

DEMONIC 841

### [Chapter 841 841. Steele](#)

The destruction of the elemental giants forced the troops of the Empire in a passive position. The casualties on their side began to mount, and multiple heroic assets started to suffer injuries or die due to the overwhelming numbers of the invading forces. Not even the cultivators in the fifth rank could avoid that fate.

That battle was leading to a defeat of the Empire.

The defenders had exhausted their defensive methods by then. Only a few shadows still lingered on the battlefield, but they weren't able to provide any significant assistance.

Retreating seemed the only option left, especially since the Empire knew that it had to preserve enough troops to fight the next battles. There were still a few valuable regions on the northeastern coast, and there was all the central area of the old continent to defend too!

Even the mighty Shandal Empire couldn't lose too many troops. Winning the war without their god might not be an option, but it wanted to survive as an organization nonetheless.

In their minds, the defenders didn't doubt for even a second that the Almighty would return and reestablish his organization as the most potent force in those Mortal Lands. Yet, hope didn't win wars, and the troops of the Empire knew that very well, which was why they still had one last trick to show to the invaders before leaving that territory.

The defenders started to retreat, and the invaders chased after them to inflict as many losses as possible. They knew that the Empire had immense reserves of manpower, so killing its heroic assets could only benefit the next battles.

However, the castles started to release a humming sound when all the invaders were above or near them. Those structures began to emit a soft light that increased in intensity with each passing second.

Noah's instincts screamed at that sight, and he shouted to warn his allies while he shot up in the sky to escape from the range of those buildings. "Retreat!"

Of course, the other heroic assets were soon able to sense that danger too, but their innate awareness wasn't enough to make them escape what would come next. Only a few experts in the fifth rank managed to follow Noah in time.

The castles exploded and engulfed the entire area with a destructive radiance that didn't let even the slowest cultivators of the Empire go. The sky above the mountain chain saw a multicolored light filling the whole region, with very few assets managing to escape that destructive halo.

Cries filled the battlefield, and charred corpses started to fall on the ground. The human cultivators in the area directly turned into ashes, and the ground cracked under the pressure generated by the detonation of the castles.

Noah watched everything from his safe position high in the sky. Danielle was with him, together with all the rank 5 cultivators of the Hive.

They had escaped even before their senses managed to feel that danger. The reason for that was their trust in Noah, which made them more reactive to his warning than the assets of the other forces.

There were other experts in the fifth rank with that group in the sky. Both the Council and the Elbas family had cultivators that had promptly followed Noah in his flight upward. Others, instead, had managed to escape from the range of the explosion by using specific movement techniques.

The losses though were immense.

The cultivators in the fourth rank that had been hit by the multicolored light were either injured or dead. Almost the entirety of the human cultivator had died. Those that had survived were severely wounded, saved only by the bodies of those before them.

As for the beings in the fifth rank, all of them had survived, but many had hideous burns.

The detonation of the castles wasn't enough to threaten the lives of the assets in the fifth rank. Still, the various losses and the many injured would slow down the advance of the invaders by a few years.

The troops of the Empire kept on retreating, and they soon disappeared from Noah's sight. They left to the three forces a broken land and a series of debris, without even bothering to keep the defensive formation intact.

"We won in terms of kill count," Andrew Elbas said as he analyzed the battlefield, "But this will slow us down for a while."

"I hope that what they were defending wasn't destroyed in the explosion." Elder Julia said as she scanned the environment, looking for something that gave value to all those deaths.

The mountain chain was mostly in ruins, but a peculiar structure in the distance had remained entirely intact. The cultivators near her soon noticed that area too and began to near it carefully, afraid that the Empire could have set another explosive trap.

There was a peaceful lake next to a crumbled mountain with no trace of vegetation nearby. Then, a bit farther away, there was a strange stele that radiated an ancient aura.

The explosion seemed to have missed that piece of land. Both the lake and the stele didn't show any wave or crack on their surface. Yet, the rank 5 cultivators that inspected it knew that there was some higher power keeping the area protected.

"This, this!" Andrew stuttered a bit when he looked at the signs on the stele. Other cultivators of the water element did the same as they sat on the ground with their eyes fixed on those ancient marks.

Their allies though quickly interrupted them and made them aware of their surroundings.

Noah saw how Andrew and the others seemed to have come out of a sort of trance since they muttered casual words and glanced at the stele with evident eagerness in their eyes. It was as if everything else had lost importance for them. Only the contents of the stele mattered.

"What is it?" Regina asked with an annoyed tone. There were even some of her underlings in the cultivators captivated by that structure. She couldn't accept that they didn't report to her as soon as they regained their awareness.

Her underlings remembered their position at her question, but they could only express themselves in simple lines that didn't make much sense.

"Water! Water is life."

"Water is a cycle!"

"Water is eternal!"

Other similar lines resounded in the area as the water cultivators of the three forces tried to explain the contents of their enlightenment. However, they only managed to give voice to confused words that didn't help the others understanding the actual function of the stele.

Luckily for the other experts, Andrew Elbas stabilized his mind in less than a minute and described with proper words his hypothesis concerning that ancient structure. "These should be the notes of a divine being of the water element. Any cultivator with the same aptitude can gain insights on the element thanks to them. I feel drained after just a few seconds though. I wouldn't be surprised if the price to pay for it were your lifespan."

#### [Chapter 842 842. Break](#)

The remains of the army eventually decided to build an encampment around the stele.

It wasn't just a matter of studying the trace left by a divine entity. The cultivators with a water aptitude wanted to use that structure to improve their understanding of their element and solidify their individuality.

A large number of heroic cultivators moved from the domains of the three nations to join the army that had discovered that incredible structure. After all, water cultivators were quite ordinary in the world, and all of them requested to see the stele.

Meanwhile, the rank 5 cultivators made a point of their situation.

They hadn't expected the Empire to lay such a trap, and they paid the price for underestimating it. Only the Hive counted more than ten casualties among the assets in the fourth rank, which was quite depressing considering that it had deployed only twenty-five of them for that battle.

The rest of them were all injured, with some of them so severely that they had to return to the southwestern coast to receive specialized treatments.

The Elders in the fifth rank were relatively fine. Elder Austin, Elder Justin, Daniel, and Amos had touched the multicolored light, but it only caused a few burns on their skin.

As for the human assets, the losses were simply uncountable.

"Years of accumulation and growth wasted because of a paranoid god!" Elder Austin exclaimed as he gulped a cup of wine before smearing some Primordial Ice on the burns on his legs. "Who even sets a self-destruct mechanism that doesn't spoil the resource of a land? I could almost think that the Empire was expecting something like this to happen."

All the rank 5 Elders of the Hive had gathered in an inscribed tent to discuss their next move, but they had ended up expressing their annoyance toward that sly organization.

"The other forces lost far more than us," Daniel said as he swept his cup with his aura before drinking from it. "I guess we are lucky to have deployed fewer troops than them."

He was injured too. His right arm was completely charred, but a thick layer of Primordial Ice covered that limb and was already quickening its recovery. The Elbas family had provided that resource freely after the explosion, so all the injured were using it.

Elder Austin snorted before refilling his cup with some wine and drinking it all in one gulp. Then, he complained in a loud voice again. "The luck of the underdog! We have lost decades of progress in a single battle, and you talk about luck. There is no victory in losing less than your enemies. The real victory is in the gains that we manage to reap thanks to those losses."

Daniel could only nod at his words.

Casualties were inevitable, especially when facing a nation that had been at the peak of those Mortal Land for millennia. Yet, if the invaders managed to gain something that would boost their growth as organizations, they would see those losses as a fair price to pay.

Noah remained silent as they conversed. The Elders didn't treat Daniel or Amos coldly anymore, but they were starting to show some trust toward those two nobles.

It would take time for the Udye family to become a part of the Hive. However, the Elders had already changed their behavior toward them.

Daniel and Amos had fought together with them in the end. The world would label them as actual members of the Hive now that they had worn its robes in front of the other nations. There was no turning back from that.

"It was worth it," Noah said as he stood up from the couch where he was sitting. "With the stele and the lava lake, we will groom stronger heroic assets and increase the number of our elites. Also, we have the living weapons, and the hybrids should provide more assistance once their mental instabilities are fixed."

Then, he left the tent to return to a cave that he had previously dug to cultivate.

They had already discussed anything important, so there was no point for him to remain there. His free time had to be dedicated to his training and projects, and he didn't feel like wasting it to analyze the data of the last battle.

Their allies had lost more than them, and the Empire had surpassed all three of them in that field. Elder Julia had calculated that at least eight cultivators in the fifth rank had died on the defending side, and Noah had filled two of those spots.

The Empire had simply lost too much, and dozens of rank 4 cultivators couldn't make up for the deaths of its elites.

Elder Julia had warned Noah on that part. The fact that he could be a threat to cultivators on his level would force the Empire to deploy equal experts against him.

They wouldn't rely on tactics to beat him. Their only weapons would be their experience and individuality, which would give birth to battles a bit more complicated than his previous ones. If strategies didn't work, the Empire would just make him face its best existences in the gaseous stage of the fifth rank.

Noah didn't know how much it would take to the three factions to reorganize, but that break gave him the chance to start experimenting in one of his projects. He resumed forging living weapons in that period of peace. After all, there was an abundance of magical beasts' corpses due to the cleaning operations on the northeastern coast.

His choice wasn't random. He would need decades to complete his other projects, and he didn't want to be interrupted when he was preparing for his next series of experiments.

Seclusion and long periods of meditation were usually the best approaches for entities on his level, but gathering experiences had the priority since he could express his individuality freely. That was in line with the requirements to advance once reached the fifth rank, and Noah had long felt that his dantian was improving.

Noah began to forge living weapons again, even if there weren't rank 4 cultivators available for their purchase. The recent losses had left a lot of living weapons behind, but very few cultivators able to wield them.

It was finally his turn with the sixth Kesier rune at some point, and his days suddenly became hectic. He couldn't waste that opportunity to improve his mental sphere as much as he could, especially with the breakthrough of his body drawing close.

A bit more than a year passed in that situation.

The territory with the stele had become quite crowded in that short period. The arrival of the new troops helped their armies to reform, but they had to summon human cultivators personally since they couldn't travel alone through the new continent.

Also, the cultivators of the Elbas family were developing an item that could block eventual explosions of buildings in the future.

The war was about to start again, and the invaders wouldn't stop until the Empire didn't have any domain left in the new continent at that time.

### [Chapter 843 843. Calmness](#)

The battles resumed once the experts of the Elbas family managed to find a solution to the catastrophic explosions that the buildings of the Empire could cause.

However, they didn't aim to protect the armies from the multicolored light. Something like that was simply impossible to create in such a short period, and a protective item in the fifth rank would have the same efficiency.

Instead, the Royals developed a scanner that would warn the troops whenever the energy in certain formations accumulated to trigger an explosion.

The warning would come far sooner than the actual detonation. After all, it was in the invaders' interest to give enough time to escape even to their human troops. They couldn't just keep only losing hundreds of promising human cultivators as collateral damage.

The three factions didn't divide themselves at that time. The Empire only had a few large regions left in its domain, and they were the territories that it had occupied right after the fall of the continent.

Those areas would be protected in the same way as the mountain chain, which meant that the invaders had some harsh battles waiting for them. Yet, that didn't discourage them. It would be strange if they managed to kick the Empire out of the new continent without struggles.

The rank 5 assets deployed in the next fight remained almost the same, but the three organizations added more troops in the fourth rank to make up for their previous losses and increase the overall power of the army. A new wave of human cultivators appeared too, but their leaders had ordered them to be careful when advancing in the enemy territory.

Faith had joined the army after the discovery of the stele, and her new cultivation level made her stand with the rank 5 Elders of the Council. Noah's guess had been on point. She had been busy breaking through the fifth rank and adapting to her new power in those years.

Yet, she didn't have time to visit Noah when they were still in the encampment, even if she often waved at him with a radiant smile whenever she saw him.

Noah had initially thought that she had become even more childish after the breakthrough, but seeing her calm expression when she stood with the other Elders made him rethink that evaluation.

Faith's calmness had evolved in those years. Her aura didn't block the external influences anymore, but it forced them to adapt to her rhythm. The wind that blew in the sky became a soft breeze whenever it neared her, and even the sunlight acted strangely when it illuminated her figure.

It slowed down and accumulated around her, making her figure shine and enhancing her already breathtaking beauty.

The army of the invaders stood at the borders of a poisonous swamp that had a tall palace standing in the middle of the toxic gases radiated by the environment. Stern-faced cultivators waited in front of the castle, and the hatred that they felt seeped through their auras and reached the opposing side.

Nevertheless, most cultivators still had the time to glance at Faith's figure. They acted as if they weren't about to engage in a deadly battle.

The atmosphere suddenly changed when the order to charge spread through the invading army and forced the distracted assets to focus.

The two armies clashed again, and the same series of defensive methods appeared to help the defending side. However, the three forces were more than used to those strategies and quickly deployed their countermeasures.

There wasn't another Elemental formation. That kind of inscription originated from specific cores that had been destroyed during the detonation of the castles. Still, the Empire had found a way to make use of the poisonous properties of the swamp.

There would be sudden green torrents rising from the ground and aiming for the heroic assets fighting in the sky. They would divide themselves into a series of precise bullets that targeted the foreign cultivators, and the poison that they carried would weaken anyone that they touched.

As a defensive method, those toxic bullets were far weaker than the Elemental formation. Yet, when the Empire used them together with the shadows, the invading troops began to feel some pressure.

Nevertheless, the troops of the Empire were trying to save their strength. It was as if they weren't interested in defending that territory since they only pursued safe battles, and they rarely engaged in one versus one fights.

It was as if they had already given up on the new continent and were only trying to inflict as many losses as possible before the invasion inevitably moved in the old continent.

Of course, there were exceptions to that approach.

Noah exchanged blows with a rank 5 cultivator at the peak of the gaseous stage. She was a middle-aged woman with long blonde hair called Icy Stare, and her title was a perfect description of her facial features.

Icy Stare had a cold expression as she froze the air around her to turn it into part of her spells. Various shapes made of ice took form from that ice and shot toward Noah, who was already using most of his abilities.

He wouldn't dare to underestimate an expert at the peak of the gaseous stage, especially after Elder Julia's warning. So, he had activated his usual spells while he was trying to create a window where he could use the second form of his martial art.

The only issue was that Icy Stare's aura was able to affect even the corrosive smoke radiated by the Demonic Form, which slowed down its advance under its influence. The various weapons and beasts made of ice that shot toward him also seemed partially resistant to the gravitational pull of the Black Hole spell.

That forced Noah to use the black lines to defend against the constant barrage of spells and his physical endurance to advance toward his enemy slowly.

Yet, Icy Stare simply increased the number of attacks whenever she saw him taking a step forward to push him back again. There didn't seem to be a limit to how many figures she could create, and she could even use the shards of ice that still floated in the sky to create more spells.

'This won't do,' Noah thought as four copies of his Demonic Swords appeared next to him, and four fuming arms wielded them.

The instants lost to perform that preparation exposed him to her opponent's attacks, which landed directly on the scaled armor. The Black Hole spell managed to take away some of their power, but they managed to pierce the gaseous protection nonetheless.

It was at that point though that Icy Stare's expression flickered, and she quickly shattered all the shapes around her to create a thick layer of ice to protect her.

A vertical piece of the layer vanished as soon as it formed, and the rest of the wall of ice crumbled quickly. Icy Stare's figure appeared again, but there was a long wound on her torso now.

#### [Chapter 844 844. Ice](#)

Noah's scaled armor had dispersed when the spells landed on him. A thin layer of ice had spread on his chest where a series of cuts had appeared. However, black smoke soon came out of his body and reduced the ice to ashes before turning him again into a fiendish figure.

He had never liked to be passive in a battle, and Icy Stare was able to push him back. So, he had simply decided to endure the might of her spells with his body and cast the second form of his martial art.

His physical strength was well known to the cultivation of the world by then, and no expert would ever allow him to get close. After all, even a single punch could kill them if they were careless.

However, Noah would only express a part of his power if he didn't use the incredible properties of his body. His martial arts were able to match spells because of it, but they alone didn't cover everything that his body was capable of.

In a situation where a melee battle was impossible, and his normal abilities weren't able to overwhelm his opponent, Noah had decided to rely on his innate defenses to launch his most potent attack right through her offensive.

'Why is the Black Hole spell affecting her spells so little?' Noah started pondering about the issue as he resumed his offensive. Icy Stare did the same, but she began to move to affect a wider part of the sky with her freezing aura.

There was something strange with her spells. The forms that she created were extraordinarily lifelike and didn't act according to specific patterns. Instead, they flew in odd trajectories and would even dodge some of the black lines launched by Noah.

It was as if Noah was facing a series of lifeforms rather than simple spells.

That peculiarity became more evident in the forms that imitated magical beasts. Those icy figures never flew in a straight line, and they even tried to encircle Noah at times.

'Dammit!' Noah cursed in his mind before activating the Divine Deduction technique.

He would generally avoid using so many techniques at once. The consumption of mental energy was absurd when he went all out, and adding the divine inscriptions worsened that already dire situation.

The drawbacks of being a cultivator of the darkness element were still there, even if his darkness had considerably eased that issue. It was merely his mental energy the fuel that was enduring them now.

The same problem didn't appear in cultivators with more common aptitudes, and the existences in the fifth rank could make up for the difference in power between their elements by using more spells.

Of course, not every expert in the fifth rank could obtain a large number of diagrams at the same level, but those that were experienced inscription masters had managed to create some spells through the centuries. Those attacks would even match their individualities most of the time, which made them stronger compared to those produced by others.



Icy Stare appeared to be one of those experts since her freezing aura worked perfectly with her icy figures. Also, she was even able to reduce the destructiveness of Noah's smoke, which meant that her ice wasn't ordinary at all.

Noah had a few plans to turn the situation in his favor, but only the clarity given by the Divine Deduction technique could put him always one step ahead of his enemy. He wanted to understand the nature of her ice too, so he could only sacrifice his mental energy in that battle.

Countless thoughts surged in his mind as an army of weapons and magical beasts flew in his direction through odd trajectories.

Noah saw a flock of eagles coming at him from below, a series of spears and shards rising in the sky only to aim for his head as they fell. Hundreds of small beetles sieged him from the front, and large axes occupied his sides.

He was surrounded, and the expansion of Icy Stare's ice wasn't stopping yet. In a matter of minutes, she would turn into ice all that part of the sky.

The number of attacks was simply too high for Noah to handle them with only his martial art and corrosive smoke. Even if those spells didn't have their peculiar traits and the Black Hole spell could affect them, he would still be in trouble.

However, he had a way to fight that offensive.

A series of saber shaped runes appeared in the sky and began to absorb the primary energy that his aura and the previous clashes had created since the beginning of the fight. The runes soon reached a threatening power, and Noah controlled them to stop the incoming attacks. Also, he created hundreds of Ghostly Sabers that he sent after the moving Icy Stare.

It was needless to say that the consumption of his mental energy increased further. Still, Noah didn't find the point in having a full sea of consciousness when you were dead.

The runes and black lines managed to fend off all the enemy attacks, and the Ghostly Sabers hindered the expansion of the ice as they chased after Icy Stare.

The number of spells in Noah's possession was incredible, and he was even able to overwhelm his opponent's offensive when he used all of them. Yet, the price to pay in terms of mental energy was absurd, which didn't allow him to fight in that state for long.

Icy Stare kept on flying away from the Ghostly Sabers, but she didn't notice how Noah was forcing her to remain close to his position. When she was close enough, he threw the Black Hole spell at her, detonating it when he was sure that she was in the area of the blast.

Icy Stare staggered for a second due to the explosion, but the Ghostly Sabers caught up with her and quickly aimed for her body to hurt her internally.

The ethereal sabers though froze mid-air as they were about to reach her.

'She puts a part of her life inside her ice,' Noah thought as he understood the reason why his Black Hole spell had worked so poorly. 'My spell can't absorb something carrying such a firm will. I would have to suppress it beforehand.'

Icy Stare seemed to use inscription methods similar to the Will-consuming runes. Her ice carried part of her will, and it even had precise orders since its creation.

'This is troublesome,' Noah thought as he evaluated the battle as a whole.

His attacks seemed able to overwhelm her for a few moments, but he had to decide if keeping on using all his spells, or just wait until she ran out of mental energy.

A torrent of green water though surged from the swamp and temporarily interrupted the battle. Noah found himself fighting against a series of poisonous water bullets coming in his direction while expecting Icy Stare to exploit that opening.

Yet, she didn't do anything, and she even began to retreat with the rest of her allies.

### [Chapter 845 845. Eagerness](#)

Noah destroyed the poisonous bullets and stared at his departing opponent. The sudden retreat of the troops of the Empire confused him, but everything made more sense when he inspected the battlefield.

A few rank 5 members of the Elbas family had gathered near the ground, where the green corpse of a man floated on the swamp. Noah didn't recognize him, but the amount of attention that those experts were giving him hinted that he had to be on their same level.

The Empire had managed to kill a rank 5 cultivator of the invading forces without suffering any casualty for what concerned experts on the same rank. Also, it had managed to inflict a lot of damage even on the other assets.

Noah could see how most heroic cultivators on his side had green spots on their skin together with various injuries. Those spots slowly spread through their bodies and affected their healing properties too. It was clear that those existences were in dire need of special care.

The new defensive battle style of the Empire had only focused on weakening the invaders, without caring about preventing the loss of the region. It was as if the defenders had sacrificed that territory to slow down the enemy army while also preserving as many assets as possible.

Of course, the Empire had suffered some losses too, but they only concerned the human assets and the heroic cultivators in the fourth rank.

The invaders had won the battle and obtained a new territory, but the state of their troops didn't make it feel like a victory.

'I don't know if they just want to gain time because they hope for the return of their god,' Noah thought at the sight of that scene, 'Or if they are up to something.'

The records retrieved in the Mortal Palace were entirely accurate, and Thirty-seven had even vouched for them. After all, anything that a divine entity had deemed worthy of keeping couldn't be false.

So, Noah didn't feel inclined to believe in his first hypothesis.

Their faith in the Almighty might have blinded the cultivators of the Empire, but they were experts in the art of war. Their tactical retreat was just a piece of a strategy that they had set in motion.

The only issue was that Noah couldn't know where such a plan would uncover itself, and he knew that even his allies were clueless about that. There had always been spies among the three big nations, but the security was impenetrable when it came to those pieces of information.

'I wonder if it will be here or in the old continent,' Noah thought before putting those problems in the back of his mind.

He was almost sure that they would eventually walk into a trap, but he couldn't know when or where that would happen. He didn't have a way to discover that either, so he could only focus on his power.

"Let's go back to the encampment," Elder Julia said after nearing him, "We have to send the injured back to the headquarters."

Noah nodded at her words and began to help to carry the wounded heroic cultivators of the Hive outside of that poisonous swamp. Some rank 4 Elders were barely able to stand in the air due to the toxins inside them, so they needed some help in returning to a safe area.

Noah's actions weren't purely selfless. The poison spread through physical contact, and Noah was the only one capable of resisting its effects due to his hybrid body. Also, he could carry more than dozens of cultivators at the same time, so he was quite handy.

That green substance had infected even some rank 5 Elders, but they were able to limit its effects with their powerful "Breath" and didn't need help in returning to the encampment.

As for the human cultivators, Danielle handled their evacuation since she could control the hybrids among them. She simply ordered them to act as mounts that the other assets could use to escape the swamp.

The injured didn't stop at the encampment though. Noah and the other hybrids carried them in the central territories, where a cloaked formation lit up at their passage.

The troops suddenly found themselves inside the separate dimension when the light of the formation engulfed them, and they couldn't help but notice two powerful figures looking at them with a curious expression.

"War has indeed changed in these years," Flying Demon said at the sight of those cultivators full of green spots. "A poison able to affect heroic cultivators in this way didn't exist back then."

"Anything coming from the Immortal Lands can hurt heroic cultivators," Noah replied to him while dropping on the ground the pile of cultivators that he was carrying on his shoulders. "Don't tell me that you can still feel bored after everything that you've been through."

"Prince, it's been a long time since we had a real battle," Dreaming Demon said when she saw that her lover had been made out. "You should understand our feelings better than anyone."

Noah could only reveal a smirk at her words. Dreaming Demon was right. Fighting against enemies on that level was extremely satisfying.

It had been a long time since enemies on his same rank managed to last so much against him. Most of the time, they would always fall apart whenever Noah revealed the power of his body or his modified spells.

However, rank 5 cultivators could match his blows. Some of them had trump cards, while others were even able to push him into a passive position.

They were enemies on an entirely different level. Each of them had a battle style that they had honed for centuries. They were perfect in their judgment and expression of their power.

Noah had been able to kill Countless Wings because she was unaware of the full potential of his abilities and Silent Lightning because his spells were a bad match for Noah. Yet, even if he was overall stronger than both of them with his hybrid status and personal "Breath", he had still needed to surprise them to obtain a victory.

Those struggles were slowly bringing his battle style to a higher level, and Noah learnt more about his weaknesses as he fought those powerful beings.

To put it simply, he would be lying if he said that he wasn't enjoying those bloody fights were perfection was the minimum requirement to come out of them alive.

"Your turn will come," Noah said as he changed the topic. "A hidden weapon is scary precisely because it's hidden. I believe I don't have to explain this to you."

Flying Demon released a laugh at his words and patted Noah's shoulder. The Elder was eager to fight, but he knew that Noah was right.

After that short conversation, Thirty-seven appeared next to them and activated a teleportation matrix inside the separate dimension to bring the injured troops on the southwestern coast. Before leaving though, the automaton handed a few tomes to Noah.

#### [Chapter 846 846. Notes](#)

Noah returned to the encampment without the hybrids. Even if he could control them, he couldn't bother to keep them in check all the time. He had far better things to do.

A lot of cultivators had been injured in the previous battle. So, the armies were waiting for everyone to recover before going after the remaining domains of the Empire.

Noah could use that time to train and to analyze his latest gain.

Thirty-seven had given him a few tomes that researched schools that seemed to have similarities with the theories applied by the Body-inscription spell. He had even written a few notes where he explained what he had found on the incompatibility between his darkness and the Blood Companion.

According to his understanding of the spell, the automaton believed that Noah's darkness couldn't fuel the functioning and the abilities of the Blood Companions because they imitated the original beast too much.

The problem wasn't in the spell but Noah's individuality. His existence had simply become so specific that his energy couldn't just activate effects that were too different from its nature.

Thirty-seven suggested to apply substantial modifications to the spell by studying schools that researched similar topics, but Noah directly disregarded that approach.

The formation field was vast and required a lot of general study before approaching one of its schools. Noah had the time to memorize that knowledge, and Thirty-seven would help him, but his expertise covered entirely different types of inscriptions.

Also, his field of expertise worked well with his individuality. The powerful wills that his mind was capable of producing were perfect both for his destruction and creation. They had even influenced each other as Noah grew in the human ranks.

So, spending decades studying another inscription method that didn't suit him just to modify a spell wasn't worth the effort. Noah could just create other spells in that time.

Thirty-seven's notes didn't stop there. He suggested other approaches to the spell where he would directly remove the core of the beast to create some sort of amorphous puppet. Yet, Noah discarded that idea too since the final product would be far weaker than his usual Blood Companions.

Some other ideas of the automaton saw Noah taking out necessary materials of the spell like the blood, the tattoos, or even the wills than he injected in them. However, all of them led to a weaker final product too, so Noah simply discarded them.

The last idea was something that Noah had considered too in his spare time, but that he didn't analyze yet because he was waiting for Thirty-seven's opinion.

The issue with the incompatibility was that there wasn't any magical beast in the world capable of making use of Noah's individuality. After all, that was the whole point of the heroic ranks. A cultivator had to become a unique existence that would eventually develop a personal law.

Then, the solution to the problem was to create a magical beast that could be compatible with his individuality.

'Organic inscriptions to create a being that won't conflict with my darkness once turned into a Blood Companion,' Noah thought as he closed the tome containing the automaton's notes. 'Basically, a chimera.'

The Divine Deduction technique was already working at full speed as Noah pondered about the matter.

He had already stepped on the organic inscriptions' field when he created the living weapons, but that project would require an entirely different level of expertise. Noah would need to build an entire body that could use his darkness as a fuel!

Also, the Beast Core for such a creature would be extremely complex to create since the will of a random beast would just endanger the entire project.

In the end, Noah would still need to perform the procedure for the creation of a Blood Companion on the creature, which meant that he would have to kill his creation.

'Troublesome indeed,' Noah thought in the silence of his cave, 'But possible nonetheless. I just don't know if it's worth just for something that I will change every time I experience a breakthrough with my sea of consciousness.'

There was another doubt that lingered in his mind.

Creating a chimera would be a clear expression of his individuality. Yet, he couldn't help but think if such a project would have more chances to succeed if he had access to his higher energy.

As he lost himself in his thoughts, a message reached his mental sphere, and Noah decided to put a hold to his meditation to head out of his cave. He reached for one of the luxurious tents in the encampment and was surprised to find Faith calmly drinking some wine inside.

She wasn't alone. Daniel was in a corner, staring at her with a curious gaze, while Elder Austin was sitting near her.

"I was saying," Elder Austin said before clearing his throat when he saw Noah entering the tent, "Fire isn't always violent. It can flow as if it was a river ready to burst out of an underground canal. Our elements have a lot in common, but the general opinion of the current experts puts them on opposite sides."

Noah had never seen Elder Austin speaking so much about the fire element, but it wasn't hard to understand the reason behind that strange behavior.

The Elder sat straight as if he wanted to appear more manly to Faith, who was simply replying to him with her enchanting smiles. The jug of wine on the mat was one of those retrieved in the Mortal Palace, and its aroma had a calming effect on the minds of those smelling it. Even Noah felt more relaxed as that scent entered his nostrils.

It was more than evident that Elder Austin was trying to hit on Faith.

"You wanted to see me, right?" Noah said as he went for the jug and filled a cup before sitting on one of the available couches.

"Yes! I've meant to come sooner, but the Elders wanted to make sure that I could put up a fight even if I've just become a complete rank 5 cultivator," Faith said. "Then, that poison came, and my body had a strange reaction to it. My pores started to secrete smelly pus, which seemed even infective. They sent me away from the tent until I managed to put the disease under control."

Elder Austin cleared his throat again when he heard those words and suddenly stood up.

"Elder Julia just contacted me. Let's do this again." He said before leaving the tent.

Noah didn't know Faith as well as June, but he had spent fifteen years with her in the wilderness. She was childish, but she was far from stupid, especially when it came to handling men.

When he turned to look at her, Faith winked at him and poured another cup of wine for herself.

It had already been more than thirty years since they had last seen each other, and Noah appreciated what she did for June.

"How is she?" Noah asked at some point.

"In perfect shape!" Faith exclaimed. "That dual cultivation did wonders."

[Chapter 847 847. Love](#)

Noah was a bit taken aback when he heard Faith's words. He knew that she and June talked about many things, but he didn't expect her to mention the dual cultivation right away.

The memories of the week spent helping June with her higher energy appeared in his mind, and his eagerness to hold her resurfaced stronger than ever. He suddenly missed their long cohabitation in the separate dimension and the possibility to be with her whenever he wanted.

Yet, that wasn't the right time to expose their relationship. Noah could only suppress his longing and learn about his lover from Faith.

"You are as curious as ever," Noah said, "I bet you asked for the details too."

"Of course!" Faith replied while revealing a bright smile. "You should have seen her. She was so shy whenever she talked about it. I didn't think you could have held back for so long with her in that state."

At her words, Noah understood that she probably knew every intimate detail about his relationship with June. Yet, that fact didn't bother him. If June had decided to tell her that, it meant that Faith was worthy of her trust.

Noah shrugged his shoulders as he suppressed his instincts and spoke. "I love her, and she needed my help."

Faith's smile widened at his words, but she felt a bit disappointed to see that Noah didn't show any trace of shyness when he said that. His expression remained relaxed and aloof.

There was someone in the room that didn't take his words so lightly.

Daniel was calmly sipping his wine when he heard the word "love" coming out of Noah's mouth. The surprise almost made him spit the wine back in his cup, and the coughing that followed claimed the attention of the other two cultivators on the room.

He couldn't believe his ears! Noah Balvan, the bane of the Elbas family, the lone cultivator that had fooled the big nations, the monster that unleashed destruction wherever he went had said to love someone.

What surprised Daniel the most was that Noah didn't flinch when he gave voice to those words. He made it appear as if it was the most natural thing in the world.

"You-" Daniel began to speak, but he had to gulp the remaining wine in his throat before continuing. "Do you have a lover?"

For some reason, he felt that he needed to know the answer to that question.

Noah stared at Daniel with a cold expression. In his mind, he was trying to understand if he could trust him with that information.

Yet, Noah soon dismissed his doubts. Daniel was the cultivator that had the most to lose inside the Hive. The very survival of his family depended on how he behaved.

Also, the oath that bound him was quite strict. There was virtually no chance that he could expose some of the internal matters of the Hive even if he wanted to.

"Of course, he has!" Faith intervened before Noah could say anything. "They are perfect for each other, and they are so cute when they become intimate."

Faith covered her mouth to hide her strange smile, and she pretended to know nothing when Noah shot a cold glance at her.

Daniel could see how the two of them appeared quite close. They didn't act as the talents of two different organizations.

When he linked Faith's words to that behavior, Daniel started to wonder whether her relationship with Noah was more than just friendly. However, Noah understood that Daniel was having strange thoughts and decided to clarify the situation. "We are just friends. My lover happens to like her, and I have to hang with her when she decides to visit me."

"Precisely," Faith added as she patted Noah's shoulder. "Also, June would kill me if I tried anything, and I mean it. I even think that she can beat me now."

When Faith mentioned June, everything clicked inside Daniel's mind.

He wasn't ignorant when it came to the noble families that had joined the Royals in the past. After all, the Cause gathered many pieces of information back then, and the Elbas family didn't hide its social activities.

Instead, the Royals would often announce specific fusions with other noble families to improve their image in front of their underlings. They wanted to show how their power continued to grow even if they were already at the peak of the Utra nation.

Yet, as far as he remembered, June Ballor was the most grumpy and unapproachable talent of his generation. Many called her a battle maniac, and she spent most of her time training in seclusion or during the secret missions of the Elbas family.

Daniel could even understand how Noah and June managed to see each other. He knew about the existence of the separate dimension, and he was aware that it was almost impossible to track.

However, he was still surprised that such peculiar characters had ultimately ended up together. Also, there was a grave doubt that screamed to come out of his mind.

"Why did you accept to feel love?" Daniel asked as he wore an incredulous expression. "Why you of all of us have chosen to focus on something unrelated to the cultivation journey?"

Noah's growth had inspired Daniel to forsake every irrelevant matter in his journey toward the peak of the cultivation world. His individuality had become a light capable of purifying the life itself of all its useless aspects.

Nevertheless, Noah had taken the opposite direction and was accepting things in his life that didn't strictly involve his cultivation.

Of course, Daniel couldn't possibly know that Noah didn't have much choice on the matter. His feelings had fused with instincts after his body reached the fifth rank, and seeing June again forced him to decide whether to pursue what he wanted or suppress himself.



He ended up with June after that, and she had become a core part of his creation as their relationship evolved.

"I didn't lose focus," Noah said as he refilled his cup. "I've simply become strong enough to enjoy a few things."

That was the truth. Power had always been the priority in Noah's mind. Yet, as his level increased and through Elder Julia's advice, he had learnt to appreciate other parts of his life.

"But," Daniel didn't seem convinced by the answer and continued with his questions. "You are on a different level! What will happen when you leave her behind?"

Noah revealed a complicated smile and gave voice to soft words as June's figure appeared in his mind. "June is strong. It will be up to her to follow me once I go away. I will only keep her spot empty because I know that she will reach me."

Daniel couldn't understand him completely, but Faith stepped in the conversation when she saw his confusion. "You can't purify your way to the sky. You'll end up with nothing if you keep on throwing away parts of you."

Chapter 848 848. Light

Faith had seen how Daniel used his light to purify the wine and guessed the nature of his individuality.

That had been quite easy for her since her individuality used to have similar features. Her peace was something that she enforced by keeping away anything that could disrupt it. Yet, her foundation would have been empty if she had continued to pursue that path.

The opposite would happen to Daniel if he kept on pursuing his endless purification. His individuality would just become nothing at some point.

Daniel's eyes widened at her words. He understood what she was saying, and he managed to spot a fatal flaw on his path thanks to the insights gained in that short conversation.

"I need to preserve a core that I can't afford to lose," Daniel said as he turned his head to stare at the wall. "That is what I have to purify to its apex. My willpower must reach a new form."

Noah had already started to ignore Daniel since he was clearly in the middle of a revelation. Faith soon lost interest too, and resumed her conversation with Noah.

The two of them spoke mostly about June and the state of the war.

It turned out that June's centers of power still needed time to adapt to her higher energy. It was something revolutionary for her Perfect Circuit, especially since it allowed her to break the limits of her Perpetual Formations.

Noah could only imagine her struggles: The biggest war of the last centuries was happening right in front of her eyes, and she wasn't in the condition to join it. Also, she would have to hold back even if she did participate in the battles.

The matter concerning the higher energies was something exclusive of the Elbas family, and Noah didn't know who else had that research. So, June couldn't create a credible justification for her new power if she was to reveal it. The only connection would be Noah, which meant that she would expose her relationship with him.

As for the war, Faith revealed that even the Council was worried about the existence of a trap hidden somewhere in the Empire's domain.

The behavior of the defenders was too obvious. They were slowly preparing the field for a significant event that would happen in an unknown place and at an unclear time. The invaders could only approach every battle carefully and develop as many countermeasures as they could as they advanced.

"The next battle should be in a wasteland near the Divine Stele." Faith said as she analyzed a simple map of the new continent. "Our forces want to corner the Empire in this forest or near these series of rivers. The final decision on this matter will arrive after we win the next fight."

Faith didn't even consider the possibility that the Empire could win. Hers wasn't arrogance nor stupidity. It was a simple conclusion reached after observing the two armies clash.

Even if the troops of the Empire were preserving their power, the invaders were too numerous. The defensive measures couldn't block them due to the impressive knowledge of the Elbas family, and the Council could create intricate battle formations that prevented most of the Empire's protection.

It didn't matter if the Empire was playing defensively and kept on weakening the enemy's army. It would still be at a disadvantage in that war.

After all, the three powerhouses would arrive once God's Left Hand felt forced to join the battlefield, and that would put an end to her dreams of following the Almighty in the Immortal Lands.

Noah nodded at her words. The strategy of the Council was good, and it would give to the invading army some control over the trend of the war.

"Once the wasteland, the rivers, and the forest are taken," Noah said, "The Empire will be officially outside of the new continent."

That would be an incredible achievement for the three forces. Kicking the organization that had been at the top of those Mortal Lands outside of the most valuable continent in the world would quicken its decline.

Faith eventually stood up when they had exhausted their topics. It was time for her to return to the tents of the Council and check the status of the injured to see how long it would take for the war to resume.

Yet, when she was about to leave, Daniel stood up and performed a polite bow before giving voice to a peculiar question. "Miss Vigny, why is the sunlight deciding to shine around your figure?"

Both Noah and Faith felt surprised by that sudden question. However, Daniel appeared particularly serious at that moment.

It seemed that his curiosity toward Faith wasn't related to her beauty. Instead, he was interested in the behavior that the light assumed when it came in contact with her aura.

He was probably trying to expand his knowledge for what concerned the laws of the light element, which was something that every heroic cultivator had to do with their respective element once reached a certain level. After all, the individuality had to lead to the world of the laws at some point.

Seeing his seriousness, Faith decided to answer without revealing too much of her individuality. "It doesn't decide. I create the conditions to make it shine more."

Daniel mumbled for a few seconds before performing another bow and sitting back in his corner. Then, he closed his eyes and started to meditate.

"He is peculiar too," Faith said as she glanced at Daniel before moving her gaze on Noah. "Maybe it's just your influence."

"A single mistake can create a chain reaction in a program," Noah replied as he walked past her to exit the tent. "Who knows, it might cause the complete failure of the system."

Faith didn't understand the meaning behind his words completely, but she could see how Noah's consciousness had blurred for a few seconds before returning to its usual form. It was as if his mental waves had surpassed some invisible barrier when he spoke and returned to their typical composition when the silence returned.

Noah returned to his cave at that point. It would take a while for all the heroic assets of the army to heal, so he had time to train and solve some of his immediate issues.

That first one and easiest to fix was the power of his mental sphere.

Noah didn't remain in his cave for long. He soon joined the clearing parties that usually prepared an environment for the passage of the weaker troops.

The clearing parties often targeted areas full of magical beasts in the fourth rank, but Noah' didn't care about those weaklings. He needed powerful creatures to enhance his mental sphere and give him enough nutrients for his body.

The breakthrough for the upper tier was nearing, and his mind was still on the process of enlarging. However, it would be only a matter of years before his body advanced.

#### [Chapter 849 849. Stronger](#)

Noah spent his time training and hunting with the clearing teams while the injured troops focused on healing.

The walls of his mind were incredibly sturdy after the various projects and struggles that Noah had gone through. That made him able to use the devouring properties of his mental energy again without worrying about negative consequences.

The hunting team mostly focused on the rank 4 magical beasts living on the path that the human troops would have to trail, but those beings were too weak for Noah's requirements. He needed wills capable of enlarging his mental sphere, and he also wanted to push his body toward the peak of the middle tier in the process.

So, he usually left the hunting teams alone whenever they reached a danger zone and went looking for prey that met his requirements.

The four organizations had colonized and cleared large areas of the new continent, but there were always territories that were too troublesome to make habitable.

The poisonous swamp was an example of that. The Empire had freed only a small part of that territory from the presence of magical beasts to place the castle and the formation that controlled the toxic water. Yet, the rest of that region was still filled by poisonous creatures that were too annoying to face as humans.

Luckily for Noah, his hybrid status made him particularly resistant to those poisonous properties, which allowed him able to hunt freely in those areas.

The hunting teams' targets were the poisonous swamp and the mountain chain with the Divine Stele in their missions. It was enough for them to create a safe passage, but Noah's presence allowed them to scare away entire packs without even lifting a finger.

Noah would release a growl when he reached those areas before leaving to search for the powerful beings hidden somewhere in those regions. His roars scared away most packs, which made the missions of the hunting teams far easier.

It wasn't easy to find a satisfying number of rank 5 magical beasts, but the new continent was still something belonging to the Immortal Lands. In that environment rich of "Breath", powerful creatures would often take control of large and isolated areas.

The mountain chain didn't have many creatures on that level. Noah could only find two rank 5 magical beasts in the lower tier during his missions with the hunting teams.

That wasn't surprising. The mountain chain had traces left by divine beings, which had pushed the Empire to clear that region multiple times, leading to a scarcity of packs that met Noah's standards.

The poisonous swamp, instead, reserved more surprises. The Empire had barely touched that territory. That vast area had remained in a wild state since the fall of the continent from the higher plane.

Noah could find four rank 5 magical beasts in the lower tier as he explored the swamp and two of them in the middle tier. There was even a danger zone in one of the areas where the water became more profound, which was densely populated by creatures on that level.

However, Noah felt forced to ignore that part of the swamp since his instincts started to scream whenever he neared it.

That sort of danger was something that only a being in the last stage of the heroic ranks could cause. There was a rank 6 danger zone inside that toxic environment.

Noah noted that location in his mind. He had done the same whenever he found traces of rank 6 magical beasts since he would need them once his body reached that level.

He knew that the requirements of his body could only increase as his rank rose. After all, it had taken him more than forty years to start to feel the arrival of the breakthrough even if he had eaten powerful creatures all the time.

Yet, even if he had two worlds where he could hunt almost freely, Noah knew that he would have to explore the depths of the sea at some point. That environment was too rich of powerful beasts to ignore it.

Noah performed the Body-inscription spell on his prey and let the properties of his mental energy devour the wills of the beasts that appeared inside his mind. Then, he ate the maimed corpses to nourish his body.

His mind gained weeks of training every time his mental energy ate those wills, and his body neared the limits of the middle tier as he fed on the flesh of those creatures. His dantian also improved at an incredible speed when he trained. It was clear that the war had brought immense benefits even to that organ.

Six months had to pass before all the injured cultivators became able to fight again, and the leaders of the three factions didn't hesitate to order another attack at that point.

The troops spread through the new continent gathered on the northeastern coast, near the encampment around the Divine Stele. They marched toward the wasteland situated at the end of that coastline when everything was ready.

The Empire was waiting for them. Its observers had noticed the arrival of the enemy army since it left the encampment, and the defending troops had always been ready for the deployment.

It was impossible to catch the Empire unprepared, especially since it was on edge all the time.

The army of the invaders attacked without hesitation and faced the usual defensive measures that they had already seen in the other territories. In that area, the Empire didn't manage to exploit the lifeforms to its advantage, so the protections were relatively weaker.

Yet, there were chained hybrids in that territory, which made the battle somewhat hard to win without losing some assets. Also, it was almost impossible not to lose heroic cultivators when the Empire was so focused on increasing the number of casualties on the enemy's side.

Noah couldn't go after the hybrids even if he wanted. Icy Stare kept him locked in a harsh battle that he didn't know how to win.

Her centers of power were on a higher level even if they were still in the same ranks and stages as Noah's, and her battle style was incredible.

Icy Stare would send various figures made of ice toward Noah while she kept on increasing the area of the sky that she could affect. Noah saw his opponent's offensive becoming harsher as the air around him froze and gave birth to different shapes, but his mind was too busy for him to worry about that.

He had activated the Divine Deduction technique since the beginning of the fight, but he was using it to find flaws in Icy Stare's battle style. He would have been satisfied even if he found a sort of habit of her as long as he could exploit it.

However, Icy Stare was perfect. She never repeated the same action twice, and she even had an exceptional understanding of her power.

Of course, Noah had tried to find a solution during the months spent hunting, but his meditations led to no answers. Icy Stare was just stronger than him.

#### [Chapter 850 850. Loss](#)

With the Black Hole spell almost ineffective against Icy Stare's spells, Noah had a hard time creating a strategy that could allow him to defeat her. He lacked the means to gain the advantage in that fight.

Of course, Noah had known that since his last battle with her. Still, he had chosen to fight her again to gain an idea of how to improve his combat style further.

Truth to be told, his disadvantage came mostly from the difference of power between their centers of power. Noah had been in the fifth rank for a little more than forty years, and he had only spent a part of them training since he had advanced without a suitable cultivation technique.

The fact that his darkness allowed him to match an expert at the peak of the gaseous stage was already an incredible feat, even if part of the merit had to go to his hybrid status. Yet, Noah had never been satisfied with his current power and always desired more.

The power of his darkness didn't make up for the weaknesses of his combat style. He lacked attacks that could match the power of the second form of his martial art, a type of offensive that only a hybrid could be capable of performing.

Nevertheless, creating or modifying spells and fusing them with martial arts was a long process that Noah couldn't start during that war. He didn't have enough time to immerse himself in another series of experiments.

Also, his instincts told him that he had to focus on the creation of his higher energy before concentrating on other projects. Having access to that new fuel would give Noah more possibilities to create a suitable offensive. It would even make him understand what it was capable of improving.

The creation of something so powerful would require time and experience in the field, together with a detailed plan.

King Elbas' research said that darkness and light cultivators didn't have only one way to create higher energy, but that lack of guidelines only increased the amount of work that Noah had to do in that project.

It had been quite straightforward with June since King Elbas had explained what type of procedure the lightning element had to go through to evolve. However, she had still spent a lot of time preparing and studying the inscription methods that had allowed her to complete the evolution of her "Breath".

Instead, Noah would have to start from scratch, knowing only that it was possible to create something similar even with his rare aptitude.

Nevertheless, if he succeeded, he would be virtually unbeatable against beings on the same level. After all, his darkness was already incredibly strong, and he couldn't wait to see how powerful he would become if he created a form of energy with his "Breath" as its basis.

The battle against Icy Stare continued for a while.

Noah would take a few hits from time to time to gain enough space to launch his more potent attack. However, Icy Stare performed an evasive maneuver every time she saw him enduring her spells with his body.

There were clear limits to Noah's simple combat style, and any expert in the fifth rank that he couldn't overwhelm with his sheer power would understand them in a few exchanges. After that, it was almost impossible for Noah to hit them.

'A powerful Blood Companion would be beneficial here,' Noah thought as he pushed his limits to block the barrage of spells coming at him. He had almost stopped attacking at that point and was mainly focusing on defending.

The saber-shaped runes protectively flew around him and clashed with the countless figures made of ice that shot toward him. His Ghostly Sabers swarmed the area, looking for the expert that was freezing the sky around him. His Demonic Sword launched black lines every time Noah swung it, and his Demonic Form had long since created a massive black cloud that surrounded him.

He didn't activate the Black Hole spell at that time since its effects were underwhelming against that opponent. Yet, that wasn't enough to compensate for the consumption of mental energy of the Divine Deduction technique.

Noah didn't dare to deactivate it. The reason why his defenses were able to hold on for so long was the enhanced speed of his thoughts that allowed him to find the best way to deal with the enemy's spells in fractions of instants.

That battle didn't have a victor or a defeated. The troops of the Empire decided to retreat soon, and Icy Stare disappeared in the middle of her offensive.

Noah broke apart the layer of ice around him when his opponent's attacks stopped and analyzed the battlefield to see how much they had lost.

It turned out that the Empire didn't manage to be as effective as the last time. The invading troops had attacked with a newfound carefulness and were more inclined to engage in multiple battles rather than risk the lives of the heroic assets.

That approach put the Empire in an unfavorable spot, especially since the defensive measures in that territory were quite basic, and the three forces had already found a way to deal with them.

Both armies had seen casualties happening among the human cultivators and the experts in the fourth rank. Still, the invading troops forced their enemies to retreat thanks to their higher numbers and conquered that territory in just one battle.

Noah didn't feel in the mood to celebrate. It had never happened to him to lose against someone that was at his same level.

Of course, he didn't really lose. Still, he couldn't see a way to beat her unless he added more techniques to his arsenal and improved his battle style, and that was a loss for him.

A familiar voice suddenly resounded from behind him. "I never thought I'd see that expression on the great Noah Balvan."

Noah's mind became calm when that voice resounded in his mind. He turned only to see his lover staring at him with an arrogant expression.

"I didn't know that the Elbas family brought newbies to its wars," Noah said as he showed a cold smile toward June.

The coldness radiated from his entire figure was enough to convince everyone on the battlefield that he wouldn't hesitate to kill June if the situation required it. However, June could only feel warm at that sight.

Orange sparks would run through June's body from time to time. Noah inspected them with the Divine Deduction technique and couldn't find any difference from the usual "Breath" of the lightning element that a rank 5 cultivator should have.

It seemed that June had managed to cover her power well, and that fact could only reassure Noah.

"Hmph," June snorted before adding a few words. "It's a pity that we are on the same side."

Then, she left to join the higher-ups of the Elbas family that welcomed her with broad smiles. It became clear to everyone that June Ballor was entering the war.