wounds weren't enough to force Noah to rest, but it wasn't the same for his opponent.

Peaceful Storm had come in contact with the black smoke multiple times, and that corrosive gas had even affected his internal organs. The humans were simply too frail, and Peaceful Storm was managing to keep on fighting because he was suppressing his injuries. Once he came back to his quarters, he would need to resort to powerful drugs to heal.

On the other hand, Noah only needed to eat. His skin and muscles weren't a problem, but his internal organs had suffered a bit during the outburst of the distorted space and needed some nutrients to heal quickly.

Yet, Noah wasn't worried about his state in the slightest. He only cared about his battle prowess, and he felt some satisfaction as he reviewed his first fight against a complete rank 5 cultivator.

Noah knew that he had never really gained the upper hand in the battle. He had only relied on his superior body to match Peaceful Storm's annoying defense. However, he couldn't help but approve the power that his darkness was able to produce when it fueled his abilities.

Peaceful Storm wasn't weak, and his experience in battles at that level far surpassed Noah's. Also, his centers of power were stronger than Noah's, even if they weren't on superior stages or tiers.

Nevertheless, Noah's attacks had managed to match his and even overcome them at times.

'I can fight the old monsters,' Noah thought as he moved forward to gather the hybrids that had survived the blue pillar. Most of them were scared and had fallen prey to their survival instincts, but Noah's roars calmed them down and forced them to regroup with the other troops.

They had lost a battle, but that was just the beginning of the war. The Shandal Empire had managed to fend them off that time, but it was still against three powerful forces. Its defenses could only delay the inevitable defeat.

The elders in the fourth rank shot worshipping gazes at Noah. They still wielded the living weapons that had given them an incredible advantage during the battle and had put them in a position where they could notice the arrival of the blue pillar before it was too late.

Having access to an almost limitless number of spells had made them overwhelm the enemy forces and even kill a few of them before the blue light arrived, and Noah was the one who had provided that power.

In their eyes, the Demon Prince wasn't only an amazing individual anymore. He appeared perfect, whether it was his battle prowess or ability in the inscription fields. He was an existence that they couldn't help but admire and revere.

Noah didn't mind their gazes. It would only benefit the Hive if his presence on the battlefield were to inspire the other heroic assets. After all, that was the purpose of a leader, and his title hinted that he would rule the Hive someday.

"How bad is it?" Elder Austin asked as he neared Noah to inspect his injuries.

The Elder hadn't revealed his living weapon in that battle since he knew that they were just testing the enemy forces with that first assault.

Noah didn't have time to answer that Danielle snorted and turned to leave before giving voice to a few words. "He isn't like you. Those wounds are nothing for our species."

Noah watched her set off to return to the territories of the Hive, but he couldn't understand how she felt after the battle. Even if she had been busy with her fight, she had been able to analyze Noah's combat style at times, but she didn't reveal her thoughts about it.

Her reaction though didn't faze Noah, who simply gestured at the Elder that he was fine before leading the hybrids back to the domain of the Hive. It was time to reorganize and set a meeting with the other forces to discuss the defensive methods of the Empire. After that, they would deploy an even stronger army and resume their attacks.

Noah created a small cave after he was done taking care of the hybrids. He didn't feel tired, so he had no reason not to train. He felt starving too, so it was a good time to make a thorough evaluation of his abilities now that he had used them in battle.

'The effects obtained with my darkness are amazing,' Noah thought as he munched the body parts of a magical beast in the lower tier of the fifth rank. 'It's a pity that some of my spells don't work with it.'

Noah had tried his best not to lose any of his abilities after he created his "Breath". However, some of his spells didn't work, no matter how many modifications he made to their diagrams.

The Demonic Form, his mental spells, and his runes had only benefitted from his darkness, which simply increased their power and made them express his individuality. Yet, some abilities didn't work before he made some changes to adapt them to his peculiar energy.

The Merging spell was supposed to use the darkness in the world to boost his speed, but Noah had to change the focus of that diagram to his destruction to put it to use. He would suddenly sharpen his aura to its limit to brute-force his way through the air and sprint at high speed.

It was more of a forced acceleration rather than a peaceful increase in speed after his modifications.

The Warp spell suffered from the same issue. The black flames could still transport his attacks, but they couldn't teleport him anymore. However, the spell would now empower the attacks that passed through them, which made Noah ignore the loss of some of its core features.

His Blood Companion seemed to have issues with his "Breath" too. Noah had to use the primary energy to make it work, even if he obtained weaker effects.

As for spells like the Dark Cover, the Dark Ray, and the Death Area, they simply wouldn't activate.

[Chapter 820 820. Quick](#)

Losing spells was a bit annoying, especially for a cultivator of the darkness element since that aptitude made them quite rare. However, Noah traded that for an increase of power in all the abilities that expressed his individuality.

Also, there wasn't much that he could do about that drawback. His existence was simply becoming more specialized in specific fields rather than others.

The only thing that mattered was that he was able to match rank 5 cultivators older than him. His search for new abilities would come later, as well as his plans to create new ones.

During his training and healing, Noah started to think about ways to create his higher energy.

It had been a somewhat streamlined process with June. King Elbas had already discovered the method required by the lightning element, so she had only to find procedures that allowed her to reach that result. However, the research was quite vague when it came to cultivators with light and darkness aptitudes.

It was a good thing that those rare elements could theoretically give birth to higher energies with any procedure, but it made Noah's work harder since he didn't even know where to start. It seemed that he could only overcome that issue by immersing himself in a long series of tests again.

Nevertheless, the war wasn't the right period for that kind of seclusion, and his priority was expressing his individuality since it benefitted his centers of power. Any research or test had to come later the nourishing of the stable sources of his strength.

It didn't take much for the attacking forces to uncover the secrets behind the defensive measure of the Shandal Empire.

Having the Elbas family as an ally turned out to be quite amazing since its ranks had experts in every field that concerned the cultivation world. The Royals had already started to analyze that defensive method since their last defeat, and seeing it again gave them the pieces of information needed to define the limits and triggers of those pillars.

It seemed that they were some sort of formations able to draw and accumulate the energy released during a battle and turn it into fuel to create a repelling force. The inscriptions though were inside the city, which meant that Noah and the others could only prevent the activation of that defensive method by winning their battles quickly.

Once they discovered those features, the three forces reorganized and created a simple battle plan that took into consideration the pillars. They would simply overwhelm the Empire with their numbers.

Noah didn't see Peaceful Storm when the forces of the three organizations gathered in front of the city that signaled the beginning of the Empire's domain.

His injuries had wholly healed during the two months that had passed, but Peaceful Storm still needed some time to return to his peak. Also, Noah guessed that he had to refill his stash of talisman before he felt confident of joining the battlefield again.

There was even the possibility that Peaceful Storm was creating something that targeted him personally, but Noah couldn't do much about it. That was simply one of the drawbacks that appeared once the cultivators exposed their abilities.

However, he noticed how Thaddeus Elbas was among the rank 5 cultivators of the Royals' army, and his cultivation level matched his companions'. His mental sphere was still in the fourth rank though.

The attackers didn't create three different fronts at that time. Their focus was on taking the city before it accumulated enough power to create a blue pillar again. So, working together on a single battlefield

was better than dispersing their troops and giving a chance to the Empire to exploit their political division.

An army made of twelve cultivators in the fifth rank, almost a hundred rank 4 cultivators, and countless warriors in the human ranks gathered in front of the city only to discover that the Empire had matched the number of their assets again. Most of those existences didn't even join the previous war, which meant that the Empire could give them a break without weakening its army.

The battle started immediately at that time. The two armies clashed on each other as if they were two tides meeting themselves in the sky.

Noah's opponent was an old woman with long white hair and a hunched back. Her name was Countless Wings, and the reason behind that title became quite apparent when Noah forced her to fight properly just like he did with Peaceful Storm.

Countless Wings dodged all of Noah's attacks thanks to a pair of insect wings made of flames that had appeared behind her back as soon as the battle started. Also, she would leave a trail of fire able to give birth to small flaming butterflies whenever she retreated.

Noah soon found himself surrounded by hundreds of those red butterflies, which would explode when he entered their area of destruction.

It seemed that the Empire had already created a countermeasure to Noah's battle style and chosen an opponent that forced him to fight at some distance from the actual battle.

Countless Wings would even shoot arrows with an inscribed bow when the butterflies managed to hinder Noah's path. That was the worst opponent for him since he didn't have too many attacks that could work at that distance.

The butterflies would target the saber-shaped runes too, which made it impossible for them to accumulate enough energy.

Noah could only use his mental attacks at that point, uncaring of the fact that the Royals on the scene could recognize those abilities. He was a rank 5 cultivator now. There was a limit to how much the Elbas family could threaten him when the Royals were the only ones in possession of the images of his revenge.

Hundreds of ethereal sabers clashed with the swarm of butterflies, causing their explosion and slowly opening a path for him. He deployed his runes again as he saw the butterflies diminishing and used the Demonic Form when he understood that those arrows could hurt him.

A strange substance covered the metallic tip of those arrows. It was similar to the liquid used by Noah during the drawing of the rune for his current cultivation technique. It was just a far more intense version that made him feel weak whenever he dodged an arrow.

The items retrieved in the other Mortal Lands had the magical beasts as their main focus. After all, the dire state of the natives wasn't an act. So, their experts had spent most of their time researching how to weaken those creatures.

The effects of those resources generally had a limited impact on him since he wasn't only a beast, but it appeared that the Empire had used its time efficiently in those past years. Yet, the weakening only lasted for a few seconds, and Noah had dodged all the arrows that aimed at him. The butterflies though were rather hard to avoid, and Noah could only use his Ghostly Sabers to make them detonate before he entered their area of destruction.