

DEMONIC 961

### **Chapter 961 961. Threats**

Ravaging Demon was injured, but King Elbas' item had managed to stabilize his condition and wake him up. The other powerhouses couldn't understand how weak he was, but there was a constant in the battle that made them realize how powerful the Elbas family was.

King Elbas appeared prepared for anything. It didn't matter if it was countering an individuality or healing a rank 6 cultivator in a matter of seconds. The Patriarch of the Elbas family had an inscribed item ready for that.

Every major asset in those Mortal Lands had always known that King Elbas was an astonishing existence. After all, the dimensional portal had shown that his expertise in the inscription field surpassed any school in possession of other organizations.

Yet, Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana felt that they had underestimated him after seeing him in action. Holding him in high regard wasn't enough to evaluate the kind of threat that he could pose to them.

King Elbas and Ravaging Demon floated closely in the air. It wasn't possible to target only one of them anymore, mainly since Diana couldn't rely on her precision at the moment.

Launching an attack toward Ravaging Demon would involve King Elbas too, which went against what Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana had tried to avoid for the entirety of the battle. It was time to decide how far they were willing to go to prevent the Royals' faction from acquiring a second powerhouse.

Chasing Demon had taken his decision previously, but he didn't discuss the matter with his natural ally. Great Elder Diana could decide to continue with her offensive, which would force the Patriarch of the Hive to help her.

The two of them exchanged a long glance after they analyzed the scene. The powerhouses were too far away to interact through their consciousnesses, but one of them had already shown his stance. It was up to Great Elder Diana to decide on their next step.

Nevertheless, King Elbas' patience had reached its limits by then. He had to waste two inscribed items in the sixth rank and even use his black blood twice to save Ravaging Demon.

The value of a powerhouse was far above that of his creations. King Elbas could always make more of them, while he couldn't decide when a new rank 6 cultivator would appear. Even the miraculous pool was a variable since it would generally kill half of the experts that immersed themselves in its oily waters.

With the Shandal Empire out of the political scene, the Elbas family needed another organization as an ally to match its enemies. Otherwise, it would have to face their suppression, which would ultimately lead to its destruction.

Powerful inscribed items could only slow down that outcome. After all, the Empire had relied on many miraculous formations but had ended up in a poor situation anyway.

Inscribed items and formations could support the cultivators and tilt the scales of a battle on one side, but they couldn't win wars on their own. There had to be powerful assets using them and exploiting the chances that they created.

King Elbas waved his hand, and multiple disposable weapons appeared in the air around him. There were swords, spears, orbs emitting various radiances, and even puppets with intricate formations on their bodies. Also, each one of those items radiated the power of the sixth rank.

King Elbas didn't activate the weapons, but he spoke with an annoyed tone to announce his stance to the two powerhouses targeting Ravaging Demon. "This is only a fraction of my assets."

It was needless to say that the sight of so many powerful weapons made Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana hesitate. Each one of those items was able to match the power of their spells. Some of them even had mysterious effects that the powerhouses couldn't discern in that situation.

Of course, both Chasing Demon and Diana had inscribed items of their own. They were still cultivators that had reached the last stage of the heroic ranks and had accumulated riches for the entirety of their long lives.

Yet, they weren't sure if they could match the accumulation of the best expert in those Mortal Lands.

Silent moments passed while the four powerhouses eyed each other with a mixture of hesitation and annoyance. They wanted to get out of that situation after they made sure that they would have the upper-hands in the next years. However, it didn't seem possible to reach that result without investing many resources.

The atmosphere became tense as the seconds passed, but a fifth powerful aura appeared in the area before the rank 6 cultivators could act.

"Attack now, and this part of the continent will sink," God's Left Hand said as she rose above the blue dome. "This goes against our negotiations. King Elbas, I'll join the battle if you unleash those items. It's in my right to do so."

God's Left Hand's appearance surprised the powerhouses and the rank 5 assets in the distance. The leaders of the armies didn't have time to describe the negotiations to their allies due to Ravaging Demon's sudden appearance, but they nodded when questioning gazes landed on them.

The next exchange could destroy those regions once and for all, leaving only the blue dome intact. King Elbas' disposable weapons would be already enough to make most of those shattered lands sink underground. Their clash with his opponents' offensive could remove that entire area from the old continent.

Nevertheless, that would go against the pact sealed between the invading forces and the Empire. The only organization outside of those negotiations was the Ravaging Demon sect, but it didn't have the power to affect that situation.

God's Left Hand's stance was clear. She eyed Ravaging Demon and King Elbas while battle intent spread through her aura. It was evident that she had decided to side with Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana.

King Elbas revealed an ugly expression. He felt that he could defend against three powerhouses if he were to fight in his domain, but he could only rely on his inscribed items there.

He wasn't worried about his life though. He had so many lifesaving methods that made him confident in surviving the clash with a god, even if only for a few seconds. The problem was Ravaging Demon.

"What if they start to attack?" King Elbas asked as he eyed the powerhouses at the edges of the battlefield.

"They would have broken the pact then," God's Left Hand said without any hesitation. "I will side with you in that case."

King Elbas nodded at her words and stored his weapons back in his space-ring. Then, he started to fly away from the battlefield, and Ravaging Demon followed closely behind him.

Noah gazed at the expressions of his Patriarch and knew that the battle was over. Everyone lost that day, and the various organizations had only set the foundation for future wars.

Flying Demon and Dreaming Demon glanced at him, and the three of them exchanged a cold gaze that carried a deeper meaning. They knew that they would raid the Ravaging Demon sect next.

### **Chapter 962 962. Flame**

The assets of the various factions started to leave the battlefield. The powerhouses moved with them, and the three organizations regrouped in different areas under God's Left Hand's stern gaze.

Noah glanced at the battlefield as Chasing Demon flew toward him. The terrain had become black due to Ravaging Demon's flames, and cracks filled every region around the blue dome.

Devastation spread in every corner of what had once been the home of the most powerful organization. The area appeared even more wrecked than the central regions of the new continent after they saw the battle against the quasi-rank 7 winged beast.

It couldn't be helped. The old continent was frailer than the new one. The amount of damage that the powerhouses could do there was immense, and even a few spells could turn entire regions into wastelands.

Noah's gaze went on the various cracks only to notice that not even a drop of blood had remained on the ground. Those regions had seen the death of countless cultivators. Yet, the battle of the powerhouses had erased every trace of their existence.

Elder Austin, Danielle, and Amos had disappeared during Ravaging Demon's sudden attack, and no one had seen them after that.

Of course, everyone in the Hive knew that they had died. Daniel's divine item had managed to save only the Elders near him, and Noah had survived the first flames because Ravaging Demon wanted him alive.

The fact that he had suffered fewer injuries than expected was just a case. After all, no one could even begin to predict that he had a Blood Companion made only of higher energy.

Noah had never been the sentimental type. Even Lily and William's deaths couldn't make him mourn. He had become more open to his human side across the years, but that aspect of him had never changed.

Death happened more often than anyone liked it, especially when it came to the cultivation world. Natural catastrophes or the whims of powerful existences could take the lives of beings that had trained for centuries in less than an instant.

Some called that fate, but Noah knew that it was a matter of luck. Cultivators could train as hard as possible and prepare for every eventuality, but there was always something that could take their lives if they didn't stand at the top.

The recent battle was the proof of that thought. Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana had done their best to kill Ravaging Demon, but King Elbas' interference had ruined their plans.

One being at the top of the world had been able to turn the tables of an otherwise helpless battle. That was how influential the strongest cultivator in those Mortal Lands could be.

'Still,' Noah thought as he moved his gaze away to join his allies in their retreat, 'Even he couldn't do anything against the leader of the winged beasts. The peak doesn't exist here. We are just ants trying to raise our heads for the first time.'

The death of those rank 5 assets put him in a sour mood. In the travel back to the territories of the Hive, Noah's mind wandered among his plans to become stronger, even if a few memories appeared from time to time.

Those memories mostly belonged to his interactions with Elder Austin. Noah remembered their battles in the new continent when the Hive had yet to claim some territories under its banner. He recalled the lessons concerning the individuality and the times when he had needed to hurt his hybrid body.

There were memories about Danielle too. Noah didn't forget how she had forsaken her pride and her faith toward her ancestors to grant a better future to the natives of the other Mortal Lands.

They were both dead now, but they had managed to affect Noah's cultivation journey, even if only in a small part. Mourning for them was almost a waste of time in his view, but forgetting them would deny the benefits that Noah had gained thanks to them.

Silence reigned among the assets of the Hive as they reached the Coral Archipelago to return to the southwestern coast of the new continent. Chasing Demon disappeared while the survivor used the teleportation matrices on the islands, and he didn't leave any order behind.

Everyone understood that the time for words would come after they had recovered from their injuries. Their focus had to be on sorting their gains and return to their peak.

The rank 5 cultivators dispersed when they reappeared in their respective domes and regions. Noah and the two Demons reappeared together in the central territories of the continent, but they only exchanged a nod before separating.

Noah turned in the direction of Divine Market city after the Demons left. He didn't know how the recent events would affect the political situation there, but it wasn't his problem anymore. There was only one thought in his mind now. He wanted to become able to survive the attack of a powerhouse.

Ravaging Demon had left with King Elbas, but he was too eccentric to remain behind the protection of the Royal family. He was bound to expose himself at some point, and the Hive had to be ready for that chance.

After all, King Elbas' inscribed item had stabilized his condition, but he had remained injured. Noah didn't know how long it would take to the Demon to heal, but his wounds would delay his hunt for the Divine Deduction technique.

Noah had a rank 6 cultivator targeting him now. His mental state was in complete battle mode, even in the safety of the Hive's domain.

The other higher-ups would handle the meetings with the Council, and the two organizations would create strategies and plans to deal with the new powerhouse. Yet, Noah had to make himself able to stand against him or at least survive one of his attacks.

"Starve them," Noah said in a mental message directed toward Thirty-seven. It was time for the hybrids to join the political struggle and help the Hive in its wars. The fastest method to achieve that was to stop the growth of their bodies and focus only on enhancing their minds.

His second rune would help in the process, but many of them would go crazy. Still, he didn't care since he could turn every failure into materials for the living weapons.

Noah returned in the separate dimension after settling the matters with the hybrids. His consciousness went on the large wounds on his body, but his intentions had nothing to do with the healing process.

Noah remembered the flames burning his flesh. He used his connection with Snore to revive the sensations that had filled his Blood Companion's body during Ravaging Demon's attack.

He felt the intrinsic destruction of the flames. They had carried a suicidal feeling, a desire to burn everything that existed, even themselves.

'A destruction so pure that it doesn't fit the cultivation journey, nor any living being,' Noah thought as he meditated in his mansion inside the separate dimension.

His remaining hand opened at that point, and a black flame appeared in his palm.

### **Chapter 963 963. World**

The flame trembled violently in Noah's palm. It radiated destruction that wanted to affect the entirety of the world and the same fuel that was creating it.

Of course, Noah was restraining its destructive effects and letting it affect only the air around it. The flame was a copy of Ravaging Demon's individuality, so it shouldn't create primary energy with its aura. Yet, the fact that the dark matter was an evolution of Noah's darkness made primary energy appear nonetheless.

The output of primary energy was inferior to his other abilities though. The fire was different from his lightning bolts. Its destruction spread even on the primary energy that it created, diminishing its quantity in the air.

'What a troublesome individuality,' Noah thought as a small spark appeared next to the flame. Seeing the product of Ravaging Demon's existence up close gave him ideas on why the powerhouse had taken so much to reach the sixth rank.

Noah didn't know about the Elbas family's pool, so his first guess was that Ravaging Demon had needed a lot of time to overcome the natural flaw of his individuality. His flames were a power that couldn't go along with any form of life, and his destruction was too pure to belong to someone that wanted to grow.

There was destruction in Noah's individuality, but that aspect of himself came from Heaven and Earth's mistake and his magical beast side. It wasn't something that could hurt him. The primary energy that it created was the main nutrient of his body!

Instead, Ravaging Demon's individuality could only lead to one outcome. It could only burn everything.

The black spark became bigger and started to interact with the flame. To Noah's surprise, the two elements didn't attack each other. Instead, they began to exchange part of the dark matter that made their form as if they were trying to fuse.

Countless ideas surged inside Noah's mind. He had expected the two elements to destroy each other due to their conflicting individualities, but they appeared attracted to each other. Their structures even started to merge in some spots!

The flame and the spark managed to fuse only a small part of their dark matter but continued to interact without hurting their respective structures. Noah felt that something was missing when looking at them. That seemed to be the reason why the merging stopped.

Noah activated the Divine Deduction technique at that point, which made him consider an exciting option.

'I've initially thought about the dark matter as the material to create a personal world,' Noah thought as countless options appeared in his mind. 'What if I need to replicate all the elements to reach that result?'

That reasoning seemed to lead him in the direction of the first spell that made use of his higher energy. That ability would be different from Snore since Noah wouldn't have to build anything beforehand.

For now, it was mostly speculation in his mind. However, Noah could imagine how he would eventually become able to deploy his world whenever he wanted once he managed to copy all the elements.

As for its effects, Noah couldn't predict them. It was all in his head anyway, so he quickly put the matter aside to focus on other pressing issues.

A rank 6 cultivator was hunting him. Every second had to be used to improve his battle prowess. He couldn't waste time daydreaming about the potential of his abilities.

His body was still recovering, and it would take a few months to return to his peak. Even Divine Demon's drug couldn't hasten the healing process too much due to the immense requirements of a hybrid.

Still, the same would apply to Ravaging Demon due to his high cultivation level. The powerhouse was bound to need a few years to heal from his injuries completely.

Also, Noah had no intention to stay put in that period because of his injuries. One of the perks of being a hybrid was that he could focus on many projects, even in his poor state.

Noah couldn't resume the creation of martial arts because he had a few missing limbs, but he could analyze them with the Divine Deduction technique to complete the theoretical work. Meanwhile, he could apply his new flames to his battle style and handle the growth of the hybrids.

Those beings would suffer a lot in the next period because the Hive desperately needed powerful assets to replace the losses sustained during the war. Starving the hybrids to focus on improving their mental capabilities would make many of them go mad, but that was the fastest approach to obtain valuable warriors.

As for his new flames, the fact that he lacked an arm didn't hinder his ability to forge. He could implement them into Snore's body and improve its overall strength.

Months quickly passed while Noah remained in his mansion inside the separate dimension. Elder Julia would contact him from time to time to update him on the political situation of the outside world. Still, she only reported a tense atmosphere, without any actual fight among the organizations.

It seemed that every force was dealing with their losses and preparing for the inevitable clash that would happen in the future.

There was no news about Ravaging Demon, but the Hive held many meetings with the higher-ups of the Council to seal a lasting alliance.

Among the three invading forces, the Council had suffered the most from the powerhouse's actions. Ravaging Demon didn't only kill many powerful assets during his sudden attack. The sects under his banner had even revolted and claimed a part of the Papral nation, undermining a large part of the Council's foundation.

A third of all the sects under the Council had abandoned its rule. They had created independent regions inside the Papral nation, creating a force similar to the Coral Archipelago in the days after its independence. The only difference was that it had far more assets since they belonged to sects that had thrived for a long time inside one of the strongest organizations.

Also, it had the backing of the Elbas family, which provided that new force with inscribed items meant to defend its borders.

As for the Shandal Empire, it delivered the resources promised during the negotiations for its surrender. They covered many battle formations and some inscription methods that had disappeared from the world for millennia.

However, the Empire didn't give the Second Life formation, and the invaders had limited leverage since the blue dome would make the Empire survive for many years anyway.

A few spells of the darkness element arrived at Noah too, but he didn't analyze them while he was busy recovering and improving Snore. Even his Demonic Sword needed to heal, so he didn't manage to cultivate much in those months.

Yet, Noah started to leave the separate dimension often once his body and sword returned to their peak. Improving Snore was something that he could do in his spare time, but he needed to complete his fusion of martial arts and spells, other than refilling his stash of magical beasts' corpses.

#### **Chapter 964 964. Contac**

Noah completed the improvements on Snore's body between his hunts and his experiments with the martial arts. The thought of focusing on recreating other elements had crossed his mind, but he eventually suppressed it.

He didn't know what triggered his ability to recreate elements. There wasn't any fixed pattern. It was a sensation that started from his instincts and dawned upon him once it could take the form of thoughts.

That field was too vague to explore when he had so many projects ready for him.

His stash of corpses returned to its previous state quickly since the domain of the Hive was incredibly large by then. The hybrids that failed to maintain their reason helped refill his space-ring too since the creation of living weapons was still on hold.

As for his martial arts, Noah had chosen to create forms that could match the Merging spell to add a powerful device to his survivability. Having a movement technique that could match the might of the second form of his martial art would be a great addition to his arsenal.

Finishing to improve the Blood Companion gave him time to inspect the spells obtained from the Shandal Empire. They were two diagrams with power in the fifth rank and meant for darkness cultivators, but only one of them appeared suitable for his darkness.

The first spell had healing effects. Its name was Dark Womb, and it enveloped a cultivator in a thick membrane that accelerated the recovery of tissues and centers of power.

However, Noah's individuality didn't fit that ability at all. He had initially thought that the healing properties inherited by the Yin body would help him activate the spell, but his darkness appeared incapable even to create the membrane.

Of course, Noah didn't give it to the inventory of the Hive even if he couldn't use it. His higher energy had just started to show its true potential. There was a chance that it could become a fuel capable of activating spells that didn't match his individuality.

Yet, Noah would have to modify the diagrams of the spells and rebrand them so that they could use his dark matter. That was something akin to creating a new inscription method, which was impossible now since his higher energy had yet to reveal all its properties.

The second spell made use of a peculiar property of the darkness element. Its name was Black Mark, and it worked as a venom capable of weakening any living being over time.

It was different from the Death Area spell. The Black Mark spell added a layer of toxic "Breath" to every ability and affected the centers of power of any existence once it entered their system.

Noah had fewer hopes for that spell, but it turned out that the destruction of his individuality suited the venomous properties of the Black Mark perfectly. It changed the structure of the actual venom, but it kept its insidious power.



The spell required a few modifications to express its full potential when paired with Noah's darkness, but it was a useful ability that would make his attack far more dangerous. That even applied to his mental attacks since the venom had ethereal properties.

The tests with his martial arts went well. Noah eventually created forms that could express his physical strength and match the effects of the Merging spell.

The process took two years, and there were still a few adjustments that he needed to complete before he could use it in battle properly. However, the most challenging phase was over. Noah had almost taken the first step toward the creation of his school.

Meanwhile, he increased the pressure that the second rune in his mind applied to its walls. A headache was nothing compared to the threat of a rank 6 existence aiming for the Divine technique inside his sea of consciousness.

Faith reappeared in that period, and she managed to visit Noah a few times since she knew about the separate dimension. She used those visits to give him a complete overview of what she had discovered about the Ravaging Demon sect in those years, and what she found sounded problematic most of the time.

Ravaging Demon's followers had roots everywhere inside the Papral nation and in a few regions of the new continent. The damage that their betrayal had done to the Council was immense, especially since they didn't limit themselves to leave.

Many of the rebels were experts that covered essential roles inside the Council and owned secret information. They had used their knowledge to raid important buildings and places inside the new and old continent to seize as many resources as they could.

Also, the fact that the old continent had seen a continuous emigration of assets for the new continent allowed them to claim a large area of the Papral nation under their banner.

Faith believed that Ravaging Demon would reappear there once his issues were gone, and she agreed to ambush him with all their firepower at that point. However, the Elbas family's protection made the task quite dangerous, especially after losing so many resources.

The two of them even talked about June. She had yet to reappear since the end of the war against the Empire, but Noah understood her actions. Every asset under the Royals was busy preparing for the imminent clash, and she couldn't disappear for a few years anymore.

Those times were too tense. Even the smallest clash would bring the organizations back into an all-out war. Still, none of them would be able to seize a complete victory due to their poor state, rendering all their struggles pointless.

It would take a while for Noah and June to see each other again, and they would probably stand on opposite sides of the battlefield by then.

Something unexpected happened in that period. Elder Julia received a sudden communication from Chasing Demon that led her to join a meeting that saw the powerhouses of both Hive and Empire.

When she returned from the meeting, she contacted Noah and the two Demons in a hurry to reveal that the Empire had asked to be part of the destruction of the Ravaging Demon sect.

That was an odd request for an organization that had just lost a war. The Empire even had restrictions when it came to its influence on the political environment. Still, God's Left Hand didn't hesitate to reveal why she wanted to help the Hive.

The powerhouse of the Empire had been discreet with her communications, and she didn't even release her plan. However, she admitted rather quickly that she wanted to work with the Hive only because of Flying Demon.

God's Left Hand had seen Flying Demon in action. She could immediately link his individuality to the god that had left her to follow God's Right Hand in his journey in the Immortal lands.

Hence, seeing Shandal's individuality again gave her a hint on the current situation.

Two identical individualities couldn't appear in the cultivation world, but Flying Demon's aura had features that only Shandal could have. So, God's Left Hand could guess that he had met her Patriarch somewhere.

### **Chapter 965 965. Threa**

The Hive wasn't worried about God's Left Hand's offer. The negotiations for the surrender of the Shandal Empire didn't allow it to attack any of the invaders. Also, it limited the influence that it could have on the political environment of the world.

The invaders had cut it off from any event, allowing it to survive only inside the blue dome and in the wrecked regions around it.

That wasn't an ideal solution for the Empire, but preventing its destruction was already an outstanding achievement. The blue dome had even allowed it to retain many powerful assets and resources, making its situation less dramatic than it looked.

Noah and the Demons discussed God's Left Hand's offer in private. Chasing Demon had already agreed to send them in the blue dome to see what the Empire could give them, but the trio wanted to set their story straight first.

The matters of the separate dimension under the Odra nation were a secret that only the higher-ups of the Hive knew about. The fact that Shandal's will resided in a palace filled with divine items wasn't a piece of information that they could share with the rest of the world.

God's Left Hand's interest in Flying Demon hinted that she wasn't aware of the separate dimension. Revealing to the powerhouse of the Empire that her Patriarch had enough items to save his organization didn't seem the best approach.

Yet, the three of them didn't have a way to justify Flying Demon's individuality. It made them wonder if Chasing Demon had revealed something already and whether they could speak openly to the powerhouse of the Empire.

Any message directed to Chasing Demon remained unanswered in that period. Noah and the Demons had a special relationship with him, but it seemed that he was too busy to handle those small matters.

His silence was a sign that he trusted the three of them though, so they prepared for their trip back in the old continent.

The truth was that the Hive would accept any help at the moment. Even dealing with the organization that they had fought only recently was better than remaining alone to see the Elbas family growing thanks to its alliance with the Ravaging Demon sect.

The alliance with the Council would eventually arrive too. Still, that matter was more complicated since there were grudges between Chasing Demon and the organization in charge of his old home. Both of them needed to look past their old conflicts if they wanted to focus on the Ravaging Demon sect.

There was someone else willing to join Noah and the Demons in the trip to the blue dome. About half of assets salvaged from the Odrea nation had remained behind during the war against the Empire. They wanted to enjoy their well-earned break from the struggles of the battlefields.

All of them had benefited from the resources of the Hive, reaching the heroic ranks in no time and managing to heal injuries that they had carried for decades.

However, there was a loud question in their minds that no resources and techniques could silence. They wanted to know why they had to suffer for so long if their Patriarch had died more than fifty thousand years ago.

Noah didn't tell them about Shandal's separate dimension, but the libraries of the Hive described how the Empire had fallen and reappeared across the years.

That inevitably left the citizens of the Odrea nation full of questions that undermined the very foundation of their determination. They eventually felt that their struggles to survive had been pointless.

Disheartened cultivators would lead to stagnating heroic assets. Those experienced soldiers couldn't explore the depths of their individualities if their minds were stuck on existential dilemmas.

Noah had given a vague explanation to the citizens of the Odrea nation once he learnt about their problems. It was in the Hive's interest to remove their bottlenecks, but Noah intended to make them drop their desire to join the meeting with the Empire.

That negotiation was too important to let cultivators full of anger and hate join it. Any outburst wouldn't endanger their lives because of the pacts in place, but it could affect the meeting negatively.

Nevertheless, the cultivators of the Odrea nation didn't want to drop their requests. They had already figured out that Shandal had something to do with their prolonged imprisonment. They could find peace only by meeting those responsible for their suffering.

Noah eventually agreed to let a few of them join him and the Demons in their trip to the Empire.

Lisa's familiar face soon appeared in the area of the separate dimension that the trio was expanding to reach the regions near the blue dome. She had managed to become a heroic cultivator in the years after her liberation. Yet, she was still at the bottom of the fourth rank due to her past injury.

There were two men with her. They both were rank 4 cultivators in the liquid stage of the fourth rank, and their stern expressions showed how determined they were to hear the Empire's version of the story.

Noah's gaze went on one of those men. He was tall, with bulging muscles visible even if he wore a loose robe. His skin was dark, and he had short curly hair. Still, his facial features were soft and reminded Noah of a woman from more than a century in the past.

Lisa couldn't help but avoid Noah's gaze when she sat at some distance from the three rank 5 cultivators. Her behavior made him understand that the man had some connection with Nina and that Lisa had probably brought him along to appeal to Noah's good-will.

"You can speak," Noah said when he noticed that the man stared at his back with an intense expression.

The man's eyes widened, and he fell to his knees to kowtow toward Noah. Lisa and the other cultivator did the same when they saw him leaving the Demons to near them.

"L-lord Demon Prince," The man said as he raised his head to look at Noah's floating figure, "I'm Luke, Nina's grandson."

Noah didn't answer but continued to inspect Luke with a cold gaze.

"Why are we dealing with the Empire?" Luke eventually asked when he saw that Noah had no intention to help him through his questions. "Why aren't we avenging the countless deaths that have swept out home due to the whims of a god?"

Noah didn't answer immediately. He knew that it was hard for such a young heroic existence to accept Shandal's actions, but there wasn't much that he could say to lift his morale.

The unfairness of the human world was something that he had accepted even before transmigrating. There were no real answers to Luke's question.

"Because we can't," Noah eventually said. "Find your peace or the power to claim your vengeance. Anything else is a waste of your breath."

Noah was about to turn then, but he added something with a voice that was a mixture of human words and growls before rejoining the Demons. "Be sure to behave there."

### **Chapter 966 966. Surprise**

Noah's threat silenced the three cultivators from the Odrea nation. Still, they didn't feel angry about it. The sole fact that he had used his precious time to answer their questions made them appreciate their savior even more.

The truth was that they knew their place. They were just pawns caught in the middle of a game played by a god. They were the nameless casualties that any war had, and they could only blame their bad luck for that.

Joining the meeting with the forces of the Empire served the sole purpose of freeing their minds from the emotions that clouded their path. The other cultivators saved from the Odrea nation shared their feelings and wanted to see their envoys face the force that had kept them imprisoned for years.

Noah and the Demons stretched the separate dimension until they reached the area under the blue dome before contacting the forces of the Empire. After receiving their answer, they set up a door that led to one of the large fissures in those regions.

The world suspected that the Hive had a secret method to transport its troops. The other organizations couldn't explain the events in the Utra nation otherwise. Also, there had been many occasions where the timing of its reinforcements was off.

Nevertheless, suspecting something was different from being sure of it. The Hive could turn a deaf ear to any accusation since the other organizations didn't have any proof.

Resurfacing at the bottom of one of the fissures served that purpose too. Placing the exit under the blue dome would give unnecessary hints to the Empire.

Noah and the Demons dug their way toward the dome and sent another message to their contact. A tunnel appeared in the ground inside the light at that point, and six heroic cultivators appeared behind the protection radiating a divine aura.

They were three women and three men, and they gestured to the group from the Hive to step forward. The blue light didn't hinder their passage, and a new world unfolded once they crossed the borders of the dome.

Countless presences appeared in the range of their consciousness, and the noise caused by the cultivators training on the surface reached their ears even if they were underground.

The Demons and the trio from the Odrea nation marveled at the properties of the blue dome. That divine defensive method appeared to block any noise and aura from its insides other than preventing any consciousness from inspecting those areas.

Noah stopped once all those inputs reached his mind. He wasn't stunned by the sudden flow of information. Instead, the aptitudes of the six cultivators at the peak of the fourth rank that had welcomed them left him speechless.

The Demons didn't understand the reason behind his behavior at the beginning since they couldn't discern their aptitudes as fast as him. Noah wouldn't be able to do it either in standard cases. Still, that situation was anything but ordinary.

Noah could feel a sense of familiarity coming from three of them and a conflicting sensation from the others. It didn't take him even a second to realize that he was facing cultivators with light and darkness aptitude!

"Did you think you and Daniel Udye were the only ones in the world?" A familiar voice resounded in the underground tunnel, and Icy Stare's figure soon became visible to the group.

After fighting with her so many times, Noah didn't feel any danger coming from her. Icy Stare had been a worthy opponent when he was in the gaseous stage, but he had eventually outclassed her.

Noah had fought against a rank 6 cultivator and could express the battle prowess of an expert in the solid stage of the fifth rank. He had entered a world that she couldn't even hope to reach with her current power.

"Why did the Empire keep them hidden?" Noah asked. Having cultivators with the rarest aptitudes could enhance the image of any organization, especially if they had managed to reach the heroic ranks.

"Why bother revealing them?" Icy Stare said as she neared them. "They are below average when compared to other cultivators. All their power comes from techniques and spells created by others, which is why they are stuck at this level. It's not worth to invest more resources on them."

Noah could understand her point of view. Spells and techniques of the darkness and light element cost a lot, and those expenses would be pointless if the nurtured cultivators didn't become stronger than experts with common aptitudes.

Failing to create a unique cultivation technique in the human ranks was a common occurrence. Yet, those six cultivators couldn't make it even when they were at the peak of the fourth rank.

That put them below the average of the cultivators approaching the fifth rank. The experts that had hopes to grow on that level were existences that had started to explore their individualities and were developing their power alongside them.

As for how did the Empire get six cultivators with the rarest aptitudes, Noah didn't even need to think about it. Most citizens of the Empire were cultivators, so spotting commoners with those aptitudes was easy.

"Why showing them now then?" Noah asked. He couldn't understand why the Empire would welcome them in that way.

"To make you understand that we are far from doomed," Icy Stare said as she gestured to the groups to follow her.

The cultivators exited the tunnel and resurfaced in the district that had generated the blue arrows during the last battle. The six cultivators with rare aptitudes dispersed at that point, but the group from the Hive was too focused on the floating structure to care about their departure.

"The Empire still thrives," Icy Stare said as she rose in the sky to fly toward the floating structure. "We expected you to give up once you saw our divine defensive item, but Ravaging Demon's appearance has taken us by surprise. Now we need more territories to stop our decline."

Noah and the others followed her, but their eyes remained on the large landmass floating in the sky. It was as if an entire region had gained the ability to fly and didn't want to return to the ground.

Luxurious palaces and tall castles appeared on the surface of the floating structure. Countless shining lines filled its barren ground, which created a multicolored scene that made the base of the buildings shine with blinding light.

"God's Left Hand is waiting for you in that castle," Icy Stare said while pointing at the tallest structure on the right side of the flying region. "Follow me."

The group followed her and moved toward the tall castle. Noah's gaze often went on the center of the region to inspect a towering structure that resembled a mountain. That was the only spot in the entire area where there weren't inscriptions.

Icy Stare noticed his gaze and spoke while wearing a proud expression. "That's the throne of the Almighty. When he sits there, his divine aura spread through our regions and enlightens the path toward the higher ranks."

### **Chapter 967 967. Offer**

The scene from above the floating structure was breathtaking. Every building in that area was a training area suitable for beings near the peak of the heroic ranks. It was as if the Empire had converged the riches accumulated through the years to build a paradise for cultivators.

The air there even resembled that of the piece of Immortal Lands. The "Breath" in the environment was so thick that the formations on the ground remained active without a power source.

Three structures stood out from the rest of the buildings. There was the tall castle on the right side of the floating region, the mountain-like building at its center, and a dark tower on its left area.

The castle and the tower leaked a powerful aura that carried a violent feeling. Noah felt as if he was in front of natural calamities, ready to unleash their blind rage to the world.

Instead, the mountain gave off a static feeling. Everything around its area appeared motionless as if stuck in time. The only word that Noah could find to describe its aura was "eternal", but he wasn't sure that his consciousness could comprehend the true might of that structure.

Icy Stare landed on the surface of the flying structure when the group drew near God's Left Hand's castle. They walked on the shining lines that filled the ground among the luxurious buildings meant for the best heroic cultivators of the Empire.

It was needless to say that living among the powerhouses was a big deal for the citizens of the Empire. Icy Stare gazed at those buildings with reverence and envy, revealing that even someone on her level didn't have access to those areas.

Dreaming Demon didn't care much about the structures. Her attention was on the shining lines under her, which she studied as they walked through the floating region.

Her expression soon showed amazement and zeal, and her eyes darted among the various lines in a messy attempt to memorize them.

"Don't bother," Icy Stare said when she noticed the Demon's actions. "This is a replica of the Second Life formation already. It barely works as it is. Coping a few lines won't even produce effects."

Noah and Flying Demon's eyes went on the ground at her words. The miraculous formation that had created so many problems in the war was right under their feet. They couldn't contain their curiosity.

"How did you manage to deploy something so complex in the new continent?" Dreaming Demon asked.

"We didn't," Icy Stare answered. "We increased the range of this structure so that it could reach those lands."

Icy Stare's reply appeared honest, which surprised the three rank 5 cultivators. Yet, they understood why she didn't bother to hold back pieces of information.

The lines on the ground were so intricate that even their powerful minds found them hard to memorize. The leaked complex auras too, which made them impossible to understand on the spot.

Icy Stare knew that Noah and the Demons had no chance to learn something from that scene. King Elbas was the only existence in the world that could understand something from those short glances, but even he would have to struggle to memorize it.

A few sparse auras appeared from time to time as they walked. There were some cultivators currently living there, but they didn't seem interested in meeting the group from the Hive.

Noah and the others didn't ask anything either to preserve some politeness. They just took note that there were even rank 4 cultivators on that fantastic structure. The Empire probably rewarded those habitations to soldiers that had accumulated significant battle merits, without minding their cultivation level.

Noah's sensed a familiar aura at some point. His head turned toward a building filled with windows that showed a cultivator immersed in a cylindrical container filled with a dark-red liquid.

"You pulled a nice trick on him," Icy Stare explained. "The Second Life formation has brought him back, but his existence can't find the right harmony since you took away his dantian. He has yet to wake up."

The man inside the container was Iron Feathers, the solid stage cultivator that Noah and Elder Julia had killed in the last battle against the Empire!

Iron Feathers had his eyes closed as he floated inside the dark-red liquid. He appeared to be in a coma even if his aura flickered from time to time.

Icy Stare continued to explain as they walked past him. "His consciousness is trying to wake him up, but his survival instinct stops him at the last second. We are trying to rebuild his dantian with the studies about the hybrids."

Noah felt that she had directed her last line toward him, but he ignored it. His expertise in that field was only for the Hive to use. He would benefit if the other organizations were to waste resources in endless experiments.

The group eventually reached the castle only to discover that its insides were less flashy than they expected. There was barely any furniture, and the most peculiar aspect of the main hall was the strong wind blowing inside it.

The wind grew more intense as the group climbed a series of luxurious stairs to reach the upper parts of the castle. It soon started to gather in the form of small tornadoes that flew into different rooms before disappearing from their sight.

It was a system of gales that created windstorms that disappeared inside the castle.

Noah and the others could guess that the system was part of God's Left Hand's cultivation technique, but the oppressing aura coming from the top of the castle claimed the entirety of their attention.

Icy Stare escorted the group until they reached a large door that stood at the end of the staircase. A whistling noise came out from the empty spaces between the door and the walls, signaling the presence of strong gales on the other side.



"I can't proceed further," Icy Stare said as she gestured to the group to cross the entrance.

The door opened when Noah and the Demons touched it, revealing God's Left Hand's figure sitting on top of a massive tornado in a cross-legged position.

The gales leaking from the tornado pushed the rank 5 cultivators backward, but they deployed their auras to fend off that pressure and protect the trio from the Odrea nation.

The storm calmed down when God's Left Hand opened her eyes, and the winds slowly dispersed as she floated back on the floor where a throne waited for her.

"Please sit, envoys of the Hive," God's Left Hand said as a series of praying mats appeared in front of her. "We have much to discuss and a lot to plan. Let's not waste our time."

Noah and the Demons stepped forward, followed by the trio from the Odrea nation. However, they didn't sit straight away to stick to the approach that they had planned.

"Speaking of wasting time," Noah said while wearing his usual cold expression, "What is the Empire willing to offer?"

### **Chapter 968 968. Negotiation**

The group from the Hive knew about the restrictions on the Empire. That organization didn't have many ways to interact with the political environment. They couldn't even attack any force thriving in the rest of the world.

The Hive would be happy to receive any help. The only issue was that Noah and the others didn't know how the Empire could improve their situation against the Ravaging Demon sect and the Elbas family.

That was why Noah had chosen to start the negotiations by asking what the Empire was willing to pay. It was pointless to hear its requests if it didn't have anything valuable to offer.

God's Left Hand felt surprised when she saw the trio in the fifth rank staring at her without any fear. Noah and the Demons were too conscious about their advantage in that situation to show any form of weakness.

However, the powerhouse of the Empire had lived for a long time, and she had managed most of the political matters since she was the weakest rank 6 asset in her organization. Her experience when it came to negotiations far surpassed that of his guests.

"As expected by the cultivators chosen by the Almighty's will," God's Left Hand said as she laid a series of delicacies and wine on the praying mats. "You have abandoned any formality because I can't touch you. Nice guts."

Noah and the others disregarded her praise to focus on her first line. God's Left Hand had admitted that she was aware of the presence of Shandal's will somewhere in those Mortal Lands!

"I understand your confusion," God's Left Hand said when she saw the expressions of her guests. "The Almighty has tried different approaches across the millennia. Me and Right Hand have been informed of his mission since we reached the sixth rank."

"Why didn't you save the Empire with his it-," Dreaming Demon started speaking, but the powerhouse's aura suddenly spiked and cut her question short.

"I don't want to know where His will is," God's Left Hand explained. "I don't want to know what His separate dimension contains. I don't want to know anything at all. Are we clear?"

Her aura kept on increasing in intensity after she finished her question. Her veins bulged as her pressure almost hurt the cultivators in front of her. A few drops of blood came out of her eyes too.

The fact that she threatened her guest's lives had activated the restrictions on her, causing internal injuries. However, God's Left Hand didn't appear to care about them.

She wanted to show her determination when it came to her previous statement, and the group from the Hive could only nod to answer her.

Her pressure dissipated when God's Left Hand saw that gesture, and she resumed to speak in a calm tone. "The Almighty suspects that a large number of cultivators outside of Heaven and Earth's system will rise to the Immortal Lands. Making the Empire survive is my challenge, my struggle to reach the sky. I can't receive His help."

The cultivators from the Odrea nation didn't understand what she meant with her words, but the trio in the fifth rank felt conflicting emotions surging inside their minds.

On one side, they found God's Left Hand's decision idiotic. After all, her Patriarch had so many divine items that the entire world would collapse under their might. No cultivator could resist that temptation, especially those labeled as "Demons".

On the other, the powerhouse's faith in Shandal's mission left them speechless. She was willing to let her organization fall apart to abide by the task of her Patriarch.

Facing the hurdles that the world put in front of her without help would surely help her individuality. Still, the other option didn't prevent that from happening.

"Did you have the chance to save your people?" Luke said at some point. He didn't understand the most of that conversation, but it sounded that God's Left Hand was purposely refusing to make use of a powerful asset to improve her individuality.

The powerhouse looked toward the trio from the Odrea nation with a curious expression. She felt surprised when she saw rank 4 cultivators with Noah and the Demons, but understanding dawned upon her when she took a second look at their faces.

"I see," The powerhouse said. "You have helped the Almighty greatly. Your perseverance is commendable. Those of you who survived have received the best reward."

"What reward?!" Lisa exploded at that point. She had seen too many of her warriors die and too much suffering to hold back in that situation. "We gave our lives countless times over a lie, over the sick game of a failure of a god!"

God's Left Hand's eyes darted for a second when she heard the insult toward her Patriarch. However, she quickly remembered that any action against the rank 4 cultivators could kill her.

As her mind calmed down, her aura went on her throne, which sent "Breath" through one of the shining lines nearby. After a few seconds, a bright circular glass came out of that same line, and the powerhouse threw it toward Lisa.

"The Almighty recorded his mental state," God's Left Hand said. "I've isolated the emotions that He felt when He looked at the Odra nation. You'll see how your struggles have stirred the determination of a god."

The trio from the Odra nation touched the glass and closed their eyes, ignoring everything around them. Noah glanced at them to make sure that the glass was harmless before speaking again toward the powerhouse. "My question is still the same."

Noah didn't care that the powerhouse knew about Shandal's will. His position in that negotiation remained the same. It was pointless to hear her conditions if she had nothing valuable to offer.

"The Empire can give you five uses of the Second Life formation," The powerhouse said.

"Twenty, and the expenses are on the Empire," Noah replied. "Also, this offer can only open the negotiations. I hope you weren't betting everything on the formation."

God's Left Hand scoffed and revealed a smile before continuing with her offers. "The Almighty has explored this world. The Empire knows all its secrets, and it is willing to share a few of them."

"We'll take all of them," Noah promptly replied. "What more?"

God's Left Hand's smile slowly faded as the negotiations continued. Noah would always ask for more than she offered, and he always requested her to add other assets on her plate.

Dreaming Demon and Flying Demon would intervene whenever the powerhouse mentioned items that Noah wasn't knowledgeable about. A decent offer formed as the trio did their best to rip the Empire off.

God's Left Hand massaged her temples when her side of the deal was over. She felt a headache rising at the thought of the massive amount of resources that she was about to give away for her simple request.

"The Empire can't fight to conquer other lands," She said when it was her turn list her requests. "Yet, our restrictions say nothing about empty territories. We only want you to leave the regions of the Papral nation without an owner."

### **Chapter 969 969. Return**

The restrictions on the Empire declared that it couldn't attack any of the forces on the world. Those limitations applied even to the Ravaging Demon sect, even if it wasn't one of the invading forces.

With all the world's territories divided among the organizations and powerful packs of magical beasts, the Empire was bound to remain confined in the small area around the blue dome. However, the restrictions said nothing about ownerless regions.

God's Left Hand's request saw the Hive leaving some regions empty once the attack on the Ravaging Demon sect began. That would allow the Empire to expand and leave the territories in the old continent's central area.

Anyone could understand that it would take centuries for the territories around the blue dome to recover from the powerhouses' battle. The amount of damage that they had suffered went far beyond what conventional methods could fix.

The Empire would need to invest resources that it didn't have to accelerate the restoration of the ground. It would need to pour "Breath" and other nourishing substances before seeing something growing in those lands again.

Those expenses would slow down its already endangered growth. It was more reasonable to migrate somewhere else.

However, the southern side of the old continent had the dimensional portal turning the area into a wasteland, and its central regions were either destroyed or under the invaders' control. The negotiations for the Empire's surrender had even taken away its domains in the other Mortal Lands, leaving it only a few choices available.

The new continent was entirely under the control of the three invading forces. So, the Empire could only migrate in the other world and clear some danger zones, or exploit the imminent attack on the rebellious sects in the Papral nation to expand.

The group of the Hive had yet to discuss the number of regions needed to comply with the Empire's request, but they were hesitating already.

Accepting those conditions would help the Empire grow again, opening it to possibilities that the invaders had removed with the war. The Hive's group didn't know if their enmity with the Ravaging Demon sect was worth the risk of helping one of the biggest threats in the world recover.

That was a choice that could lead to awful consequences in the future. It might endanger the well-being of all the invading forces. After all, it concerned the return of powerful organization into the political environment.

Of course, the Empire would be restricted even if it was to expand. Yet, it was unclear for how long the restrictions applied on it could stick.

Noah and the Demons discussed through mental messages while they pondered over the situation. The advantages that the Hive would receive from that negotiation were immense, but they didn't know if they were worth the risk of saving the Empire.

Nevertheless, they agreed to that condition in the end. The group's decision didn't take into consideration the entirety of the world. It was a selfish act that saw only the benefits that the Hive would receive.

"Is this good for you too?" God's Left Hand asked the trio from the Odra nation after the rank 5 cultivators accepted her terms.

They raised their heads to nod toward the powerhouse before diving back into the piece of glass. It was possible to understand from their expressions that their mental state had improved after taking a peek at that item. The only strange aspect was that they were crying, and their tears resumed to flow once their minds entered the glass again.

The group from the Hive remained in that hall for a few hours to review the details of their agreement and enjoy the delicacies offered by the powerhouse. They eventually had to abandon any claim over the Papral nation to force the Empire to agree to everything they had set before.

They didn't swear an oath when the negotiations ended. There was no need to waste a precious inscribed item to handle those matters. The Empire would give only half of what it had promised and slowly send the rest of the resources as it gained territories.

After the meeting ended, the group from the Hive returned on the fissure, where the entrance for the separate dimension was with only part of the promised goods. The Empire would send the rest after it organized the complex matters like preparing the Second Life formation for the new cultivators.

The Hive wasn't committing any crime by setting secret agreements with the Empire, but Noah and the others wanted to avoid claiming the attention of the other forces anyway. It was better for such pacts to remain concealed for as long as they could.

Noah initially had some reservations about using the formation. The powerhouse had explained that it needed a link to the cultivators' existence to bring them back. That would make them lose part of their individualities during the rebirth, which caused their loss in terms of cultivation level.

Also, the number of resources required to bring the cultivators back depended on the energy contained in their beings. Noah soon found out that hybrids weren't eligible for the formations, which made his hesitation vanish.

According to the powerhouse, reconstructing an entire hybrid body was something that the Second Life formation couldn't do. It worked for humans since it preserved their minds and most of their individualities with its connection, but it wasn't meant to do the same with the bodies.

It was as if the formation could work only when there were two significant variables. It couldn't function when the body became a major aspect too.

Noah took the piece of glass in his hands during the trip back to the new continent. A series of images and emotions filled his mind when his mental energy entered the inscribed item.

He felt hopeless, lost, and without any will to live left inside him. Yet, the Odrea nation entered in his vision at that point, and many images scrolled past his eyes. They had a chronological order and showed multiple battles fought by the inexperienced soldiers of the Empire.

The helpless struggles of the citizens of the Odrea nation seeped through him and made him feel as if something in the world could reflect his mental state. However, their determination to survive rekindled his will to defy Heaven and Earth and proceed on living through his cursed existence.

The emotions were so vivid that Noah had almost forgotten about himself. He felt and saw as Shandal when he looked at the glass, and the sensations of a god were enough to make even his cold existence struggle to remain calm.

Of course, Noah didn't care about those images. His only interest was in the point of view of a god since it could reveal hints concerning the world of the laws.

His decision turned out to be correct since he entered that peculiar mental state when he sensed the laws.

### **Chapter 970 970. Sea**

Noah was in the liquid stage of the fifth rank now. His path toward the sixth rank required him to learn how to wield the laws to aim to become one eventually.

However, the laws were elusive, and Noah couldn't touch their world whenever he wanted. He had interacted with them far more than other cultivators at his level, but he wasn't able to control them yet.

His abilities made use of his understanding already, but it wasn't a proper control. It was only a natural consequence that came with his improvements.

That was why he would seize any chance he found to make contact with the world of the laws. He managed to reach that state more often since he had improved his second rune, but those moments were still sparse and unpredictable.

Seeing the world through Shandal's eyes gave him a vague idea of the mindsets that divine entities had when interacting with matter. They didn't think. Their whole beings appeared made of emotions.

That realization matched his leading theory about the laws, even if he knew that Shandal didn't put all of himself in those memories.

Noah saw the laws as soft instincts that helped any cultivator in matters involving their individuality. They were something that experts could wield and turn into weapons, but they were mostly passive knowledge about a specific field.

Noah's understanding of his creation had increased while he built Snore's body. The laws of that path had fused with his dantian and were part of him now.

That improved his ability in his inscription methods even if he didn't deploy the laws to help him. It was as if he could suddenly understand and predict more when it came to creating.

Noah didn't use the laws to become better. The laws were part of him, so he was better.

The same went for his destruction. The battles fought in the last period, and his exchange with Ravaging Demon had improved his understanding of the laws relative to that part of him.

His abilities grew stronger because he knew how to destroy better. That improvement even increased the amount of primary energy created due to the influence of his individuality.

Abilities meant for destructive purposes came to his mind too. It was as if his mind had tuned with that aspect of his individuality and helped him find better ways to put it into use.

Also, his projects required the entirety of his individuality. Noah destroyed and created at the same time, and the relative laws helped him through an endless cycle of passive knowledge and enlightenment.

That was why his project with his school of attacks saw so many successes in such a short time. Noah was becoming able to create stronger abilities faster, which most cultivators in the liquid stage of the fifth rank couldn't even come close to do.

Of course, those advantages had drawbacks. Noah could fight stronger cultivators when he went all out, but his individuality also required more time to grow.

That affected his overall growth as a cultivator. Noah's improvements were by no means slow, but they weren't as monstrous as before. His individuality was too vast to resume his old standards.

Noah remained immersed in Shandal's memories until the group returned to the new continent. He gave the piece of glass back to the trio from the Odrea nation at that point and left with the Demons to sort the gains obtained in the negotiations.

The Empire had yet to give everything that it had promised, but the Hive should receive what it had established by the end of the week. After all, the most delicate matter concerned the Second Life formation. The others were just about transcribing old books and gathering many resources.

Since Noah had lost access to the formation even before he could decide upon that matter, he felt eager to see the pieces of information that the Empire had amassed thanks to its god.

Noah knew that there were a few rank 6 danger zones, but the sea's fauna remained unclear, and there were bound to be many valuable places hidden somewhere.

His expectation turned out to be on point when the detailed map of those Mortal Lands arrived through an orb that the Hive had chosen to communicate and exchange items.

Noah and the Demons could see how the Empire had described the danger zones of both landmasses in great detail. The focus mostly on the level and peculiarity of the creatures habiting them.

The same went for the sea. The danger zones there didn't have many fixed borders, but the Empire had used the hunting areas' width to make an educated guess.

The Empire had even listed the rank 6 magical beasts confirmed in the sea. There were seven of them scattered through the waters, with only the two Mosasaurus sharing the same hunting zone.

The map said that there could be other creatures on that level in the sea, but Shandal didn't bother to explore it in detail. Most of his knowledge came from casual strolls that he would make every time his boredom got the best of him.

The magical beasts weren't the only exciting aspect of the map. Those drawings described even many peculiar areas that Shandal found too low-level to investigate in-depth.

There were descriptions about the two danger zones that divided the old continent into three parts. It had vague comments in other areas like the valley previously habited by the Albino Snake and its pack. According to the map, Twilboia Cliff had a high density of "Breath" because a calamity had killed all the magical beasts.

That left a series of powerful corpses on the ground, which eventually fused with the rocky terrain there, creating an area with a high density of "Breath".

That land had lost its value due to the dimensional portal in the Utra nation, but the map had mentioned it nonetheless. The Hive could rely on that resource to look for possible sources of income that Shandal had ignored through the millennia.

Noah and the Demons' focus was on the sea since they had already seen the most secret place in the entirety of those Mortal Lands. There was nothing more hidden than Divine Architect's separate dimension, and they had already taken everything they could before its destruction.

The sea had a few areas with peculiar features, but they were always near the hunting areas of the creatures in the sixth rank. Only one of them was far away from any reported monster, but Shandal described it as a "tunnel that would probably bring more troubles than benefits".

It was needless to say that Noah's curiosity spiked when he learnt about that tunnel. However, he had to help the Hive with the Ravaging Demon sect before pursuing his desires.

The Hive was still waiting for the Council to answer their offer and create an alliance. After that, they would start a war against the new force that was trying to climb the political ladder.