

DEMONIC 971

Chapter 971 971. Plan

Reports about the situation in the Papral nation accumulated while the Hive and the Council were busy negotiating the terms of their alliance. The whole world was going through a period when all the organizations reestablished pacts to define their political sides.

Noah went back to his mansion inside the separate dimension after parting ways with the Demons. He knew that Elder Julia would try to keep him away from the imminent attacks at the Ravaging Demon sect since he was a high-value target. Yet, he wanted to fight, which meant that he had to prepare for the eventual fight against a powerhouse.

His tests with his new school of attacks proceeded steadily. His mind frequently touched upon the laws as he studied forms that he could pair with some of his spells.

Noah perfected the technique that made use of the Merging spell and moved his research forward. He soon learnt how to diversify his creations. After all, each martial art could use multiple spells, which increased their power according to how harmonized they were with the basic form.

The Demonic Form spell and the Black Mark spell could virtually suit any martial art since they added general enhancements to every ability. The consumption for each technique increased when Noah activated both spells, but power output reached insane levels.

Noah felt that he wouldn't have any problem fighting a solid stage cultivator in the fifth rank if he became experienced with his current project. His offensive was slowly entering a realm that liquid stage experts shouldn't even begin to consider!

Also, Noah felt that he was finally obtaining tools suitable for his species. He could feel all his strength being put to use when he performed the techniques from his new school.

The new techniques allowed him to express the entirety of his existence, without holding back any of his unique features to suit the human standards.

Years passed as all the organizations in those Mortal Lands reorganized and established new alliances. Their main priority was to recover from the losses suffered during the war, but that didn't stop them from planning the next battles.

The Council and the Hive managed to abandon their past grudges and seal a lasting alliance that saw them cooperating for the next three thousand years.

That alliance was different from the pacts signed whenever a significant crisis or opportunity appeared. It was an agreement that featured detailed laws connected to a series of punishments for any transgressor. The Hive and the Council even created teams of powerful cultivators with the sole task of overseeing and enforcing those rules.

Such teams had cultivators from both organizations and featured leaders who had authority over both forces' assets. They couldn't order rank 5 cultivators around, but their influence in the alliance wasn't little.

The alliance even saw the possibility of both organizations to fuse in the future. That outcome was unlikely, but it improved the relationships among the sects and the invisible domes, creating a more friendly environment.

Only time would tell if those pacts would lead to a genuine friendship between the two organizations. All they could do for now was focusing on the destruction of their common enemy.

Once the Hive and the Council finished handling the matters connected to their alliance, it was time to attack the Ravaging Demon sect.

The rebellious sects had taken control of most of the Papral nation during the years after Ravaging Demon's appearance. Their Patriarch didn't show himself since the battle near the blue dome, but they had continued to expand their domain even without him.

The Council had suffered too much to deploy troops to defend those poor territories. The war and the rebellion had taken away almost half of its assets, which prevented it from starting long battles right away.

However, it could start pressuring the Ravaging Demon sect to draw out its Patriarch now that the Hive was on its side.

The higher-ups of both organizations held long meetings meant to prepare a solid battle plan. Still, it soon became evident that a massive mobilization of troops could only trigger the Elbas family's reaction.

Another all-out war would hurt everyone, both attackers and defenders. Claiming vengeance was necessary, but resorting to expensive plans that would hurt their growth wasn't worth it.

The meetings went in a different direction after that realization. Both organizations would rather use small groups made of powerful experts rather than risking their already suffering foundation.

The idea came from the Council, but it had taken inspiration from the Hive's attacks on the Utra nation. The guerrilla-style battles seemed the best tactic to use against their enemy.

That approach would make it hard for the Elbas family to send reinforcements, and it would force the sects under Ravaging Demon's banner to assemble. The alliance could launch a massive attack at that point and end the Ravaging Demon sect once and for all.

The plan worked perfectly in theory. The rank 5 cultivators chosen for the attacks could always destroy the regions if they didn't manage to win against the enemy forces.

Any outcome would lead to a victory since they would be fighting over the enemy's territory. It was enough to create chaos, kill a few Elders, and run away to complete the attacks.

There was a problem with that plan though. The guerrilla-style attacks had worked for the Hive because it owned Divine Architect's separate dimension.

Boundaries and defenses were powerless against that tool. The Hive could take any force by surprise, ignoring any protection in place. Almost no one was safe against the separate dimension.

Still, that meant revealing the existence of the separate dimension to the Council or giving some clues about it, at least.

It had been different with the Udye family and Faith. The nobles couldn't break the pact with the Hive, and Faith was Noah's friend. There was no risk of exposing the separate dimension.

However, the situation was different when taken into consideration the Council as a whole. Great Elder Diana alone would manage to get that information from any Elder involved in the attacks.

The Hive had to give up something to proceed with its plans. It didn't reveal the separate dimension, but it took upon itself the task to create items capable of suppressing their allies' consciousnesses.

In that way, the Elders of the Council could make use of the separate dimension without being able to learn anything about it, even if it forced the assets of the Hive to accompany them.

It didn't take much to ideate the item required for their cooperation. Thirty-seven and his disciples came up with a blueprint in a few months and perfected the product in little more than a year.

The inscribed item came out as a helmet capable of cutting off any external input once worn. It worked as an oath though, meaning that the cultivators had to accept its effects for them to activate.

After the Council and the Hive surpassed that last hurdle, they could finally divide their most potent assets into teams and start their raids on the Papral nation. As for Noah, he chose to attack alone.

Chapter 972 972. Raid

Noah walked through the tunnels of the separate dimension alone. There was a map provided by the Council in his hands which depicted the territory of the Papral nation in great detail.

The map covered even the area of influence of the nation. It spanned the regions from the end of the mystical fog to the beginning of the sea on the northern coast.

Some regions had a few red dots marked on them, which resulted from the Council's investigation and hypotheses. They indicated the rebellious sects and the important structures conquered during the rebellion.

His target was a new sect that had appeared during the last five hundred years. Its name was True Mountain sect, and it had gained fame quickly among the Council's ranks due to its members' power.

The sect was the result of an internal fight that happened in a major sect. A rank 5 cultivator in the liquid stage named Elder Marco had taken the best disciples from the original organization with him and founded the True Mountain sect.

After Ravaging Demon's appearance, Elder Marco joined the revolt against the Council, revealing that he had managed to reach the solid stage in those years.

It was needless to say that the alliance's higher-ups had expressed their complaints when Noah had chosen to go after such a powerful cultivator alone. However, his status in the political environment and his many achievements forced the Elders to accept his request.

They didn't like that he wanted to go alone either, but Noah had his reasons for that. His battle prowess had increased in those years, and he wanted to test it without foreign eyes on him.

After all, the alliance required for the cultivators of the Hive to accompany those of the Council due to the inscribed helmets forced on them. Noah's companion would have been an Elder of the allied force, and he didn't want to make his strength famous so soon.

The Hive left Thirty-seven the task to perform the calculations required for those precise attacks. The automaton had even linked the map to the separate dimension, so anyone could know which exit to use.

Of course, the Hive had placed incomplete exits beforehand. The cultivators in the separate dimension only needed to pour "Breath" in their lines to make them appear in the outside world.

Noah reached his destination in less than an hour and proceeded to sort the insides of his space-ring. There was no need for hoods or covers in those attacks. The Ravaging Demon sect had to know who was after it.

Coldness started to come out of Noah's eyes as his darkness went on the lines under him. His "Breath" completed the exit, which illuminated the area and engulfed him in its white halo.

When Noah's regained his vision, he was in the middle of a mountain path, with a dozen human cultivators starting at him in confusion.

"Is this the True Mountain sect?" Noah asked, and the pressure radiated by his sea of consciousness forced those cultivators to answer. They limited themselves to nod since the air had become too suffocating for them to speak.

Noah sensed the presence of a few rank 4 cultivators coming in his direction. He wasn't using any concealing technique, so the whole sect became aware of his arrival.

Another powerful aura burst from the peak of the mountain. Noah sensed that it belonged to a solid stage cultivator in the fifth rank and that it was about to converge toward him. However, before it could touch his consciousness, Noah waved his hand, and a series of Instabilities shot in various directions.

A dense black gas surrounded his figure as the Instabilities detonated. They were his improved disposable weapons created with his higher energy. Each of them had power in the upper tier of the fifth rank and had equally strong saber-shaped runes as their spikes.

The amount of destruction that they unleashed was immense. All the buildings on the path fell apart under the might of the explosions. The same road cracked and sank downward, toward the base of the mountain.

The detonation of the instabilities affected even the mountain in its entirety. An earthquake swept the area, and large fissures appeared on its rocky sides, making boulders fall toward the ground.

The sect's defensive measures took care of external threats, but they couldn't handle a sudden attack coming from behind them. Also, Noah's Instabilities were powerful. Any standard protection would have crumbled under their might.

The explosion propelled the saber-shaped runes, which shot forward and created an array of flying blades that filled the entire mountain. The few lucky cultivators that had managed to escape the detonation of the Instabilities had to face the fury of the runes, which ended their lives in a few slashes.

Of course, the few survivors were heroic cultivators. The human experts had died as soon a whiff of the weapons' aura spread in the environment.

Noah remained inside the protection made of dark matter as destruction spread in every corner of the True Mountain sect. The area was bound to have some protected training areas that his Instabilities didn't manage to affect, but he didn't care enough to search for them.

His focus was on the solid stage cultivator, whose aura was still on the mountain peak. It seemed that the expert didn't dare to chase after him while his runes filled the sky.

When the storm of blades ended, Noah came out of the dark matter and rose in the sky.

The result of his destruction appeared in his view while his consciousness remained fixed on the mountain peak. The sect once had hundreds of buildings built inside the mountain's side, but the Instabilities made everything fall apart.

There was only a messy pile of rubble there now, and no one would be able to guess that a powerful sect had once habited in that area.

"To think that you came to me willingly," A deep voice resounded in the area, and a figure flew from the mountain peak to descend toward Noah. "Patriarch's reward will be incredible!"

A middle-aged man with short black hair and a small scar that ran vertically through his mouth appeared in front of Noah. He didn't have any beard, and his description matched the Elder described in the Council's map.

Noah had already deemed words pointless by that time. Black smoke started to come out from his body, and his dark matter began to condense under him. He was going all out. He couldn't underestimate a cultivator in the solid stage even if he had the means to kill him.

Nevertheless, his innate awareness suddenly sensed danger coming at high speed from behind him. Noah's hand shot backward and grabbed the cause of that sensation. It turned out to be a spear made of ice that fell apart once he applied some pressure.

A second powerful presence appeared at that moment and revealed a rank 5 cultivator in the liquid stage.

Chapter 973 973. One-sided

It was common for such a powerful sect to have more than one rank 5 cultivator, but Noah didn't sense the second presence until the attack reached his back.

Noah turned to stare at the woman that had appeared on the ground. She was tall and had long blonde hair falling behind her back. There was a thin layer of ice covering her exposed skin and robe. It seemed that she had already activated a defensive spell.

A perfectly square opening in the ground behind her radiated a faint blue light that Noah connected to inscriptions. He could guess why he didn't sense her presence before. The opening probably led to a training area that had many protections.

"Are you regretting this already?" Elder Marco said as he flew toward the other Elder. He placed himself between her and Noah with the intent of stopping the invader from focusing her first.

"Carmen," Elder Marco continued as he tilted his head to look at the Elder under him, "Seize any opening. I'm more than enough for him, but I don't believe that the Hive will send him alone in a mission without protections."

Elder Marco didn't transmit that conversation through his consciousness. He used his voice and made sure that Noah heard it.

Elder Carmen nodded at his words and prepared a series of icy-spears that floated behind her back as she waited for the battle to start. Her eyes remained fixed on Noah, who had turned into a fiending creature wearing a scaled armor by then.

Snore's body had solidified too. The enormous snake protectively coiled around Noah and unfolded its feathered wings before hissing menacingly. He was ready to fight.

Elder Marco felt completely confident since he knew that Noah was weaker than him by a full stage. Yet, his opponent didn't try to escape even when Elder Carmen appeared.

Also, the fact that Noah had come alone gave him a bad feeling. He couldn't believe that the Hive had accepted to send its Demon Prince without informing him that a solid stage cultivator ruled the sect.

Of course, Elder Marco couldn't imagine that Noah had chosen him as a target to test his strength. There had never been a cultivator on a lower stage treating a more potent existence as a training dummy.

He guessed that the Hive had messed up when it planned its attacks and had sent Noah into a location far more dangerous than expected.

Noah's aura didn't reveal anything. There wasn't his usual violence, nor the coldness that preceded his battles. Elder Marco expected to see at least a faint trace of fear, but it seemed that Noah's mind had become blank.

Elder Marco gave up on making that battle more satisfying at that point. His Patriarch's target was right in front of him. There was no reason to delay his capture further.

The air above him condensed and took the form of countless needles. A barrage of sharp spikes filled the sky and tilted toward the massive figure of the snake.

A sudden dangerous sensation surged in Elder Marco's mind right after he deployed his spell. Noah's figure became blurry and black cracks appeared in the sky between him and Elder Carmen.

A faint dark shape preceded the cracks. It was as if something was moving so fast that it destroyed that part of the sky with its passage.

Elder Marco was a solid stage cultivator that had trained for a long time. He recognized a movement ability when he saw one. Yet, he didn't have time to warn Elder Carmen since his consciousness had perceived the attack too late.

His mind wasn't at fault. He would have sensed that attack an instant before if Noah targeted him. However, the black shape went after Elder Carmen, meaning that his mind didn't register it until it perceived energy release.

The black shape was too fast for him to do anything about it. Elder Marco could only see the cracks in the sky spreading until they reached Elder Carmen, where they suddenly stopped.

The black blur stopped moving after it crossed Carmen and took the shape of a fiendish form donning a scaled armor. Noah had reappeared wielding the Demonic Sword with one hand and while releasing dark matter.

Elder Carmen had remained stunned for the whole duration of the event. The intensity of the danger in her mind was so great that her consciousness had frozen out in fear. Only her right hand moved, and she used it to point toward Noah's previous position.

Noah and Snore's previous figures vanished into a cloud of black smoke. The speed that he had reached was so high that he had left after-images in the sky!

The cracks in the air soon closed, until all the sky returned to its original state. The only difference was that Noah now stood motionless behind Elder Carmen.

Elder Marco saw the scene unfolding in slow motion. It was a red line at first. A long but superficial wound appeared on Elder Carmen's body and traced a diagonal cut across her torso and waist.

Then, blood started to come out of her wound, but its quantity was too high for the kind of injury that she appeared to have received. In the end, the entirety of her upper body exploded into a rain of blood and internal organs, leaving only Elder Carmen's waist and legs behind.

Elder Marco felt amazed. He had never seen a battle between existences at the same level being so one-sided. Elder Carmen couldn't even react in time, and her protective layer of ice crumbled completely at Noah's passage.

As for Noah, his hand quickly shot toward the insides of her low-waist to seize her dantian. He ate it in one bite, but he didn't remain immersed in the sensations that it caused. There was Elder Marco still in front of him. That wasn't the time to evaluate how much he had improved.

Noah had always known that creating an individual school would make his prowess reach unseen levels, but he had been surprised too. Elder Carmen couldn't even react when it happened.

"You think you can come into my home and destroy anything that you like?!" Elder Marco shouted at that point. Refilling the assets in the fourth rank was already a troublesome matter, but Noah had killed the only other rank 5 expert of the sect.

The True Mountain sect was no more, destroyed in a few exchanges against the Demon Prince of the Hive. That realization made him snap. It was as if he had wasted the last five hundred years of work.

The spikes in the sky began to fall. They pierced the air, creating large areas where the world's fabric broke and connected it with the void.

Nevertheless, Noah stared at the incoming needles without any fear. He knew exactly how to block that attack.

Snore raised its reptilian head and spread its maws to release a series of black flames. When they reached the spikes, a sea of fire appeared in its place, destroying many of them.

Chapter 974 974. Short

The sea of flames radiated a feeling of pure destruction while it spread in the sky and engulfed the barrage of spikes. The fire devoured most of Elder Marco's spell, protecting the part of the terrain where Noah was standing.

The rest of the spikes crashed on the terrain and destroyed most of the environment. Large cracks spread around Noah, who didn't move his eyes from the cultivator in the sky.

He could see Elder Marco's expression turning into one of pure astonishment at the sight of those flames. The attack that had destroyed his spikes was almost identical to that of his Patriarch!

His surprise didn't stop there. Seeing that Noah owned flames capable of imitating Ravaging Demon's individuality was already incredible. Yet, the fact that they could match a spell cast by a solid stage cultivator made them even more impressive.

Snore let out a proud hiss and rose in the sky to face Elder Marco. The cultivator was about to prepare another spell when he sensed danger coming toward him.

The Blood Companion's body turned into smoke, and a black shape pieced it to shoot toward Elder Marco. Cracks spread in the sky at the shape's passage, and part of the dark matter fell into the void among them.

The attack aimed directly at Elder Marco at that time, so his mind could sense it in time to deploy countermeasures. The air in front of him hardened and formed a series of spiked shields with the same shape.

Noah crashed into the spiked layers and stopped after breaking through them. However, Elder Marco had already left his previous spot.

The broken shards of condensed air began to take the form of a sphere meant to trap him at that point. Yet, four additional arms rose from his torso and wielded the copies of the Demonic Sword that had appeared next to him.

Elder Marco prepared an offensive spell high in the sky when another incoming danger forced him to dodge again. A fissure appeared right next to him, and the condensed air that he had prepared before disappeared without leaving any trace.

The Elder was about to turn toward Noah, but Snore had reformed in the meantime. Black sparks filled the Blood Companion's horns and condensed between them to create a massive lightning bolt that shot toward the solid stage cultivator.

Elder Marco couldn't believe his eyes. A liquid stage cultivator was able to corner him!

Nothing like that had ever happened in the history of the world. Even the most monstrous cultivators had managed to fight head-on with experts on higher stages only thanks to particular items of favorable situations.

Instead, Noah was fighting him fairly. He didn't use any sneak attack or troublesome tactic. The Demon Prince of the Hive was deploying his best techniques and gaining the upper hand in the battle with them.

Elder Marco felt a tinge of respect surging inside him. Noah was even better than what the reports said. He was a real monster capable of ignoring the common sense at the foundation of the cultivation world.

However, pride soon suppressed that feeling. After all, Elder Marco was still an expert that had reached the solid stage. He couldn't let a junior think so poorly of him.

"Don't die on me too soon!" Elder Marco shouted before releasing a loud laugh. The air in a large area of the sky became still, and the lightning bolt flying toward him slowed down, hindered by the dense atmosphere.

Noah's eyes sharpened at that sight. His mind sent warnings coming from every direction, but he couldn't pinpoint the exact nature of the attack.

The lines of the Divine Deduction technique began to consume mental energy to improve his mind's capabilities. Noah knew that he was insanely strong for his level, but he couldn't underestimate a cultivator in the solid stage.

His consciousness couldn't understand what Elder Marco was planning even after activating the Divine technique. Noah decided to resume his offensive at that point, but a sharp pain suddenly spread from his chest.

Noah quickly retreated as his mind analyzed the insides of his torso, and blood filled his mouth. He soon discovered that the air inside his lungs had turned into sharp spikes. They had pierced his organs and were trying to reach for his heart.

His higher energy expanded to fend off the threatening spikes, and Snore reformed around him, covering half of his body with its gaseous properties. A roar came out of his mouth too, and the world lost its light for a second.

Noah spewed a trail of flames toward the dense atmosphere to destabilize the Elder's spell and clean his lungs with that tainted air.

The truth was that he didn't expect Elder Marco to have access to such a powerful ability. Noah had never imagined that even the air inside his body could become a weapon under that old monster's influence.

He knew the reason behind his miscalculation though.

Noah rarely found himself fighting cultivators that had a mental sphere more advanced than his. The improved awareness due to his hybrid status gave him a keener perception too.

However, Elder Marco had cultivated for far longer than him. He had taken his time developing an alternative training method for his sea of consciousness. That put his mind above his dantian in terms of advancement in the fifth rank, far above Noah's level.

The Elder had even hidden his strategy. Increasing the density of the air around him had been part of his plan. It made Noah unable to realize that the air inside his lungs was turning into spikes since his mind sensed too many threats.

Elder Marco didn't let go of that chance. Spikes formed everywhere around him and destroyed the lightning bolt still in place. Then, they gathered to take the shape of gales that shot toward his target.

Noah had suffered injuries twice already. The first time had been when he had slammed on the spiked shields and the second one in the last exchange.

His understanding of a solid stage cultivator's actual prowess in the fifth rank expanded as the battle continued. He had always known that those existences wouldn't be easy to kill, but he couldn't be sure about how hard they were to fight.

Most of that came from his lack of experience in battles at that level. However, he was gaining a raw estimate of where he stood compared to those old monsters.

'I fall a bit short,' Noah thought as the feathers on Snore's wings rose to point at the incoming gales. Black sparks also appeared on its horns, and dark flames gathered at the top of its throat.

'But this doesn't mean that I must lose,' Noah calmly concluded inside his mind as Snore launched its attacks.

A series of lightning bolts and violent flames crashed on the gales made of sharp spikes, and feathers chased closely behind them, ready to destroy anything that survived that offensive.

Chapter 975 975. Sky

A loud crash of powerful attacks happened in the sky above the remains of the True Mountain sect.

The lightning bolts pierced the gales' loose structure and destroyed many spikes before exploding into crackling dark sparks. The flames swept the artificial winds too and enlarged, covering a large chunk of the sky with their destructive might.

Only a few gales managed to survive those clashes, but they soon found a barrage of sharp feathers in front of them.

Noah didn't build Snore's wings to help it fly better. They increased its agility mid-air, but that wasn't their main purpose. Each feather was an improved version of the saber-shaped rune that used large quantities of dark matter. Noah had to build them one by one before fixing them to Snore's body.

They had become body parts of the Blood Companion once Noah perfected his creation. Still, they had remained disposable weapons that Snore would take a while to regrow.

Of course, they were so troublesome to implement in the Blood Companion because their might was incredible. Noah had made sure that all of them had a starting level at the bottom of the solid stage and could grow as they absorbed the primary energy in the environment.

Such a powerful attack would generally weigh a lot on his mind. However, Noah had limited their maneuverability to relieve part of their pressure. Also, Snore's consciousness shared part of that burden, making them even more comfortable to handle.

Noah and Elder Marco had gone through a few exchanges already. Primary energy filled every corner of the battlefield and struggled to leave the area due to its high quantity.

The feathers had an innate traction force due to Noah's greed. The primary energy converged toward them as they flew toward the gales and increased their power when it fused with their structure.

By the time they reached the few surviving winds made of sharp spikes, their power had surpassed Elder Marco's cultivation level!

The feathers overwhelmed the gales and continued to fly toward the incredulous Elder, who could barely understand what was happening. They pierced the remaining dense air around him and aimed for his figure.

Some of them didn't manage to change their trajectory enough to hit him, and others had lost too much power due to the condensed air. Yet, many feathers still swept Elder Marco, who found himself engulfed in that barrage of sharp runes.

Noah used that chance to deactivate the Divine Deduction technique. His mental sphere was still far away from reaching a critical state, but he had kept the Demonic Form active for the entirety of the battle. He couldn't afford to waste too much mental energy, especially since he had also activated the Black Mark spell.

A sudden surge of energy appeared in Elder Marco's position. Noah sensed the power of the peak of the solid stage coming from that spot and saw a gray light coming out from inside the barrage of feathers.

The runes slowly fell apart. Even the higher energy in their structure lost its stability and dispersed in the air, revealing a poor-looking Elder Marco that held a cracked talisman in his hands.

The cultivator had resorted to a disposable inscribed item to fend off Noah's attack, but his condition appeared terrible nonetheless. His robe was full of holes, and black spots filled the skin underneath them.

His legs were nowhere to be seen, but there were only superficial injuries on the rest of his body. It seemed that he had managed to activate the talisman right before the feathers could reach his internal organs.

An ugly expression lingered on Elder Marco's face. He could now understand the real power of the hybrids and why they were so troublesome to face.

The superiority of the magical beasts when it came to their bodies was one of the cultivation world's pillars. Yet, that feature became almost unfair when existences paired them with the abilities of a cultivator.

Elder Marco had hit Noah twice with abilities fueled by his "Breath" in the solid stage. On the other hand, Noah had landed only a blow on him. That would typically give the upper hand to Elder Marco in a battle between humans. However, the actual damage suffered by him and Noah differed in severity.

Noah had taken Elder Marco's legs and poisoned him with one attack. Those injuries were bound to affect his battle prowess, even if only slightly. Instead, Noah had a few cuts on his body and injured lungs, but those wounds didn't affect him at all.

The resilience of a hybrid was showing its importance in the battle. Humans were too frail to endure the same powerful attacks repeatedly.

Elder Marco understood that he needed to end the battle quickly. Otherwise, Noah's incredible body would slowly tilt the scales of the fight in his favor.

Noah felt able to read what was happening inside the Elder's mind. He knew that the next exchanges would decide the battle's outcome, so he had to prepare for anything that the old monster had in store for him.

"You know," Elder Marco said, "My individuality isn't related to spikes and needles. It's about control over the air. I make it take that form because it's easier to turn it into a weapon, but it seems that it won't be enough against you."

Elder Marco's aura spread, and a sense of stillness filled the world. His consciousness affected the air and tried to reach for Noah, but the dark matter of Snore's body fended it off.

Noah could see some similarities with Dreaming Demon's individuality. The difference was in the subtlety of their mental waves. Dreaming Demon took control of the matter of the world delicately, while Elder Marco's approach was forceful.

That led to a difference in what they were able to obtain through their influence. Dreaming Demon could even fuse with Heaven and Earth's will and predict future events with her individuality. As for Elder Marco, Noah had yet to see the full potential of that unique existence.

Noah didn't wait for the Elder to complete his preparations. Additional arms wielded copies of the Demonic Sword to perform the second form of his martial art. Snore spewed flames and launched lightning bolts too.

The attacks struggled to fly through the condensed air. They managed to cross a large chunk of the sky thanks to their might, but it seemed that Elder Marco had paid particular attention to the space between him and his opponent.

Meanwhile, his control over the sky expanded and reached the air behind Noah, affecting even his movements. It was as if the air had turned into a dense liquid that hindered anything trying to move inside it.

"Let's see how you handle the fall of the sky!" Elder Marco shouted as he raised his hand before swinging it down with a sharp movement.

Noah didn't even know what to look for since his mind sensed danger everywhere around him. However, when the Elder completed his gesture, he felt the entirety of the sky weighing on his back and flinging him on the ground.

Chapter 976 976. Suppression

Noah felt an immense force weighing on his shoulders and pushing him at high speed toward the ground. There was nothing that he could do to stop himself. Even his hybrid strength enhanced by the Demonic Form spell couldn't stop his fall.

The large area of the sky condensed by Elder Marco slammed on the ground, crushing the already broken mountain and leveling the terrain. The dense air didn't stop there. It continued to descend, creating a rectangular hole that kept on becoming deeper.

The region occupied by the True Mountain sect had become unrecognizable after the battle had gone on for a few exchanges. Noah's sudden arrival and consecutive attacks had already ruined the scenery significantly. Still, Elder Marco's last spell was causing cracks to appear in the entirety of the region.

The condensed air began to disperse after it had dug a hole a few hundred meters deep. Its disappearance left a space where the debris accumulated at the sides of the rectangle could fall.

Noah was at the bottom of the hole when the debris began to fall over him. His body felt sore, but it was in one piece. He had a few broken bones, but the Demonic Form and Snore had managed to absorb most of the spell's power.

Elder Marco coughed a mouthful of black blood as he admired the result of his spell from high in the sky. That attack had required a great deal of focus from him, so his suppression on Noah's poison had wavered for a few seconds.

That massive display of power wasn't efficient to use. It consumed a lot of energy, and it didn't focus its damage on one point. It could be perfect against large magical beasts, but it was a bit wasteful against cultivators.

The spell was by no means weak. Its large size made it unsuitable for targeting cultivators due to their small bodies, especially in a one versus one battle. The actual area that would hit them was only a minute part of the attack, which meant that most of the condensed air would end on the ground.

Nevertheless, that was the safest and most challenging to avoid attack in Elder Marco's arsenal. He could cast it from a safe position, and it worked as natural protection while he prepared it.

Even the joint attack of Noah's second form and Snore elements wasn't enough to pierce it.

'Can he do it again?' Noah thought as he rose in the sky. Yet, the same dangerous sensation as before filled his mind before a massive weight fell on his shoulders again and pushed him back on the ground.

Noah felt his bones crackling during the impact. Elder Marco had launched another one of those large spells and had flung him on the ground again.

The hole became more profound as the area of condensed air continued its descent. It leveled the previous debris that had fallen inside the rectangular chasm and dug for a few more hundred meters.

Elder Marco spewed another mouthful of black blood. Noah's poison managed to cause some damage every time he focused on casting that spell. Still, he inflicted more wounds on Noah in that way, so he felt satisfied with that outcome.

The expert had found a way to avoid facing a hybrid body's troublesome features and suppress Noah. Suffering some minor wound to end the battle safely was worth it.

On the other hand, Noah was in a pickle. He could feel that his Black Mark spell was continuing to damage the Elder's body, but he knew that he was suffering far more.

Also, he didn't know if Elder Marco was nearing his limits. He wasn't aware of a solid stage cultivator's full potential, so he guessed that the expert could continue with that tactic for a while.

Noah was still okay, at least when it came to the world of the hybrids. Many of his bones were either cracked or broken, and his internal organs felt heavy after enduring that pressure.

Quick math in his mind revealed that Elder Marco could kill him if he had the power to cast that spell nine more times. Noah would even become slower as time passed, meaning that most of his strategies would become useless.

He felt that he had only two choices. He could dig a way out of that situation and call it a day, or try to defeat Elder Marco in the next attacks. The only problem with the second option was that he didn't have a promising offensive strategy.

He had already thought about digging a tunnel only to sneak on him once he resurfaced somewhere else. Yet, Elder Marco was high in the air, and Noah didn't have anything to cover his presence.

The Elder would notice the sudden attack and cast another of those large spells. After all, he only needed to sense the threat's origin to decide which area to flatten.

The only approach that could make an attack successful saw him piercing the condensed air formed while the Elder cast the spell and reach for him with the movement technique. The issue was whether Noah owned an offensive capable of doing it.

'Any solid stage cultivator can make me go all out then,' Noah thought as a black sphere formed on his palm on began to float next to him. 'I guess thinking about killing them while being in the liquid stage is already a great achievement.'

The Black Hole spell had an innate gravitational pull that made the primary energy in the air gather around its form. Its power increased quickly, and it soon reached the standards of the solid stage.

Elder Marco sensed that Noah was up to something. However, there was virtually no drawback in waiting for his opponent there in the sky. Also, there were various formations in the nearby regions so that Noah couldn't escape underground.

Of course, the Elder didn't know about the separate dimension. He guessed that Noah was trapped there with him now. The territories nearby had sects under the Ravaging Demon sect too. There was no chance to escape with standard methods.

However, Noah had no intention to escape. He had come there to destroy the True Mountain sect, and he would do it as long as he had a chance to succeed.

Four fuming arms wielded copies of the Demonic Swords. Yet, they didn't fuse into one slash. Noah was waiting for everything to be ready before unleashing another new technique.

The dark sphere in front of him started to morph at that point. It became an irregular shape that floated toward the various Demonic Swords and covered their form with its energy.

The Demonic Form enlarged when that happened, but Noah didn't feel surprised since he had already tested the technique in private. The quantity of corrosive smoke released during that process was immense too due to that power-up.

Another layer of a dark substance covered his weapons. That was Noah's Black Mark spell, which increased the overall power of the attack.

Then, Noah rose in the sky and slashed with his weapons at the first sign of danger.

Chapter 977 977. Water

Noah's scaled armor morphed when the power accumulated by the Black Hole spell converged inside it. It took a tall irregular form that vaguely resembled a six-armed dragon.

Elder Marco didn't hesitate to relaunch his large spell as soon as he sensed Noah rising from the hole. However, a massive figure appeared in his vision when the air around him started to condense.

It was a gaseous shape. It had six arms stretched forward with claws pointing in the Elder's direction, and a reptilian head with open maw between them.

Its body was a cloud of violent black smoke that left a corrosive trail from its back. Still, its form condensed as it flew toward Elder Marco, and it slowly took the shape of a six-armed dragon.

The dragon clashed with the condensed air spreading to complete the spell. To the Elder's surprise, the creature broke through the dense atmosphere without any struggle and continued to fly toward him.

Elder Marco felt threatened. He wasn't sure if the attack could reach him, but his mind warned him that direct contact with it would be fatal.

The condensed air suddenly started to retract and accumulate in the space between him and the dark shape, slowing down its advance and giving him more time to evaluate the threat. Yet, lightning bolts soon flew toward him from a different direction, followed by dark flames that radiated a destructive aura.

That was a proper siege. Elder Marco felt like retreating at the sight of those attacks, but his experience in battles at that level revealed a second option.

He had already seen how Noah's abilities tended to assume draconic shapes. The many reports about him suggested that he had fused with a magical beast of that species too.

When the Elder looked at the reptilian form breaking through his spell so quickly, he couldn't help but link its appearance to a variation of Noah's Demonic Form. After all, he couldn't believe that the Demon Prince could vanquish his attack without relying on his hybrid's strength.

An idea quickly formed in his mind. He could end the battle in one blow if he managed to kill Noah while inside the six-armed dragon. The attacks of the winged snake would vanish as a consequence of its owner's death.

He didn't need to escape or defend. Elder Marco only had to destroy the main spell of his opponent.

The condensed air changed shape under his will. Most of it had already accumulated between him and the dragon, so it was easy for him to create something powerful in a few instants.

A massive drill formed in front of the dragon and started to rotate. Its motion created storms all around its shape, which applied a pulling force to the environment's air.

Winds gathered around the drill, increasing its shape and its rotating speed. Even the black smoke that made the dragon began to waver as it flew toward the tip of the Elder's spell.

The two attacks clashed, and shockwaves flew everywhere as pieces of both spells fell apart in the impact. Cracks that led to the void filled the sky around them, and a large area became an unstable mess that very few cultivators would dare to cross.

Elder Marco focused all his consciousness in increasing the rotation speed of the drill. His attack became stronger even as the six-armed dragon marched through its dense shape.

Noah's attack eventually lost too much smoke, and its stability wavered, giving a chance to the drill to destroy it in one go. Elder Marco prepared himself to restrain the Demon Prince at that point, but his expression froze when he saw no one inside the dragon.

His consciousness quickly spread to find Noah. He couldn't believe that the Prince was capable of such might without putting his body on the frontlines!

Nevertheless, it was already too late. Elder Marco found his target only when a dark shape appeared on the corner of his eyes.

Time slowed down for him in that situation. His eyes became able to make out Noah's blurry features breaking the sky. The Elder could only condense the air around him in a desperate attempt to survive before his vision went dark.

Elder Marco's head exploded as Noah stopped behind him. His hands shot to stop his corpse from falling and stabbed his low-waist to seize his dantian.

'I did it!' Noah couldn't help but shout in his mind. The battle had been close, but he had successfully defeated a solid stage cultivator in the fifth rank on his own!

He had to resort to a little ploy though, and luck had played a part in his victory too. Noah had planned to use the destruction generated by the two attacks to take his opponent by surprise. Yet, he didn't expect the Elder to focus all his consciousness on the drill.

That made it easier for Noah, who had planned to repeat the process until his enemy's condition reached a critical point. The Elder had made a mistake during the exchange, and he had paid the price with his life.

Noah believed that he would have won anyway if the Elder didn't have other disposable items or secret abilities. Yet, managing to kill him without suffering additional injuries was the best outcome that he could hope for.

Noah threw the bloody dantian in his mouth and seized the Elder's ring. He was about to fly toward Elder Carmen's corpse to find her storage item too, when his stomach became tense and forced him to bend.

Vomit came out of his mouth. Noah spewed the Elder's organ pieces along with the "Breath" contained inside the center of power.

He continued to spit for a while. His body didn't seem able to relax until it expelled anything belonging to Elder Marco. An oily liquid rose from his throat at some point, and Noah joined his palms to let it fall there.

His condition improved as the oily liquid left his body. That substance was the cause behind his state. Noah wanted to analyze it and understand the reasons for the violent reaction of his body.

A smelly scent filled his nose as Noah spit the liquid inside his joint palms. It didn't resemble anything peculiar. He couldn't sense any "Breath" or aura coming out of it.

However, his mental energy became restless when he tried to investigate its fabric. Some foreign understanding tried to enter Noah's mind at that point, but he promptly cut his connection with those tainted mental waves.

The lines of the Divine Deduction technique began to shine as he kept on looking at that strange water. His brows furrowed as his mind tried to recall any memory that could help him understand the nature of that substance.

Noah came up with a vague hypothesis after a while. There were unanswered questions when it came to the behavior of the Elbas family.

There were only rumors when taken on their own. Still, they formed a pattern when pieced together, starting with the Royals claiming that they could force breakthroughs in heroic cultivators.

Chapter 978 978. List

June had told Noah that there was a mysterious pool at the end of the Royal Inheritance. The claims that the Elbas family gave the chance for breakthroughs to the nobles came right after June's team found it.

The war against the Shandal Empire then revealed that some nobles had experienced sudden breakthroughs. That phenomenon wasn't limited to them either. Some Royals had advanced faster than expected too.

In the end, there was the cooperation between the Elbas family and the Ravaging Demon sect. The fact that a rank 5 cultivator stuck at the peak of the solid stage for so long had managed to advance right after the first sign of their alliance was suspicious too.

It was safe to assume that even Elder Marco had gone through the same process. After all, even his breakthrough had been equally surprising.

Everything seemed to fit the idea forming inside Noah's mind. The foreign understanding that had tried to reach him was even another clue that supported his hypothesis.

The pool retrieved in the Royal Inheritance appeared to have the ability to force breakthroughs in heroic cultivators. Yet, Noah's body found its waters toxic, which was why he decided to refuse the understanding that they gave.

There were some dark areas in his reasoning. Except for the actual proof that the oily liquid had some connection with the pool, Noah was unaware of its drawbacks.

Such a miraculous item was bound to have massive repercussions on the centers of power of the cultivators. Even the natives' transformation forced them to abandon their individualities, and that process was less invasive.

'Some nobles have never reappeared,' Noah thought as the Divine Deduction technique helped him gathering all the pieces of information that he could find. 'And my body rejects this liquid, meaning that it can't be anything good. I've never seen a magical beast being picky about food unless it has evident negative effects.'

An inscribed bottle appeared in his hands, and Noah stored the liquid inside it before putting it back in his space-ring. He wasn't qualified to analyze that substance. It was better to leave the matter to Thirty-seven or Daniel.

The destruction caused by his battle against the True Mountain sect appeared in his eyes when Noah moved his focus back on the environment. He expected to see reinforcements coming soon, so he didn't want to remain in the area for much longer.

Noah dived toward the ground and searched the spot where Elder Carmen had died. He quickly found her space-ring, and he returned in the location of the separate dimension's door after seizing it.

He had no time to look for the secret areas of the True Mountain sect. They would be troublesome to find and open due to the defensive inscriptions there.

The alliance had predicted that the entrances to the separate dimension would break during the raids. It was part of its plan to deploy Thirty-seven's disciples in each location to keep them functioning so that the attackers could retreat at any time.

In Noah's case, the destruction had been so thorough that the disciple in place had to rebuild the exit multiple times to keep it active for the whole duration of his battle.

The door released a light that enveloped Noah's figure when he activated it. The scenery of the separate dimension soon appeared in his eyes, as well as a familiar face that he didn't see for a long time.

"Demon Prince," Elder Roy said as he performed a polite bow, "I hope your hunt was fruitful."

Noah's consciousness swept Roy's centers of power to check on their state. Many years had passed since the Elder had recruited him in the Chasing Demon sect, and many events had filled that long period.

Elder Roy was still a rank 4 cultivator, but he had managed to reach the solid stage. Noah had outclassed his growth, but the Elder had found his path only after Thirty-seven joined the Hive.

Noah nodded. That casual meeting reminded him of how much he had grown, especially since he had just overpowered a solid stage cultivator.

"Get to the fifth rank," Noah said as he walked past him. "The Hive needs to recover from the war."

There wasn't much more that he could say to him. Their relationship had become stale since the Hive claimed its independence. Noah had been too busy becoming stronger than anyone in his generation to mind social interactions.

However, seeing that the older generation's experts were catching up eased his worries about the Hive's situation. There were still many promising assets, and its foundation was finally on par with the other organizations.

With the hybrids, the cultivators from the Odrea nation, and the many recruits that joined every day, it was only a matter of time before the Hive reached that level. It only had to turn that foundation into powerful Elders now.

The insides of the Elders' space-rings appeared in Noah's mind as he walked toward a specific teleportation matrix. There were riches of various kinds inside them, but they mostly suited his two victims' elements.

There were a few valuable items, especially in Elder Marco's ring, since he was the sect leader. They consisted of inscribed weapons and some scrolls, but nothing surpassed the fifth rank in terms of power.

That amount of riches was average for rank 5 cultivators. Only cultivators that had encountered inheritances or were in similar lucky situations could get their hands on items that surpassed their power.

Noah didn't know if the True Mountain sect's secret areas hid something else, but he wouldn't risk his life to look for them. What he had obtained was already enough, and it wasn't even the main goal of his mission.

He had obtained what he wanted. The Ravaging Demon sect had lost two rank 5 cultivators, and he had tested his new abilities in a real battle. Also, he had seized essential pieces of intel from the Elders, which would help create a complete picture of the enemy's situation.

Noah returned to the gathering point of the alliance after using a series of teleportation matrices. It was a structure built in one of the destroyed areas under the control of the Hive.

A series of amazed glances landed on his figure when he entered the large hall filled with Elders from both organizations. There were large maps that depicted the territory of the Papral nation and piles of notes next to them.

The outcome of the first raids had already become a public domain for the most part. After all, there were many eyes on the Ravaging Demon sect. Also, some of the Elders that had rebelled had done so to become spies for the Council.

Reports arrived continuously on a large crystal placed at the center of the room that created an ethereal screen where it listed all the major news. There were even kill counts when it came with the experts directly involved with the raids.

Noah could see his name on the screen. He was almost at the top of the list, second only to Flying Demon and Dreaming Demon.

Chapter 979 979. Review

Elder Marco and Elder Carmen's names stood next to Noah's. He felt amazed to find that the alliance had become aware of his kills so quickly. Still, the matter became doable when he thought about how the Council used to habit those lands a few years ago.

There were bound to be remains of investigative items and formations in the Papral nation. One of the strongest organizations in those Mortal Lands couldn't give up to their domain without activating some countermeasures.

Dreaming Demon and Flying Demon's names were above his. They stood on the same line and top of the list, and they had four targets next to theirs.

Noah recognized them from the data gathered about the Ravaging Demon sect in that period. The Demons had killed one cultivator in the solid stage, one in the liquid, and two in the gaseous.

The Demons had been among the cultivators that had suffered the most from Ravaging Demon's betrayal. Their anger wasn't something that they could vent with a few raids.

They had chosen to attack without bringing Elders from the Council, and they had targeted a region that had two different sects. No one in the alliance had dared to complain about their plan either since they knew their identities.

The Council found it necessary to accommodate the Demons as much as it could. After all, part of their suffering was its fault. The sole fact that they had managed to forsake their past grudges to focus on Ravaging Demon was already a great result.

Noah couldn't help but apply his previous discovery to the current assets of the Ravaging Demon sect.

It had been part of the Council, which had many heroic cultivators at the apex of its power. However, its number of powerful assets was abnormal, and there were a few cases of sudden breakthroughs when it came to old cultivators.

Noah didn't think much about it at the beginning. They were just targets that he had to kill to make Ravaging Demon come out. Yet, now they had become part of a ploy that had been in place for many years, probably decades!

He could see the strings of the Elbas family behind the power of the Ravaging Demon sect. There was a chance that everything was only the product of his imagination. Still, many clues stated the opposite too.

"Where are Flying Demon and Dreaming Demon?" Noah asked, breaking the silence that his arrival in the hall had created.

"They went out again," Elder Regina said after she saw that the other Elders in the hall hesitated to reply. She even threw a small orb in Noah's direction to update him about the other raids' results.

Noah caught the orb and inspected it with his mental energy. A list of all the achievements and pieces of information gathered after the battles appeared in his mind.

Some of the attacks of the alliance had failed. The Ravaging Demon sect had deployed powerful defenses in essential locations, and the raiding teams there couldn't find a way to cross them in a short time.

Those weren't common defenses placed at the borders of each domain. The separate dimension would directly ignore them in that case. Instead, they were formations placed directly at the center of each sect and capable of hindering any intruder.

The alliance knew that the Ravaging Demon sect didn't have that kind of inscriptions. It wasn't a field that the Council specialized in. Also, those defenses seemed to target the effects of the separate dimension.

It was as if the Ravaging Demon sect knew that its enemies had access to that tool, even if it had never suffered from the separate dimension before.

All the clues led to the Elbas family again. The Royals were the only force capable of creating those defensive items in a few years and predicting the kind of attacks they had to stop.

"Notify me if something changes," Noah said before leaving the structure. He was still tired from the previous battle, and his injuries had just started to heal.

Noah had only changed his robe before visiting the structure, but there were many things that he wanted to do before fighting again. The first one was healing, and the second was analyzing his current power thoroughly.

The recent battle had given him a clear idea of where his battle prowess stood compared to solid stage cultivators. Noah had used all his abilities against Elder Marco, and the fight had been close nonetheless.

'I can face weaker solid stage experts,' Noah concluded as he returned in the separate dimension. 'As for the stronger ones, I can only rely on my body for now.'

Noah gave the bottle containing the oily water to Thirty-seven before returning to his mansion. The images of his battle against Elder Marco filled his mind for the entirety of the trip, and he couldn't help but feel satisfied with his new abilities.

His movement ability fused the Merging spell with a martial art that used a mixture of brute force and a specific rhythm. Noah's legs would imitate the effects of the Merging spell to enhance them and rely on their physical power to push his speed to the limit.

The acceleration that Noah obtained with that technique was incredible. Its only issue was the lack of maneuverability due to the momentum that it was capable of providing. He could make sharp turns, but he couldn't curve his trajectory accurately.

Snore's flames and feathers were incredible too, especially the latter since they weren't limited to its level. The Blood Companion revealed itself to be a fantastic helper, with the only difference that Noah had finally removed the limitations on its growth.

As for the ability that had given him the chance to win, Noah found it even more potent than he expected.

Using the Black Hole spell to overcharge the Demonic Form spell gave birth to the third form of the Dragon's claw martial art. Noah slashed his six arms without fusing them and threw all the black smoke around him along with the attack.

That gave birth to a gaseous shape that took the form of a six-armed dragon. Its power was immense since it fused all the second form's strong points with his other spells. The only issue was that the scaled armor would disappear after launching that attack.

The same went for the copies of the Demonic Sword and all the Black Hole spell's energy. Noah remained defenseless for a few seconds after using the third form of his martial art, but its power made it worth it.

After all, Elder Marco had used the entirety of his consciousness to focus on his drill, but Noah's attack had managed to match it for a few seconds. That was enough to prove how powerful it was.

'I've obtained these results by creating martial arts for preexisting spells,' Noah thought as he meditated while his body absorbed nutrients to heal. 'How much power can I obtain if I create specific spells?'

Chapter 980 980. Move

The rounds of raids on the Ravaging Demon sect's territories eventually ended. All the experts involved in the battles held a series of meetings to summarize the situation.

The battles of the alliance in the Papral nation had been mostly successful. The only failures happened whenever the raiding teams met formations and inscribed items that targeted some of the separate dimension's capabilities.

The alliance's kill count had reached eleven rank 5 cultivators of various stages and multiple assets in the fourth rank. The losses of the Ravaging Demon sect had been immense. It lost half of its strongest experts in just a few attacks.

Of course, the alliance didn't expect that trend to continue. The raiding teams had exploited the subtlety of the separate dimension well, but its enemy was bound to resort to countermeasures.

The spies inside the Papral nation reported that most sects were moving in the locations that had survived the attacks. All the Ravaging Demon sect's remaining assets amassed in three regions to prepare for the next waves of attacks.

The rest of the Papral nation became empty of humans, and the packs of magical beasts didn't hesitate to swarm them now that their enemies had disappeared. It took only a short period before those regions fell into a wild state.

The forces of the alliance remained silent in that short period. Their enemies moved through teleportation matrices, which prevented eventual offensive operations. Also, some of their assets had to recover.

Noah didn't fight anymore after the battle in the True Mountain sect. His injuries weren't severe, but the damage on the bones required some time to heal. His position on the leaderboard fell by a few spots, but he didn't care about it. He didn't need fame. His priority was on the path ahead.

The Demons claimed the first spot though. Their fury against the Ravaging Demon's underlings was boundless, and they vented it even on sects that didn't have any rank 5 experts.

However, even with all the separate dimension's advantages, their enemies still had many powerful cultivators in their ranks. Simple sneak attacks could only make the raids easier.

The Ravaging Demon sect had inherited part of the Council's strength after the rebellion, but it could only retreat in front of the alliance. The Hive still had fewer experts than the other organizations in the world, but they were so strong that no one would consider it inferior.

The Hive was a relatively young organization. It was normal for it to have fewer assets in the higher ranks. Yet, no one could match the quality of its experts.

Noah alone raised the standard. After all, he was a cultivator capable of defeating existences on a higher stage!

The reappearance and battle prowess of the Demons declared that the Hive owned the most talented cultivators. The only organization that could claim that spot was the Elbas family, but its fame mostly came from the incredible King Elbas.

The alliance observed the Ravaging Demon sect's behavior for a while and kept part of its attention on the territories of the Elbas family.

Ravaging Demon had yet to show his face again. No one had seen him after the battle above the blue dome, and even the recent raids didn't make him appear.

A peculiar event happened in that period though. The alliance was still deciding on its next step when cultivators started to clear and habit the peripheral regions of the Papral nation.

They were nothing more than settlements with only human cultivators led by a few experts in the fourth rank. The alliance didn't mind them since they appeared as nothing more than hunting parties. Only the Hive knew that they had come to conquer some regions once the situation stabilized.

The alliance had yet to divide those territories, and it wouldn't do so until the threat of the Ravaging Demon sect vanished. Also, it was in no hurry to conquer them since they were part of the old continent.

Only the most affectionate assets of the Council wanted their old home back to restore their face. After all, the Ravaging Demon sect's rebellion had been something unexpected, but that they could prevent in many ways.

Still, Ravaging Demon had helped the Council claiming the entirety of the Papral nation in the past. The losses that they had suffered during his betrayal had come after many advantages seized thanks to him.

The alliance decided to assemble the armies once every expert had recovered from their injuries. Nothing peculiar had happened in those regions, so the attacking forces felt the need to pressure the Ravaging Demon sect before it came up with other countermeasures.

They didn't opt for the separate dimension though. That had to be a frontal attack that saw the Council and the Hive going against their common enemy. All the world had to see that scene.

Three armies formed. The plan was to apply pressure on all the crowded areas at the same time and see if they could force Ravaging Demon's hand. Of course, the powerhouses of both organizations would lie in wait for him.

Noah and the Demons became the army's leaders tasked to attack the Four Sigils sect, which was the new name given to one of the crowded areas. Some assets of the Council would join them, together with weaker cultivators from both organizations.

There were even human cultivators, although not as many as during the war against the Shandal Empire. They were mostly assets that showed no talent or determination for the cultivation journey, and experiencing a battle could help them.

"How do you want to drive them out?" Flying Demon said as he stared at the array of tall structures under him from the sky.

"Prince, do you have something to throw at them?" Dreaming Demon asked as she turned toward Noah. There were assets of the Council among them, so she preferred to use his title when talking with him.

The army had gathered in the region occupied by the Four Sigil sect, and the heroic assets were analyzing it from their position in the sky.

Their target appeared as a marvelous city. It had four huge pagodas on its corners and a series of peculiar buildings among them. A series of mountains encircled those structures and worked as natural protection. They had faint traces of inscriptions on their rocky surface, meaning that they were part of the sect's defensive formations.

The Council's intel had revealed that the Four Sigil sect had four rank 5 cultivators in its ranks, but only one of them was in the solid stage. With Noah and the Demons there, that threat was manageable.

The only problem was its defenses. They could tilt the scales of the battle in favor of the sect.

Noah shrugged his shoulders before waving his hand. Dozens of spiked spheres appeared in front of him and began to fall toward the mountain chain.