

DEMONIC 981

Chapter 981 981. Defenses

Those Instabilities were all inscribed weapons with power in the fifth rank. Their tier varied, but there were a few of them in the upper level.

Noah's body was in the upper tier, and the Demonic Sword was still in the middle tier. Both of them required a large number of nutrients, but they had also become picky about them.

Magical beasts in the lower tier of the fifth rank could barely satisfy their hunger. They preferred to hunt powerful prey to keep their carvings in check for more extended periods.

However, there was a limit to how many powerful creatures habited the territories of the Hive. Noah had managed to refill his stash thanks to the hybrids, but he often had to rely on weaker beasts to satisfy his hunger.

That made him gather many corpses belonging to weaker creatures. They were mostly big beasts though, which gave Noah enough materials to spare for some side projects, namely his disposable weapons.

His higher energy improved the final products' quality, allowing him to use many weaker materials to create valuable items. Noah could use many peak rank 4 body parts to mass-produce Instabilities with power at the bottom of the fifth rank.

Also, the saber shaped-runes used as spikes didn't depend on the material used. Noah tuned their level according to how much the sphere could hold, making the weapons threatening even if their overall power put them in the lower tier.

Noah could refill his stash of Instabilities by sparing a few tissues from his meals, and he gladly did it since it improved his expertise with the dark matter. They were simple creations, but the experience was something built through countless hours spent training.

The Instabilities fell toward the Four Sigils sect under the cold eyes of the Demons. They watched as the mountain chain around that large city lit up to create a defensive shield. Inscribed arrows shot from some buildings too.

The arrows destroyed some bombs, but there were too many of them. Noah's Instabilities fell on the golden shield, covering the city to release their destructive might.

The bombs hit by the arrows exploded too, and a barrage of fuming spikes spread on the sky above the Four Sigils sect.

Of course, the assets in the four rank on the scene had retreated a bit when they saw that the Demonic Prince had taken the initiative. They didn't want to be too close when rank 5 cultivators acted.

The light radiated by the golden shield flickered under the assault of the Instabilities. Each one of them was similar to a spell launched by a rank 5 cultivator, and more than forty bombs were exploding right above its surface!

Cracks appeared on the shield, and golden shards fell on the city. Some saber-shaped runes even passed through the fissures and aimed for the buildings below.

The arrows stopped them, but the explosions still raged in the sky, and the light of the shield dimmed as cracks accumulated. Then, the light completely vanished, and the mountain chain returned to its natural state.

The storm of spikes flew toward the city at that point. Countless saber-shaped runes with the power of the fifth rank threatened to crash on the structures on the ground and unleash destruction among the cultivators inside them.

Nevertheless, the pagodas lit up, and a wide array of inscriptions spread from them to cover the entire city. A series of golden beams then shot from the four tall structures and aimed for the spikes, destroying them at the slightest touch.

Noah's eyes sharpened at the sight of the beams, and the Demons turned toward him to nod. He had shared his theory about the Royal's pool with the Hive's higher-ups, and their opinions matched his.

Still, there was a lack of actual proof since both Thirty-seven and Daniel were having issues analyzing the oily water.

The quality of the defenses of the Ravaging Demon sect's regions though showed how comprehensive its cooperation with the Elbas family was.

The Four Sigils sect should only have a few defensive formations according to the Council's intel. Instead, it had inscriptions capable of countering multiple kinds of threats.

The lines on the ground probably had the purpose of defending from the separate dimension. Something like that wasn't something that the Ravaging Demon sect experts could have built in a short time. Only the Elbas family had inscription masters with that level of expertise.

The nods of the Demons meant that there might be more surprises once the attack started.

The golden beams destroyed the saber-shaped runes before they could even touch the ground. Some of them managed to make a few buildings crumble, but that amount of damage was negligible.

The Demons acted after the destruction stopped.

Flying Demon deployed a layer of ice at the base of the mountains that spread over them as it made its way toward the city's insides. Dreaming Demon closed her eyes, and the light of the formation dimmed as her consciousness invaded it.

They had to take down those defenses before diving toward the city. They couldn't barge in recklessly now that they suspected that the Elbas family had been there.

The pagodas' light fought against the spreading ice, but the latter seeped in some blind spots anyway. A few buildings started to freeze, and ice flowers grew on their surface.

The flowers radiated Flying Demon's individuality. They worked as the cores in a formation, giving more power to the ice that continued to reach the city's center.

The golden beams struggled to escape Dreaming Demon's control. Yet, they only manage to bend their light without succeeding in reaching for the layer of ice.

Panicked human cultivators began to exit their habitations and assemble in a battle formation at the center of the city. A few rank 4 experts also came out in the open to avoid the effects of the Demon's attacks.

Noah observed the scene with the utmost attention. The higher-ups of the Ravaging Demon sect had to appear soon. Otherwise, he and the Demons would level that city before the battle even started.

As he had predicted, four figures suddenly shot in the air and stopped at some distance from the trio in the fifth rank. They were the four experts reported by the Council.

The Demons continued to attack the city even after those enemies appeared. They had to damage its defenses as much as they could before the rest of the army invaded. However, their enemies couldn't let them continue.

There were two Elders in the liquid stage, one in the gaseous, and one in the solid. They were barely a threat in front of experts that had managed to survive the attack of a powerhouse.

Yet, a series of inscribed items soon appeared in front of them and radiated auras with power at the peak of the fifth rank. The two cultivators in the liquid stage even started to execute strange forms to activate a battle formation.

Chapter 982 982. Golden

Noah didn't fear any of those enemies. His current battle prowess gave him enough confidence to fight all of them at the same time even!

He didn't know if he could defeat them, especially since they had powerful inscribed items. Still, he was confident that he could slow them down to buy some time for the Demons.

A faint smell reached Noah's nose and reminded him of the taste of Elder Marco's dantian. A smirk appeared on his face when he identified the origin of that smell. The auras of the two liquid stage cultivators spread that hateful carried that hateful scent everywhere they went.

Noah wouldn't have been able to sense it before the battle against Elder Marco. Yet, his body could now perceive the presence of the oily water after it had a taste of it.

After all, it was something that it hated, much like the Heaven Tribulations. Noah's body had developed natural awareness against it.

The forced breakthrough didn't come with evident advantages, but Noah knew that individualities couldn't express their full power if the enlightenment weren't natural. The two liquid stage experts were bound to have flaws in their battle prowess, and he wanted to exploit that.

Black smoke came out of Noah's skin as his figure became blurry. The Ravaging Demon sect didn't gather much intel from the raids due to their abruptness, so his abilities were still unknown to the enemy forces.

Noah sprinted forward, leaving cracks in the sky behind him. He reached the four enemies before the scaled armor could even form, but his Demonic Sword was ready to slash at the two liquid stage experts.

A faint golden light had begun to shine around the two cultivators since they had started to execute the battle formation. An array of scales had formed around them by the time Noah reached their position.

The other two cultivators activated their peak rank 5 items too. The black cube in the solid stage expert's hands expanded to create a large form that the sunlight seemed unable to illuminate. The last enemy threw a blue powder in the sky that surveilled the area, taking various shapes as it floated.

The golden scales cracked under Noah's attack, but the black cube's expansion blocked it and pushed him backward. A metallic sound resounded in the sky as the slashes slammed on that dark fabric, leaving no marks on it.

Noah's legs landed on the cube, delivering two powerful kicks that didn't manage to slow down its expansion for even a second. He wanted to remain there and deploy all his attacks, but the blue powder went after him, taking the shape of a giant eagle in the process.

The world lost its light for an instant, and a wave of half-white half-ethereal flames came out of Noah's mouth and engulfed the blue eagle.

The creature changed form during the impact. Trails of dense blue powder came out of the flames and turned into a series of small snakes that pounced at Noah.

The Demonic Form's corrosive smoke hindered their advance, but a few of them managed to pierce the spell to reach for him. Still, they only found a cracked sky waiting for them.

Part of the blue powder fell into the void as Noah sprinted away. He analyzed the expanding black cube as he flew around it, but he couldn't find any weak spots in its structure.

The situation didn't bother Noah too much. The Demons could continue to damage the city's defenses while the four experts were busy activating those powerful items.

However, he still wanted to test his strength. After all, it rarely happened that something could resist his brute physical power so easily.

Four additional arms wielded copies of the Demonic Sword as Noah executed the second form of his martial art. The air in the trajectory of his attack disappeared, but the black cube remained in place, and only a few cracks appeared on its structure.

A clinking sound echoed in the sky again after the impact. Noah remained still when he saw that even his second-most powerful attack couldn't pierce the cube.

He felt something strange inside that metallic material, but he couldn't understand anything else from that simple observation. Still, he opted not to use the Divine Deduction technique since he didn't know how the battle would unfold.

Buildings started to fall as Flying Demon's spell spread through the entirety of the Four Sigils sect. The golden beams became dimmer too as Dreaming Demon's consciousness damaged the sources of their power.

Panicked human and heroic cultivators filled the streets of the city. All the sects' assets had come out in the open by then, but their only hope was in their leaders.

The defenses were slowly falling apart, and the rest of the attacking army stared at the process in awe and eagerness. Their moment was about to come, and everything had been possible due to the experts fighting above them.

The blue powder came after Noah again, but its power had fallen since some of it had ended into the void. He felt almost tempted to ignore it and continue to focus the cube. Yet, he ultimately decided to sprint again and continue his assault in another spot.

The powder radiated the power of the peak of the fifth rank, but it wasn't too scary. It was annoying to deal with. Noah didn't want to waste time with that troublesome item. He preferred to find a way inside the cube to hunt the experts before they prepared their countermeasures.

The entirety of the sect became a frozen scenery in the next few minutes. No more lights came out of its buildings either, and the heroic cultivators on the scene had to use defensive spells to protect the human assets. Even the slight contact with the ice could freeze their entire figures.

Flying Demon was a solid stage cultivator though. There was a limit to how much those weaker assets could fend off the ice.

A series of cracks soon spread on the surface of the black cube, and a golden light came out of its insides. The item eventually fell apart to reveal a massive golden Tyrannosaurus!

The Ravaging Demon sect's solid stage and gaseous stage experts stood side-by-side with the giant creature as they retook control of their inscribed items.

Surprise spread among the attacking troops. That golden figure was too similar to the battle formation of the Shandal Empire not to notice the backer of those rebels.

All three invading forces had obtained the teachings of that battle formation, but there was only one force that could modify and deploy it in such a short time. It became evident to everyone that the Elbas family supported the Demon sect with its experience in the inscription field.

Noah stared at the Tyrannosaurus and recognized the troublesome wings behind its back. However, its power didn't reach the sixth rank. It only lingered in the solid stage.

"I'll take the big guy," Noah said, and the Demons revealed a cold smile as they glanced at the remaining two enemies.

Chapter 983 983. Caves

Noah had chosen the Tyrannosaurus as his enemy mostly to test himself, but there were other reasons behind his decision. The Demons were the perfect experts to deal with any eventual defense deployed by the Elbas family while the allied forces regrouped.

It was better if Noah took care of the most troublesome enemy while they managed the rest. After all, only one of their opponents in the fifth rank was in the solid stage. He had plenty of room to focus on the entirety of the battlefield.

The Tyrannosaurus was different from the battle formation deployed by the Shandal Empire. It wasn't only the different color of its light. Its form appeared far denser, and it only had a pair of arms and wings.

It didn't even require the same number of heroic assets. Only two rank 5 cultivators in the liquid stage had been enough to summon it.

The power of the Tyrannosaurus appeared different too. Noah didn't feel as if he was facing a formation. His senses told him that he was facing an actual magical beast.

Noah's eyes sharpened as he sprinted toward the tall beast. Pieces of information resurfaced in his mind as he tried to remember anything connected with that ancient species.

He had the faint sensation that the Elbas family had deeply modified the battle formation, making it resemble the beast that it tried to reproduce.

That meant that he could use the legends and old reports studied by chance when he was in the academy or searched for creatures suitable for the fusion.

As if to prove his instincts wrong, the Tyrannosaurus spewed a golden beam aimed at the dark shape reaching for it. Its arms also slashed the air and released golden blades that flew toward the same target.

Those were the same attacks used by the Empire's battle formation. It seemed that the Royal's version of the technique didn't abandon those features.

Noah ignored the incoming attacks. He was far faster than them. By the time they reached his position, he had already moved forward, leaving only a trail of cracks waiting for them.

The cracks expanded once he reached the belly of the beast. A large patch of the sky fell apart as he made a sharp turn upward while releasing two quick slashes.

The slashes slammed on the creature's golden body, but they were unable to do much damage. Only a few deep marks appeared on its belly, but the wings promptly absorbed the energy still lingering in the environment to heal them.

'Are my instincts wrong?' Noah thought as he rose above the Tyrannosaurs' head to prepare another attack. However, the tail of the creature suddenly appeared on its path and cracked at him.

The scene seemed to freeze for a moment. The cracks in the sky stopped spreading, and most of the black cloud around Noah vanished during the impact.

'They weren't wrong,' Noah thought as he looked above his head. His hand kept the golden tail stuck in an immovable grip, and his fingers had stabbed that dense light, creating cracks through that body part.

After making direct contact with the creature, Noah could sense that the Tyrannosaurus' physical prowess was on par with magical beasts near the peak of the fifth rank.

'It's as if I'm fighting a proper hybrid for once,' Noah revealed a cold smile as he thought that. 'I should let it know why a human form is the best for this strength.'

Noah didn't feel any fear. Instead, his pride as a creature on the same level spiked when he found an opponent that could take his blows.

He had found some of them in the other Mortal Lands too, but they were hybrids that could barely maintain their sanity. They were no more than beasts once they suffered a few injuries.

However, there were two experts in the liquid stage controlling that powerful body now. Noah knew that there wasn't the risk of them losing control of their mental faculties.

He couldn't help but feel excited at the thought of measuring himself against something that resembled him.

The Tyrannosaurus spread its maw as golden light gathered in its throat. It was about to tilt its head to aim toward Noah when the latter abruptly pulled.

The cultivators on the scene had begun to fight after the Demons destroyed the defenses of the city. Both humans and heroic cultivators had engaged in messy battles in the mountains around the city.

Yet, the golden light above them suddenly started to shift, which created rotating shadows under them. Many couldn't help but stop their battles to stare at the sky, and what they saw made them forget where they were.

It seemed that the massive Tyrannosaurus was flying in circles. Nevertheless, they soon noticed that something was off.

Its tail remained tense and pointing at the center of those circles, where a small fiendish figure was filling the environment with black smoke. It took those assets a few seconds to realize that the Demon Prince of the Hive was flinging the Tyrannosaurus around as if it was a small creature.

Noah pulled the beast's tail as he rotated on his position. The force that he applied was so intense that the Tyrannosaurus didn't have the chance to stop its motion.

It would have been different if the creature was a real magical beast or a hybrid. Still, two cultivators were controlling and creating that huge body, and they couldn't find their balance while also keeping the battle formation active.

Their expertise in that technique was minimal too, so they didn't want to risk the golden beast's integrity to attempt to restore their balance.

Noah rotated to build momentum before throwing the Tyrannosaurus toward the Four Sigil Sect. A golden meteor fell under both armies' incredulous eyes and slammed on the frozen buildings, spreading earthquakes that affected even the territories after the mountain chain.

The dust eventually settled, but tremors continued to spread through the lands. The Tyrannosaurus' fall had affected even the environment under the city, which continued to experience earthquakes.

The Demons had fought against the other two experts in the meantime. They had the upper hand through the entirety of the battle, but their opponents had a series of peak rank 5 items that prevented them from expressing their full power.

The black cube had reformed after the Tyrannosaurus' appearance, and it had kept the duo from the Ravaging Demon sect safe. Instead, the blue powder had become a pile of ice shards after only a few exchanges.

The gaseous stage cultivator though had deployed a series of whips that could act on their own and a dozen puppets with the shape of armored knights to replace it.

Using so many items at the same time strained its mind to no end, but they allowed the duo to match the two Demons who assaulted them relentlessly.

The Tyrannosaurus' fall diverted their attention from their battle and made them stare at the destruction unfolding in the city. When the dust settled, they could see that the golden creature was at the bottom of a series of caves dug under the city.

Chapter 984 984. Understanding

The light radiated by the tall beast illuminated the tall caves that made the city's underground world. The area was vast and polished, which hinted that they weren't simple tunnels dug to transport items.

An eerie aura came out of that cavity too. The Demons couldn't help but notice that panicked expressions had appeared on their opponents.

The human cultivators and experts in the fourth rank resumed their battles, but the higher-ups remained still.

Noah and the Demons seized that chance to send a series of mental messages to their allies in the Council to question them about the underground structure. However, they received conflicting answers.

As cultivators who had lived through many ploys and near-death experiences, Noah and the Demons could guess when someone was trying to hide intel from them.

The alliance between the Council and the Hive had set the basis for mutual trust, but they didn't have to reveal everything about their organizations. Secrets had to exist, and the trio from the Hive felt that they had found one of them.

Noah moved his attention to the eerie aura. A calming sensation accompanied it and filled the entirety of the underground structure. It spread on the Four Sigils sect too since there was a large fissure at its center now.

A series of defensive formations activated after the breach. Layers of golden shields and armored puppets appeared on the surface of the city to protect that entrance.

Noah and the Demons had found themselves in a similar situation many years in the past. They were in Divine Architect's separate dimension, under the raining Heaven Tribulation, when they saw the Mortal Palace appearing.

Their instincts as lone cultivators had made them ignore the danger and go after that mysterious place in the past. They didn't even have to look at each other to make the same decision in the present.

They could avoid the Tribulation in the past. Now, they had to defeat their enemies first. Their greed for resources couldn't overcome their anger toward Ravaging Demon.

Noah had no intention to chase the Tyrannosaurus inside the hole. The defensive formations would put him at too much of a disadvantage, even after his improvements.

The Tyrannosaurus didn't want to remain down there either. Noah could decide to help the Demons and come after it together with them if it didn't help its companions in the sky.

The two liquid stage cultivators inside the golden creature had understood that they weren't a match for Noah in a melee battle. The Tyrannosaurus' physical strength was above his, but they didn't know how to use it properly due to their inexperience.

Noah's body was part of his existence, while the golden creature was only a weapon in those experts' hands. There was an intrinsic difference in how much maneuverability they could have. It was only normal for Noah to be able to express far more power than his opponents.

The Demons resumed their fight while Noah watched the Tyrannosaurus crossing the golden puppets and rising in the sky again. There were cracks over its body due to the last impact. Still, they were already healing due to the energy absorbed by the wings.

Noah had understood that his normal tactics wouldn't work against his opponents. The fact that the liquid stage cultivators relied on a battle formation made them quite hard to kill.

It wasn't a matter of abilities. Noah could dodge all the attacks of the creature, and his strongest technique could match its offensive.

The only problem was its regenerative ability. The pair of wings absorbed the residual energy of every spell that passed near it.

That allowed the battle formation to keep an intact structure and fight as long as the cultivators controlling it had enough energy. That gave a chance to the Tyrannosaurs to last more than Noah when it came to exhaustion.

Noah knew that very well. The third form of his martial art could create a mess there, and his saber-shaped runes could try to sever its wings. Yet, he felt that he had a more straightforward method to deal with that creature.

The Tyrannosaurus waved its arms to launch a series of golden slashes, but Noah had already started sprinting by that time. Cracks spread in the sky as he dodged the incoming attacks and reached for the maw of the beast.

Noah delivered a powerful punch on the creature's head, and golden shards shot everywhere as cracks appeared on that spot. The Demonic Sword left his grasp and stabbed those fissures to increase the amount of damage inflicted.

The Tyrannosaurus' tail tried to crack at him again, but Noah had predicted that attack. He sprinted away as soon as the Demonic Sword spread some corrosive smoke inside the creature and reached for another part of its body.

Noah reappeared on the right side of its torso, and his fingers arched to form claws that ripped off the beast's golden scales. The Demonic Sword quickly stabbed that spot again before Noah grabbed it to sprint toward another body part.

The Tyrannosaurus couldn't keep up with Noah's speed, and all its attacks were unable to touch him. Also, relying on his physical strength prevented the accumulation of energy in the air, which negated the wings' ability.

Noah roared, punched, and stabbed as he sprinted around the massive beast. Cracks appeared and vanished as he continued to move in different spots to damage and destabilize the battle formation.

That was a battle style suitable only to hybrids. It was an approach that allowed him to release only a small amount of energy while inflicting a good number of injuries.

Noah was relentless in his offensive. Golden shards fell toward the frozen scenery as he kept on ripping the Tyrannosaurus apart. The mighty and scary figure had turned into nothing more than a maimed and broken creature after a few minutes.

Signs of destabilization began to appear in its shape. The golden scales started to tremble as Noah's assault continued, and many of them lost its solid form to return to a state of pure light.

Noah noticed that phenomenon but continued with his offensive until a clear opening appeared in the beast's body.

The experts inside the battle formation were so busy trying to stabilize the technique that they didn't notice the different smoke that had begun to enter the Tyrannosaurus. They only took it as Noah's usual corrosive gas.

However, they froze in place when they saw the massive reptilian head solidifying right next to their position. Their survival instincts spiked at that point, but it was too late for them to do anything.

Snore released a wave of flames and a sword-shaped lightning bolt right in the center of the Tyrannosaurus, and the golden beast's figure exploded into a storm of shards.

A gray cloud followed the shards, but Noah quickly waved his hands to disperse it and catch the experts' falling space-rings. As for their bodies, only a few bloody patches of tissues had survived the last attack.

Chapter 985 985. Statue

Noah shook his head when he looked at the two space-rings in his grasp. The number of resources inside them was decent, but his thoughts were on the two liquid stage cultivators that had died under his attacks.

They had relied on a battle formation that they couldn't operate fully to improve their chances of survival, but the variety of their attacks had diminished due to that decision.

Noah would have had a harder time dealing with multiple spells of various natures. Yet, the two experts would have died far sooner without the protection of the golden scales.

Battle formations, inscribed items, and similar methods were helpful to cultivators. Still, there wasn't much that they could do if the existences using them were weak or had evident flaws in their individuality.

'Power comes from within,' Noah gave to the matter one last thought before moving his attention elsewhere.

The Demons had ended their battle before Noah. It had taken them some time to get past all the protections and weapons of their opponents, but they were too experienced not to win that fight.

Noah turned toward them only to see Flying Demon throwing two frozen human figures in his direction. He winked at him before focusing on the protected area in the middle of the city.

Flying Demon's ice had sealed the "Breath" inside the dantians of the two experts, preventing it from dispersing in the environment. Noah immediately ate them to obtain their nutrients.

Noah's focus went on the underground structure too. The golden shields prevented the eerie aura from leaking on the surface, but a strange sensation still lingered around the area.

The human cultivators and experts' battles in the fourth rank continued even if the fight was virtually over. The trio from the Hive could use that moment to focus on the caves before someone from the Council intervened.

After all, that territory was the target of the army led by Noah and the Demons. The Council couldn't claim the entirety of its resources if the trio were to seize them in that situation.

The defenses in place to defend the underground structure were powerful. Their level lingered in the space between the fifth and quasi-sixth ranks, which showed how important those caves' contents were.

Noah and the Demons took their time to destroy the defenses without wasting too much energy or endangering themselves. Dreaming Demon hindered those formations' responsiveness, creating opportunities that her companions exploited to destroy those inscriptions.

The armored puppets fell apart without even being able to attack once, and the golden shields eventually followed that trend. The eerie aura resumed to spread in the city when the protections vanished, and the trio began their descent toward the caves.

There weren't many things that could surprise Noah and the Demons. They had dealt with gods rising into the starry sky and explored the researches of experts capable of probing other Mortal Lands with their creations.

However, being immersed in a divine aura gave birth to mysterious and deep sensations even in such seasoned cultivators.

Noah and the Demons could sense the trace of divine once they touched the eerie aura. Their minds began to wander in the world of the laws on their own. It was as if they had entered a realm close to those profound rules.

Nutrients filled Noah's body, but he couldn't pay attention to them in that situation. His mind was lost as understanding dawned upon him. The feeling was similar to when he touched the winds in Shandal's dimension, even if it was far softer and gentler.

A general idea about the caves' nature was already forming in Noah's mind, but Dreaming Demon solved any doubt when the trio touched the ground.

"Divine Elder Tabitha," Dreaming Demon said in a soft tone. Flying Demon nodded at her words, while Noah inspected that aura with a newfound interest.

Even if the Demons had lived in that nation more than a thousand years ago, they didn't know where Divine Elder Tabitha had placed her inheritance.

It wasn't a surprise that the forces of the Council didn't want to give a clear answer. That place was the foundation of their power, as well as the reason behind Ravaging Demon's betrayal.

Noah could see how the cold expressions of the Demons softened as memories resurfaced in their minds. It wasn't easy for them to suppress their emotions in that situation.

Still, they had endured a lot already. Falling prey to their emotion would only threaten the stability of the alliance and endanger the position of the Hive in the world.

"Let's steal from a god," Flying Demon eventually said as he steeled his resolve. His lover caressed his shoulder before walking in front of him, toward the cave where the eerie aura was more intense.

Noah didn't speak and left the Demons handle their mental state. He was their friend, but only they could know the full extent of the scars that still burdened their minds.

It wasn't his place to say anything. The best he could do was to cover for their lack of focus.

The trio advanced through the cave, paying the utmost attention to their surroundings. Those tunnels had a rectangular shape and sharp corners. Also, it seemed that they underwent constant maintenance since there wasn't even a slight crack or trace of dust inside them.

The aura intensified as the trio moved forward. They soon reached a large underground area where a series of columns surrounded a tall statue built at its center.

"It's her," Dreaming Demon said as the statue appeared in their vision. It depicted a woman dressed in a long robe that covered even her hands. Her eyes were closed, and she had long hair that reached her waist.

Her face expressed a peaceful feeling, capable of calming down even the most violent of the beasts. Even Noah's hunger dispersed in front of the aura radiated by the statue.

Noah couldn't help but think about Faith for a second. She didn't resemble Divine Elder Tabitha, but their auras were similar.

That could have been the reason why the Council wanted to keep her on its side even after her unruly behavior had come out. Her organization probably saw her as the rightful successor of its Divine Matriarch.

"You came," A voice suddenly spread in the underground hall, and the trio quickly prepared themselves to fight. That voice belonged to Ravaging Demon, but the three of them couldn't sense his presence anywhere in the area.

"Can't you see it?" Ravaging Demon said as he walked from behind the stature. He appeared as an average human in that situation. There wasn't any sign of his mighty cultivation level.

"I thought that my flames would be able to burn too after I reached the sixth rank," Ravaging Demon said as helplessness appeared on his expression. "I failed."

Ravaging Demon sighed and gestured to the trio to follow him as he flew toward the ceiling of the hall. Noah and the others didn't even bother to look at him before contacting the alliance's powerhouses.

Chapter 986 986. Gathering

Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana had been ready for the eventuality of Ravaging Demon's reappearance since the beginning of the attack. As soon as the trio in the underground structure gave the signal, they moved in their direction.

A series of shining lines appeared on the ground of the hall, and a blinding halo filled the area for a few seconds before Chasing Demon's figure appeared on the scene.

A lightning bolt pierced the ceiling of the hall and stopped mid-air. The sparks condensed on the spot and took the form of Great Elder Diana's figure.

The two powerhouses had arrived in only a few instants!

Ravaging Demon looked at the two powerhouses with a plain expression. It was as if he didn't care about the threats that had appeared with the only task of killing him.

"You failed to see the biggest flaw in your plan," Chasing Demon said as he rose into the air toward his sworn enemy. "You have never been worthy of the Immortal Lands."

Ravaging Demon snorted when he heard that remark, and his sharp words followed it, "I don't base my individuality on a dead lover and call it life at least!"

"There is only one rule in the cultivation world," Great Elder Diana said as she joined the conversation. "You know that very well. Power is right. Weakness is wrong."

"Power," Ravaging Demon said in a soft voice before exploding in a laugh and resuming to speak in a loud tone. "I stand here, at the last stage of the heroic ranks, and you dare to talk to me about power? I seized every chance, just like all of you did. Don't lecture me about the cultivation world. I'm the embodiment of its true aspect!"

The trio from the Hive listened attentively to the discussion, but an awful smell reached Noah's nostrils as they remained on the floor of the hall. In his mind, he could now confirm that Ravaging Demon had made use of the Royal's pool.

Any small advantage could determine the outcome of a battle. That was true at any rank, especially when the mindset of a cultivator directly influenced the individuality.

Noah knew that Ravaging Demon had no chance against those two powerhouses, but the Elbas family's backing worried him. He couldn't believe that the Royals had let them come so close to their target without preparing some traps.

That was the reason why he sent a message to Chasing Demon, explaining the secret behind Ravaging Demon's breakthrough. He didn't dare to say it publicly because that could reveal his relationship with June, and he was sure that his Patriarch would be mindful of that too.

Chasing Demon revealed a smile when he heard Noah's message, but his expression soon turned sour. No one could understand his thoughts until he began to speak. "You betrayed everything and everyone

for what? You ended up cheating your way to this level anyway. How can you even think that you can compare yourself to us?"

Ravaging Demon's laugh froze when he heard those words. He had no idea how Chasing Demon had learnt that information, but he had exposed the biggest flaw in his individuality!

After all, Ravaging Demon truly believed that he was the perfect demon and the only cultivator worthy of that title. The fact that he didn't manage to improve on his own was a crack in his belief that had haunted him since he reached the peak of the fifth rank.

He had initially thought that his individuality was too vast and required more time. Yet, that belief had slowly turned into delusion after he spent hundreds of years stuck at his previous level.

Ravaging Demon could only blame Heaven and Earth at that point. Changing path would probably kill him since his entire existence had destruction as its foundation. He had to cling on every other explanation to maintain his sanity.

Still, the flaw remained there, and it became heavier inside his mind as time passed. It continued to grow even as he spent decades immersed in the oily water of the Royal's pool.

Now, Chasing Demon had given voice to his flaw, making it more real than ever.

Ravaging Demon's body began to tremble, and small pieces of his skin turned into flames as they lost their harmony. Even his face suffered from that destabilization, and his frozen smile deformed further during that process.

"You can't even handle failures," Chasing Demon said after heaving a helpless sigh. All his hatred seemed pointless when he saw how fragile his sworn enemy was.

However, the hatred didn't disappear. Ravaging Demon had to die. It was a vital matter for him.

Chasing Demon reached forward, but a confused expression appeared on his face. His "Breath" came out of his hand, but it refused to form violent spells.

"You can't fight here," Great Elder Diana said as she created a platform made of "Breath" to lift Ravaging Demon through the fissure in the ceiling. "No one has ever managed to fight next to Divine Elder Tabitha."

Chasing Demon nodded, and the three powerhouses flew outside of the underground hall, leaving Noah and the Demons alone. The three of them exchanged a glance and hesitated before deciding to follow the rank 6 cultivators.

They were inside Divine Elder Tabitha's inheritance ground, but the Council had owned that place for more than a thousand years.

The Ravaging Demon sect had done the same in that period. It was unlikely that those strong organizations had left resources laying around for the trio to take.

Instead, spectating a battle among cultivators in the sixth rank could provide significant insights into the laws' world. The three of them could see how the powerhouses wielded their laws according to their individuality.

Noah and the Demons resurfaced and found themselves in a thick forest. Noah could sense how the area's lifeforms had fled due to the three powerhouses in the air.

The trio flew away too, but only to find a safe spot to inspect the powerhouses' battle. After all, even they couldn't do anything when it came to fights on that level.

Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana circled the motionless Ravaging Demon and prepared their offensive spells. That resembled an execution since their enemy didn't appear willing to react to those threats.

Nevertheless, a fourth powerful presence appeared in the sky above them and claimed their attention.

"I wouldn't do it if I were you," King Elbas said as he spread his aura to announce his arrival into that battle. The four powerhouses had converged into the same battlefield once again.

"You," King Elbas said as he eyed Ravaging Demon, "I'll help you become a god. Now fight."

Ravaging Demon's figure stabilized when those words echoed in the environment. He didn't care if King Elbas' promise sounded absurd. He was willing to cling to anything as long as he could hope to reach the Immortal Lands.

"You owe me one," Great Elder Diana said as she flew upward to face King Elbas.

Chasing Demon limited himself to nod before focusing on his opponent, who had started to laugh again.

Chapter 987 987. Puppets

Ravaging Demon laughed and exploded into a sea of flames. An intense sense of destruction filled the area and created large patches of void in the sky.

Chasing Demon didn't move. The flames engulfed him, but a metallic membrane came out of his skin and covered his entire body.

When the flames retracted and condensed to retake Ravaging Demon's shape, the membrane around Chasing Demon broke and revealed that he didn't suffer any injury.

The metallic shards of the membrane fell on the ground as Chasing Demon observed his opponent without revealing the slightest tinge of emotion. There was only coldness in his eyes as he looked at the man that he had hated for more than a thousand years.

The ground rose after the metallic shards stabbed the terrain. Hundreds of humanoid golems formed and flew in the sky as they punched toward Ravaging Demon. The gravity around him increased too, and pressed on his form, slowing down the spreading of his flames.

Ravaging Demon managed to turn into a sea of flames right before the golems reached him. A few of them exploded in the impact, but many endured the fire and waited for their caster's orders.

The metallic membrane protected Chasing Demon again, and its shards fell to the ground to create more golems. Meanwhile, Ravaging Demon reappeared higher in the sky, closer to the battle between Great Elder Diana and King Elbas.

King Elbas had a series of long fiery snakes around his figure. They spewed long trails of flames that aimed for the elusive Great Elder Diana.

Great Elder Diana danced in the sky as parks cracked under her feet. The snakes' flames couldn't touch her due to her high speed and sharp turns, and she launched small lightning bolts whenever she stopped.

Her attacks landed on the snakes circling King Elbas but were unable to reach him. The two powerhouses exchanged attacks, defenses, and dodges without gaining the upper hand on their opponent.

Of course, they weren't trying their best. They were only preventing each other from influencing the battle between the two demons.

King Elbas' words toward Ravaging Demon had hinted that he wouldn't help him against Chasing Demon. So, it was pointless to waste resources to gain the upper hand over Great Elder Diana.

Their fight was necessary, but it was more of a probing than a proper battle to overcome their opponent.

Ravaging Demon glanced at their battle before focusing on his opponent again. An army of golems flew toward him while Chasing Demon scattered more metallic shards on the ground.

The forest had turned into a messy pile of debris and holes due to the golems that had formed. There didn't seem to be a limit to how many of them Chasing Demon could create.

Ravaging Demon spread his hand forward, and a violent flame appeared in his palm. That was his third fire already, and it was remarkably stronger than his previous attacks.

Before the golems could reach him, Ravaging Demon's fire exploded into a sea of flames again, destroying dozens of those rocky puppets. That generated more explosions though, which dispersed a large part of his attack.

Ravaging Demon reformed again in another spot only to see that there were even more golems going after him. Chasing Demon wasn't giving him any chance to recover.

His complexion had already paled due to the many detonations. Ravaging Demon wasn't immune to damage when he turned into flames. His situation could only become worse.

The destructiveness of Ravaging Demon's flames was increasing as he cast spells. Still, the number of golems under Chasing Demon's control had never stopped growing either.

The more golems fell apart, the more detonations would happen. Ravaging Demon could only continue to suffer more injuries if he kept on fighting in that way.

A large crystal suddenly appeared in Ravaging Demon's hand before he expanded his fourth flame. His fire converged into that item and shot toward Chasing Demon in the form of a crimson beam.

The attack surprised Chasing Demon. Even as a powerhouse who had cheated his way into the sixth rank, his opponent still had a power worthy of that level.

A normal rank 5 item wouldn't be able to endure his "Breath". The crystal had to be an inscribed weapon in the sixth rank, and there weren't any doubts concerning its origin.

Chasing Demon suppressed a curse aimed at King Elbas and controlled the golems so that they would amass on the trajectory of the beam.

The condensed flames had an incredible piercing power and destroyed hundreds of puppets as they tried to reach their target. Yet, the detonations that followed the golem's destruction depleted their energy, making the beam unable even to come close to Chasing Demon.

Ravaging Demon summoned his fifth flame, which burned with even more intensity than the previous one. Its destructiveness was so unruly that even the skin of his palm began to burn.

Chasing Demon had no intention to lose the upper-hand in the battle. The remains of his golems and the other intact puppets began to converge on a spot right above his opponent to form a massive hand that closed on him.

The hand trembled, and crimson light shone from the fissures among the fingers. Tongues of flames came out of them, but the grasp held strong and continued to squeeze the cultivator inside it.

The crimson light eventually vanished before a red brilliance seeped out of the palm again. Some flames managed to come out from the small cracks on the rocky fingers, but the hand was as stable as a mountain. It seemed that nothing could make it move.

Ravaging Demon had to resort to his seventh flame since both the fifth and sixth had failed. The massive fingers trembled slightly at that point, and some cracks spread throughout the hand. Yet, the grasp remained closed.

Only the spreading of the eighth flame managed to destroy the hand and release Ravaging Demon, who revealed his maimed state to the world. His body was a mess of bruises, broken limbs with bones coming out of his skin, and blood.

The pressure that he had to resist inside the hand had hurt him badly, and it would have reduced him to a pulp if he didn't manage to escape in the next seconds.

However, as soon as Ravaging Demon's sight focused, two massive pouches slammed on him and destroyed the entirety of his lower body.

Chasing Demon didn't stay still while Ravaging Demon was trapped. He had created two massive titans that had punched his opponent as soon as he freed himself.

A cloud of blood and flames spread after the impact. Ravaging Demon spewed blood as his upper-body flew higher in the sky.

He had been too focused on getting out of the hand that he didn't notice the two titans. Those massive puppets now stood with their right fists connected to his previous position, but their heads tilted to follow his figure.

Cracks spread on the giants' faces to form huge mouths at that point, and their insides began to tremble to prepare a loud cry.

Chapter 988 988. Trapped

Noah and the Demons observed the battles with the utmost attention. They didn't let even the slightest detail escape, and they made sure to memorize every exchange among the powerhouses.

The four of them appeared able to move the laws without thinking. Their hands moved, and the world acted according to their will.

King Elbas' flames burned more brightly after every attack blocked effortlessly. The more his figure gained importance, the more intense his fire would become.

Great Elder Diana was untouchable. She danced in the sky, launching precise lighting bolts whenever she found an opening in her opponent. Space itself seemed to bend whenever she moved as if trying to give her the chance to attack.

Ravaging Demon was a true embodiment of destruction. Large pieces of the sky fell apart every time his flames spread, and even the air burned due to the effects of his individuality.

His flames didn't leave even him unscathed. There were patches of burned skin on his upper-body, and smoke came out of his hair.

Chasing Demon appeared majestic. His mental waves gave birth to humanoid lifeforms, and every piece of the terrain took life whenever his individuality swept them.

All four of them acted normally as if casting those powerful spells didn't require the slightest effort. They willed, and the world reacted. Even their expenditure of "Breath" appeared minimal since the environment helped them.

They were existences able to wield the laws, but that had yet to become one of them.

Noah could vaguely guess what the four of them were aiming for. Ravaging Demon was easy. He just wanted to burn everything and become a more profound type of destruction.

King Elbas was the same. His arrogance pushed his bloodline to become the best possible fuel for his flames. His value as a material increased, which allowed him to give birth to stronger reactions.

Great Elder Diana was strange. Her individuality expressed her complete control over the lightning element, but it also affected the space around her. Noah could only make various assumptions when looking at her. He couldn't understand anything specific nor the law that she wanted to become.

Chasing Demon's individuality gave life to inanimate objects, but it wasn't as simple as it looked. His aura radiated a peculiar craving, something far more profound than merely shaping and controlling humanoid puppets.

He didn't give life. He desired someone's life so intensely that the inanimate matter took life when his individuality touched it. His aura conveyed that desire, and the ground replied, shaping itself in golems that obeyed his orders.

It wasn't a secret who was the cause of Chasing Demon's desire. Ravaging Demon had understood that since their first exchange, and Noah didn't take much to comprehend that too.

Chasing Demon desired Charming Demon to be alive so intensely that his entire individuality had grown using that feeling at its foundation.

As for which law he wanted to become, Noah didn't know. His guess was on something related to resurrection and similar fields, but he couldn't be sure.

Nevertheless, Noah could relate with Chasing Demon, even if in a far milder way. His approach toward death had always been too radical for his mind to fall prey to such emotions. Still, he felt them.

Also, his creation belonged to similar fields for what concerned the laws. He had even given birth to lifeforms already.

Noah's fingers tingled as he understood Chasing Demon's individuality. He wanted to isolate himself in a training area right away to vent that eagerness, but the battle of the powerhouses kept him glued on the spot.

Ravaging Demon floated in the sky without a clear goal. The lower part of his body was no more. The titans had destroyed it along with his dantian.

The only force keeping him alive was his sea of consciousness, but that was a temporary fix. His life hung on a thin thread, and he needed to stabilize his body if he hoped to survive.

Of course, his potential as a cultivator was no more. His dantian was gone. The only method capable of solving that issue was the transformation of the natives of the other world, but even King Elbas couldn't replicate that easily.

"What a disappointment," King Elbas said when he saw the poor state of his ally. "He even managed to destroy the fire prism. That was one of my first creations to reach the sixth rank."

King Elbas snapped his fingers, and a peculiar reaction happened in Ravaging Demon's maimed body. Trails of flames came out of his figure and converged in the Royal's position where they fused with his skin.

King Elbas's flames became more violent as the process continued, and Ravaging Demon became thinner as his ally sucked his existence away.

"You could have killed me when I was at my peak," Ravaging Demon said as he exploded in a vulgar laugh. "You won't be able to absorb even half of my power now."

King Elbas shook his head, uncaring that Great Elder Diana's attacks were slamming on the fiery snakes around his figure. An arrogant smirk appeared on his face before he replied to his ally. "You need to invest resources in every experiment. Trust my words when I say that this is only another failure in my eyes."

Chasing Demon suddenly arrived in front of the thinning Ravaging Demon and grabbed his head with both hands. There was only hatred in his expression. The sole thought that someone could take away his target had made him abandon any composure.

"You thought that you could play around because you had nothing to lose," Chasing Demon said in a deep tone. "You made a mistake."

King Elbas' smirk froze when he saw a black sheet appearing next to the Demons. His expertise in the inscription fields made him understand the purpose of that item in an instant.

"You made the Demon sects suffer their greatest loss," Chasing Demon continued to speak as his grasp tightened, cracking his opponent skull. "It's only proper that you spend eternity protecting them."

A faint substance came out of Ravaging Demon's head and entered the sheet when Chasing Demon broke his skull. A small version of Ravaging Demon's figure appeared on the black item and began to move while wearing a panicked expression.

The trails of flame converging toward King Elbas dispersed, interrupting his absorption of power. Chasing Demon had killed his opponent with his last move, removing the owner of that energy and dispersing it in the environment.

Chasing Demon glanced at the figure inside the black sheet. Ravaging Demon screamed and slammed its ethereal arms against the item's fabric, but nothing came out of it.

The Patriarch of the Hive had trapped his consciousness. As for what he would do with it, only he knew.

Great Elder Diana and King Elbas stopped fighting at that point. There was no reason to continue that battle unless the leader of the Royals wanted to make the world fall into war again.

Chapter 989 989. Craving

The three powerhouses didn't move after Ravaging Demon's death. Chasing Demon stored the sheet and joined his ally in her stare toward King Elbas.

The leader of the Royals' behavior would decide how the situation would unfold. They could have an all-out battle there, or retreat and return to their respective domains.

Of course, the leaders of the alliance didn't want to fight there. King Elbas was a formidable opponent, and his stash of inscribed items would most likely keep him alive against the joint offensive of his two enemies.

That was the best outcome that Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana could picture in their minds. There was the chance that King Elbas could overwhelm both of them.

Moreover, the Council and the Hive would gain the most out of a break in the hostilities. They could slowly suppress the Elbas family in the safety of their domains and eventually launch a war once the Royals declined.

King Elbas' flames showed signs of instability from time to time. Absorbing the dying Ravaging Demon wasn't a natural process, and any sudden increase of power usually required a period of cultivation to stabilize the improvements.

The leader of the Royals couldn't suppress that instability. No matter how hard he tried, some of his flames would flicker, exuding Ravaging Demon's destructiveness in the process.

The alliance's powerhouses didn't overlook that, and they tried to memorize the instabilities' rhythm to use it to their advantage in case a battle happened.

King Elbas noticed their attentive gazes, and his expression became pensive as mysterious thoughts filled his mind. He seemed busy performing profound calculations in the span of those short instants.

Then, he abruptly turned and left to fly in the direction of his domain.

Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana heaved a sigh of relief at that scene. The sole fact that King Elbas had considered the idea of fighting both of them was a sign that he could do it.

The two powerhouses couldn't possibly guess the real value of the assets created by the existence known as the best inscription master in those Mortal Lands. They didn't know what he had managed to build in the years spent ruling his family.

The two of them flew toward each other and exchanged a few words that the trio on the ground couldn't hear. The war against the Ravaging Demon sect was virtually over, so they needed to discuss how they would divide the gains.

The terms of the alliance would typically force them to divide everything equally, but those territories were the Council's home. The Hive could give them back in exchange for more assets and some concession.

Many cultivators of the Ravaging Demon sect had survived the battles. They were too valuable to be executed. It was better to turn them into manpower that could slowly gain the trust of the victorious organizations.

Great Elder Diana left first, and Chasing Demon neared the trio on the ground. There was a complicated expression on his face. Part of him appeared happy, but there was helplessness behind his smile.

The Demons wore a similar expression when they looked at their old friend. The pain that had festered for a thousand years was still there, but they had managed to find closure in the end.

Their emotions surged as they reunited, and Noah distanced himself from them out of respect for their sorrow. Since no one had given him any explicit order, he flew back into the underground hall to meditate in front of Divine Elder Tabitha's statue.

Noah reviewed the images of the powerhouses' battle as the eerie aura helped his mind explore the world of the laws. His thoughts felt smoother near the statue, and understanding soon dawned upon him.

The rocky ground around the statue trembled slightly as Noah's consciousness expanded, carrying the understanding he had just gained. The dark matter came out of his heart and fused with part of the terrain before two golems grew out of it.

The golems initially had vague facial features, but they became clearer as Noah lost himself in his craving for life. Details appeared on both of them, and even robes soon shaped around the two rocky figures.

Noah opened his eyes when he felt that the process had ended. The innate coldness in his reptilian eyes vanished as he turned toward the two golems to inspect them.

They were different from Chasing Demon's powerful puppets. They were golems that depicted two crucial figures that Noah had lost during his cultivation journey.

One of them depicted Lily, whom Noah still remembered down to the slightest detail. The puppet had managed to represent her delicate features and caring gaze, and it even showed some of her usual bruises.

The other depicted a young William Challi wearing a sleepy expression but with an expression similar to Lily's.

Noah stared at them without showing any emotion. He knew how Heaven and Earth handled the souls of living beings, so he was sure that a proper resurrection was impossible. Yet, looking gave birth to a soft sorrow inside him.

Noah didn't forget that the two of them had been essential at the beginning of his cultivation journey. Without them protecting and training him, Noah's power would have never grown so quickly.

Anger appeared inside him too. Part of him regretted the aloofness that he had carried with him from his past life. Lily and William had given him nothing more than love and care, but Noah had rewarded them with coldness and death.

It couldn't be helped. Noah could only think about his power back then, and it had taken him a long journey to accept his human side.

He had to spend decades fighting, betraying, and escaping to awaken that part of him, which culminated with his love for June.

Noah's stare toward the golems became intense. Understanding of the laws of creation became clear in his mind as his emotions surged.

He knew he could turn those puppets into proper lifeforms now. There was little that he couldn't do in that particular mental state. He could even copy their personality, making the golems resemble those two important figures quite vividly.

"The past can only drag you down," Chasing Demon's voice suddenly echoed in the underground hall. Noah didn't need to turn to sense that the three Demons had entered the area.

"I know," Noah replied as his hand rose to point at the two golems. "This feeling can force life into inanimate matter, but it can never bring what you lost back."

Chasing Demon sat next to Noah, and the other Demons did the same. The four remained silent, lost in their thoughts and emotions as Divine Elder Tabitha's statue enhanced their mental capabilities.

Noah slowly closed his hand after a while, and the two puppets crumbled. His emotions became stable again, but that craving for life remained and became part of him.

Chapter 990 990. Growth

Noah and the Demons remained in the underground hall while the battles on the other two crowded areas ended.

The terms of the alliance between the Hive and the Council covered the division of the gains already, but Chasing Demon and Great Elder Diana had made private pacts too.

Most of the Papral nation's territories would return to the Council, which would compensate the Hive by giving it a larger share of the gains. Moreover, the Council would share the training areas in Divine Elder Tabitha's inheritance ground.

The war against the Ravaging Demon sect had established a new political environment that saw the Elbas family as the strongest force in those Mortal Lands. Still, the Royals had powerful enemies who had even allied to control them.

As for the Shandal Empire, its troops spread through some empty regions in the Papral nation and settled in its peripheral areas. The Council noticed their invasion only after the war was over, but there wasn't much that it could do at that point.

The Council had suffered countless losses after battling the Empire and the rebellion of the Ravaging Demon sect. It couldn't afford another war, mainly since many higher-ups of the Empire had survived thanks to the Second Life formation.

The Hive wasn't willing to help it either. The Council didn't know that it had sealed a secret pact with God's Left Hand, but its decision appeared reasonable.

There had been too many conflicts in the span of a few decades. All the organizations in the world had yet to recover properly. It was time to enter a long period of peace and make the best out of the new political environment that had formed.

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Peaceful years passed. The political borders of the various domains remained the same due to the absence of any significant conflict. The only battles happened among human cultivators, but they could not affect the world's forces' relationships.

The Shandal Empire and the Elbas family went utterly silent in those years. They both focused on reinforcing their domains and restore a positive trend in their growth, without interacting with the other organizations.

Instead, the Hive and the Council began to interact often. They deepened their relationship by creating events meant for the promising human cultivators and organized meetings among experts in various fields.

More neutral structures appeared in their domains. The alliance created sects that shared disciples from both forces and buildings meant for research and investigation.

The Hive and the Council began to share techniques too. They used their accumulated knowledge in the inscription fields to research and exchange spells, martial arts, and peculiar creations.

Of course, they didn't share their secret and most valued techniques. The most precious items in the trades were the living weapons, but the Council had to pay a hefty price for each one of them.

Both organizations flourished during those years, and their growth improved as their cooperation covered more fields.

Flying Demon and Dreaming Demon would often recall the old political environment of the Papral nation when they saw that, but they had found some peace after Ravaging Demon's death. They could wholeheartedly focus on the positive aspects of that cooperation now.

Most of the higher-ups of the Hive entered a long period of seclusion in those years. The world's political matters didn't require their presence to focus on their cultivation again.

Noah did the same, even if his needs as a hybrid and his duties inside the Hive forced him out of his quarters more often than his peers. He had a few visitors too. Daniel, Faith, and the Demons would often come by his mansion in the separate dimension to share some wine and insights concerning the laws' world.

The four of them were busy with their matters, but they liked to spend time with Noah, especially since Shandal revealed that his existence went against Heaven and Earth's system.

The Demons came more often since they didn't have any specific task. They visited Noah whenever they needed a break in their training and intimate time.

Daniel came once every few years. The other Mortal Lands were the perfect research field for an alchemist due to the peculiarity of their lifeforms. He would often travel there to study and handle the faction of the Hive settled there.

Faith could remain for days inside Noah's mansion since she didn't have any real relationship in the Council. Also, the rumors that she and Noah would eventually marry and reinforce the alliance's stability scared many of her pursuers away.

Noah had become even more famous after the wars. His battle prowess ignored any common sense and placed him near the top of the fifth rank even if he was still in the liquid stage.

No one would dare to mess with him. Faith's pursuers could only accept that the Demon Prince of the Hive had conquered the most beautiful woman in the world.

Of course, that was the complete opposite of the truth. Faith could be at ease around Noah because she knew that he only saw June as his partner.

As the relationship between the alliance and the Elbas family worsened, Noah found no chance to meet June. Faith couldn't even visit her to gain information about her location, so the couple remained separated in those years.

The Elbas family would still respect the pacts sealed before the recent chaos. The Council and the Hive could use the dimensional portal and rule over Divine Market city. However, they didn't interact anymore, and they avoided themselves even when they were in neutral areas.

Noah didn't mind that at the beginning. He and June had spent years away from each other for many decades without endangering their relationship. Nevertheless, the peaceful period continued for decades, and the weight of those years began to accumulate on Noah's mind, forming a constant longing that couldn't go away.

Noah still trained and experimented like a madman in those years. Yet, June's face appeared often in his mind whenever his thoughts wandered.

The peaceful period brought only positive events inside the Hive though. Many cultivators of the old generation managed to catch up with the talents that had outclassed them and reinforced their organization's higher ranks.

The various techniques retrieved along the years and created by the new generation of inscription masters gave birth to multiple experts too, reviving schools that were thought to be lost.

The old leader of the thieves' faction of the Chasing Demon sect, Bruce, managed to reach the fifth rank after applying the Enduring Demon sect's methods to his cultivation technique.

Alison managed to use the teachings of the Charming Demon sect to improve her illusions. She reached the fifth rank, and she even healed her revolting body in the process.

Elder Roy reached that level too, but his focus remained on the inscription fields. His battle prowess was negligible even as a rank 5 cultivator.

Noah managed the hybrids too, creating an elite force that the world was still unaware of. However, he grew restless with each passing year, and his eyes soon landed on the sea as he craved for new journeys.