

Chapter 251 - 251. Investigation

Those three words silenced the nobles, only Cecil was aware of the situation.

The truth was that after Noah's element was revealed, they had actively investigated his whereabouts without being able to find any clue.

Noah seemed to have disappeared!

"He hasn't returned to his rented habitation and his academy and hunter tokens can't pinpoint his location. They are either in a space-ring or broken."

Thaddeus added with his head lowered, he really wasn't prepared for such a situation to happen.

He had given Noah plenty of resources and kept his identity as a secret, he really couldn't understand his actions.

Generally speaking, his terms were the best ones that a cultivator could hope to find in that nation, there was really no one willing to give away that much to a lone cultivator.

"Hmph, how would we know if you are telling the truth? Let's say that you really didn't know about his real identity, how can we be sure that you are not hiding him now that this information is widely known?"

Ian pressed on, he wouldn't let go of that chance so soon.

At that time, Cecil stepped on.

"Our family division had a meeting about that. We have decided to let any willing noble join the investigation of the Royal dynasty."

The nobles were surprised by that statement.

Allowing the noble families to join an official investigation of the Royals had a great importance on many sides.

Not only could they prove their innocence in front of witnesses, they could also satisfy the need for information of the nobles.

Ian, Fred, and Meredith weren't that happy about those terms but Thomas was ecstatic!

"If that's the case, I'm willing to follow the Royal dynasty in the search of my grandson."

He said, performing a deep bow.

It couldn't be helped, Thomas was only the patriarch of a medium-size noble family, his power alone couldn't make the Royals budge, he was more than happy to accept those terms.

His goal was to uncover the whereabouts of all his lost heirs, he had more to lose than anyone.

Cecil nodded to Thomas and waved a hand in the direction of a specific quarter inside the Capital.

"Then, Lord Balvan, I believe you'll be interested in what his Master has to say about him."

His phrase piqued the attention of the other nobles who silently followed the two Royals toward Noah's previous habitation.

They arrived at a relatively simple building but that featured a high density of "Breath", in Thomas' eyes that place was already extremely luxurious.

Cecil took out a token from his space-ring and he used it to open a certain flat.

The flat was composed of a single large room where a shabby cultivator was sleeping.

"I must warn you, this man has a cracked sea of consciousness, the only information he is able to store is that concerning his inscription method."

Cecil warned the nobles and entered the room, lightly tapping on Ivor's shoulder to wake him up.

It took a while for Ivor's eyes to open and to gain clarity, it really seemed that his mind was reaching its limits.

"You again?"

Those were the first words that came out of his mouth, it seemed that the Royals had already questioned him.

"Would you mind telling what you said to me a few days ago to these Lords?"

Cecil's manners were polite, he even took out a jar of wine and handed it to him.

"What did we talk about a few days ago?"

Ivor took the jar and began to drink, expressing his confusion about the topic.

"Your student, Vance. Tell us everything you know."

Thaddeus said.

"Mh..."

Ivor took a long time to sort his thoughts.

"He is a talented kid, one of the most prominent in the Elemental forging method. Honestly, his life must have been tragic for him to have such a strong mental sphere."

Ivor's words made the cultivators in the room turn toward Thomas who could only sigh helplessly.

He knew that Noah's life hadn't been easy but he was only a bastard, there was no reason to give him any special privileges.

Also, as soon as his aptitude was discovered, his mother had killed herself to stop being a burden to her son, Thomas could only curse to how fast those events had occurred.

"Yes, his life wasn't easy. Do you know where he is now?"

Thomas changed the focus of the conversation.

"No idea, he just comes and goes as he wishes, he never tells me where or why. Oh, now I understand. You have lost him."

Ivor was shaking his head when realization dawned upon him and he couldn't help but break in a sonorous laugh.

"Hahaha! That kid is the most talented mage in the history of this country and you actually managed to lose him! What a joke!"

Ivor continued to laugh but was forced to stop due to the waves of pain that his mind sent to him.

Thaddeus neared him to speak in a soft voice.

"Your student has abandoned you here. Don't you want to find him and ask him why?"

However, Ivor only laughed more to those words.

"Haha! Who cares about me! I'm just a wasted cultivator and I've already passed all my knowledge to him. It's actually comforting knowing that he is willing to abandon the people close to him, you will never find someone with that character! I can be ensured of the survival of my method now."

Ivor's words made the expressions of the cultivators in that room turn dark.

"Can't we simply inspect his sea of consciousness?"

Fred asked to those around him but Cecil shook his head.

"His mental sphere is almost completely cracked, we would just destroy it as soon as we try to examine it."

Silence fell in the room, they really didn't know how to approach Ivor.

It was at that moment that Ian snorted and turned his attention toward Cecil.

"He is clearly hindering the investigation of the Royal family, what will you do about it?"

Cecil understood the meaning behind his words and focused his mental energy on Ivor's mind.

That action took only an instant but Ivor's mind couldn't withstand the pressure radiated from Cecil and broke, making Ivor's consciousness vanish in the world.

The light in Ivor's eyes vanished and he fell back on the sofa where he was sitting, spilling the wine in the jar everywhere.

Ivor was dead.

"Was him your only lead?"

Thomas asked plainly, the death of a cultivator wasn't really a big deal.

Thaddeus answered him with his gaze still fixed on Ivor's corpse.

"No. We will go to the Shosti's inheritance ground next."

Chapter 252 - 252. June

In the domain of the Shosti family, there was a separate dimension created by a powerful cultivator.

The information about that cultivator had been mostly lost due to the passage of time, the only things known were his title and the cultivation level that he had at that time.

There was another piece of information that could be determined about that dimension: even though it gave rewards to anyone worthy, the true legacy was reserved for one single heir.

No one knew that the inheritance had been claimed some time ago by a young woman with a wild attitude.

Inside the inheritance ground, in the third layer of the separate dimension.

June swung his spear surrounded by hordes of magical beasts.

Those beasts were each of a different type and they seemed to have an ethereal body, they were clearly a creation of the dimension.

June pierced a mole's head, then she kicked toward a snake that was coming from behind her.

Each of her strikes killed a beast in one attack and they were all beasts in the peak of the third rank!

After seeing that the number of beasts didn't diminish no matter how many of them she killed, June stabbed her spear on the ground, injecting all her mental energy into it.

The spear released countless sparks on the fake terrain which then exploded all around her, creating a thunderstorm that destroyed the encirclement of the magical beasts.

June supported herself on the weapon, she was gasping for air and her complexion was pale, that last spell had exhausted her.

"You have finally become used to your new body but your sea of consciousness is still too weak, it can't express the true power of my spells."

Eccentric Thunder was in the air above her, he had carefully watched the battle of his heir.

"That's all thanks to Master Eccentric, my body would still be in the third rank if it wasn't for your amazing refinement method."

June bowed to the old cultivator hovering in the air.

"The refinement method was only the last part of the process. What was amazing was your determination and the formation that I have personally created. You are quite lucky, I was only able to create the True Thunder body refinement method when I became a rank 5 cultivator. You are so young and yet you already have a rank 4 body, I have to say that I envy you a little."

June smiled at her Master's words and bowed again.

She had really improved a lot since she became Eccentric Thunder's heir.

Not only all the wealth of the separate dimension had become hers, but she had also gained access to tens of spells and techniques of the thunder element, improving her battle prowess by a large margin.

Also, Eccentric Thunder had used a method to forcefully bring her body in the fourth rank, giving her a body that could enhance the power of everything that used the thunder element as its core.

'My Master was really a monster, he has personally created a formation able to emulate the Pain Tribulation so to immediately refine a rank 4 body. I wonder how powerful he was back then.'

She really couldn't be happier.

She had a ridiculous amount of wealth, techniques, spells, and even a personal Master that guided her training and helped her in the breakthroughs, her future had never been brighter.

'And all of this is because of him.'

June's mood turned sour as she thought about Noah.

The separate dimension stored all the information about the various trials, she had watched Noah's battle in the second layer many times and she had also witnessed his rebellion against his family on the first layer.

'I thought I had it hard. My family simply forced me to become strong while you fought against the suppression of your entire family and still managed to become stronger than me. Your will is simply in a different realm.'

Eccentric Thunder noticed the change in her mood and landed on the ground right in front of her.

"Still thinking about him?"

He knew what bothered his disciple.

They had been together for more than one year after all, he had learned all about June.

"Yes, sometimes I wonder about how dark my prospects were before I arrived here. This inheritance gave me the means to easily become a rank 4 cultivator in the future and has given me far more than the Royals could have ever allowed. All of this is thanks to him."

Eccentric patted her shoulder and smiled at her.

He was happy to have found such a talented and honest disciple, he was really thankful to Noah.

"That kid is probably doing something unreasonable or conning some old man for a few pieces of gold, you don't have to worry about him. Actually, you should focus on yourself, we both now that you won't surpass him easily."

June nodded, her mood had slightly improved thanks to her Master's words.

She was about to turn and resume her training when Eccentric stopped her and handed a large metallic hat to her.

"Wear it."

"..."

Eccentric smiled to her but June only looked at the hat with aversion.

"Master, I hate hats."

"I don't care, wear it."

"..."

They stared at each other for a long time before June gave up and finally took the hat.

The truth was that Eccentric's hat was an inscribed item specific for cultivators of the thunder element.

Yet, June really hated to wear it while she fought.

Not only it hindered her vision but it was also hard to keep on her head during a fight.

However, Eccentric Thunder had never accepted to inscribe a different item for her and she was forced to learn how to fight wearing that heavy thing.

"Master, listen. I know that hats are great and everything, but can't you just inscribe something different? I don't know, I personally like-"

She interrupted her phrase because she noticed that Eccentric's figure was staring at the ceiling with his brows furrowed.

"What is it?"

Eccentric stared at the ceiling for a long time when an earthquake ran through the entire layer.

"Master!?"

June didn't know what was happening and called for her Master.

Eccentric ultimately moved his gaze away from the sky and turned it toward June.

He sighed and hundreds of orange runes gathered around him and June.

"It seems that someone is forcing the entrance of the dimension and they actually have the power to do so. I have waited so much for a worthy heir to appear and Heaven only gives me a bit more than a year with her. Damned luck."

Eccentric shook his head and gestured for the runes to envelop June.

"I'm sorry, our time together is over. I'll transfer everything valuable inside your storage devices and send you as far away from the invaders. Be safe my disciple."

The runes shone in a blinding orange light, making June disappear on the spot.

Chapter 253 - 253. Images

Over the entrance of the inheritance ground, the known one near Mossgrove city.

Eight cultivators stood in the air, carefully watching as one of them sent brown runes on the terrain below.

Five of them were from different noble families while three of them came from the Royal dynasty.

The nobles were Ian Udye, Fred Muwlos, Meredith Ramgett, Thomas Balvan, and Kent Shosti, the latter had joined the group since the investigation involved his family's domain.

The Royals were Cecil, Thaddeus, and the woman that was forcefully opening the inheritance ground.

A rain of brown runes came out of her stretched hands and she kept her eyes closed to focus on the task, the cultivators around here watched in reverence as the process continued.

Her status seemed to be superior even to Cecil since he stood with his head lowered on her side.

After a few hours, a gap opened on the terrain which showed the seemingly endless green plain of the separate dimension.

The woman then opened her eyes and sighed.

"The entrance is open and most of the defensive measures have been destroyed, there is only a will inside."

The other seven cultivators bowed toward her and Cecil personally expressed his gratitude.

"Lady Edna, your might incredible, such a powerful inheritance ground couldn't last a few hours in front of you."

Lady Edna snorted at those words.

"Most of the work was done by the time that has passed since its creation. Eccentric Thunder was a monster with a rank 6 dantian, he specialized both in runes and formations, I could have never obtained this result with my power alone if thousands of years hadn't passed."

She uncaringly replied before continuing with her explanation.

"Remember, even if it has only a small part of its former power, this is still a separate dimension of a mighty expert. Don't try to go all out at once, just slowly exhaust its reserves. I will go now, I've lost way too much time in sorting your mess."

Lady Edna vanished from her spot but the cultivators there still performed a respectful bow.

The truth was that Cecil had specifically requested for her help to enter the inheritance ground, he simply didn't have the power to force its entrance.

"I'll lead the way."

Kent took the vanguard position, it was his family's domain after all, he couldn't let anyone guiding him inside the inheritance ground that they have guarded for hundreds of years.

The group of seven entered the pit and found themselves in a green plain with an orange sky.

Even though they were all cultivators in the heroic ranks, they were still surprised by the width of such creation.

Standing on the plain, there was an old cultivator that wore an extremely large hat and a luxurious orange robe.

Eccentric Thunder had appeared as soon as the cultivators entered his dimension!

"You must be senior Eccentric's will, it is an honor to finally meet you after so many years."

Kent bowed toward Eccentric's figure but the others in his group didn't follow his example, they didn't have any special relationship with him while the Shosti family had built its wealth on that separate dimension.

Eccentric snorted and opened his mouth to speak.

"It is fun seeing some intruders speaking of honor, have you come for the resources of my dimension? Ha! I will destroy them before handing them to you."

The runes that composed the dimension began to flicker and emitted an ominous noise, it seemed that Eccentric was ready to detonate the entire dimension.

It was at that moment that Thomas flew in front of Kent and bowed toward eccentric, pleading him in a loud voice.

"Lord Eccentric Thunder please wait! We have come to investigate a matter concerning the opening of the inheritance ground five years ago. The entire group of cultivators from my family has vanished and there is no trace of it! I wonder if you could tell us what has happened back then."

Eccentric fell deep in thought.

He knew exactly to what event he was referring to but he was somewhat conflicted about showing it.

'That kid is not my disciple but he still provided me with an heir. I also have to buy some time for June to safely escape the area of the dimension. I'm sorry kid, my disciple has the priority.'

Eccentric sighed, even as a will he still maintained his human gestures.

"I can provide that but you have to close the dimension afterward, I'm still looking for an heir."

"Deal."

Cecil answered immediately and Eccentric sighed again before making an ample gesture with his right arm.

The runes on the terrain shone and some faint images appeared.

They pictured a group of soldiers in red armor that was silently encircling a suffering youth with his eyes closed.

That was the moment when Noah had just come out of the second layer and was enduring the transmission of the Demonic form spell!

The imagine then moved and showed to the cultivators the battle that followed that event.

There was also the sound of their voices, Thomas couldn't help but knit his brows hearing Noah's conversation with Lena.

Then, Noah used the Demonic form for the first time and completely overwhelmed the heirs of the Balvan family, taking all the corpses in his space-ring and leaving in a certain direction.

A moment of silence followed the end of the images, the cultivators were still surprised by what they had seen.

Not only the complete Demonic form was clearly powerful but also its wielder couldn't be underestimated.

After all, Noah was only fifteen during that battle and he was already extremely proficient in combat, some of the nobles couldn't help but internally shake their heads seeing such a talent being forced to rebel against his own family.

"I hope you would forgive my frankness, Lord Thomas."

Meredith spoke, turning her head toward the patriarch of the Balvan family before continuing her phrase.

"How could you not suspect him from the beginning? He is clearly one of the strongest youths of the country."

Thomas showed a complex expression at that question and coughed a couple of times before he was able to give an answer.

"I didn't even know that he had a space-ring."

Chapter 254 - 254. Detonation

The truth was that Noah had always been careful in showing his strength and, also thanks to William's help, he had been able to hide some of his strongest abilities.

His most important trump card at that time had been the Body-inscription spell, it was the ability that had allowed him to triumph in the inheritance ground and obtain the Demonic form spell.

Then, there was his space-ring, stolen from the members of the Gray Shadows, which he had ultimately substituted with a better one.

In the end, he had hidden the incredible pace at which his sea of consciousness improved, hiding his status as a mage thanks to William's assistance.

What had simply been a bastard with some skills in Thomas' eyes was, in truth, a beast that had hidden his sharpest fangs.

"I have really underestimated him."

Thomas concluded, shaking his head.

He had found his answers, the heirs and soldiers were dead and all their resources had been plundered by Noah, there was really nothing else that he could hope for.

"So, are you saying that this demon has been a student of the academy? Do you simply allow anyone inside?"

However, Fred wasn't happy with the results of the investigation and expressed his complaints.

Thaddeus opened his mouth to answer him.

"The entrance test values the battle prowess and he has performed far better than anyone in his generation. The Royal family is not to blame for being willing to nurture such a talent."

"What now? Do you have any other lead?"

Meredith joined the conversation and sided with Fred.

Thaddeus shook his head at that question, he really didn't know where Noah could have gone.

Silence fell again in the group of cultivators, they were slowly accepting the worst option.

It was Thomas the one that gave voice to their thoughts.

"I bet that he has left the country already. This is my fault, that kid was raised without any loyalty toward his family or nation, he is only interested in his personal power."

Cecil neared Thomas and placed a hand on his shoulder.

"Don't worry, we are at fault too. We will emit an arrest warrant and his picture will be affixed everywhere in the Capital. If he dares to show his face, we will surely catch him."

His voice was firm which gave some confidence to the other nobles.

Fred and Meredith nodded, they had lost their heirs after all, what they wanted the most was to find the main suspect for their son and daughter's demise.

Ian was a bit regretful but he could only accept that outcome.

The Royals had already lost enough face with that matter and he could not prove that they were aware of Noah's real identity, he had to accept that small victory.

The only one completely uncaring about the matter was Kent.

His worries concerned the inheritance ground from which his family gained most of its wealth, knowing that it had been damaged made him fear about the future prospects of his family.

It was with hesitation that he spoke to the group.

"Should we leave? I don't see any reason to protract our stay."

Thaddeus smiled and pointed at the terrain.

"We have a complete inheritance ground in front of us, I say that we see what it contains. Don't worry, the Royal family won't take anything and you will share the profits equally."

The cultivators became immediately interested.

That was a separate dimension created by a mighty rank 6 cultivator, it would surely contain something that interested them.

However, Eccentric Thunder was ready for that turn of event.

The runes that composed the dimension began to tremble as soon as Thaddeus spoke.

Then, they began to explode one by one, creating a chain reaction that detonated bigger pieces of the dimension.

"What? How can this place still hold so much power?"

Cecil was surprised and began to retreat, the other cultivators that came with him did the same.

Eccentric didn't answer, he was using the last reserves of "Breath" to destroy the entire dimension.

'They can't know that someone has taken the inheritance. It's time to vanish for the sake of my heir.'

He was only a will after all and his mission had been completed, he would gladly use his remaining power to erase the traces of June's passage.

Explosions rang everywhere, space itself began to curve due to the power expelled by the orange runes.

Little by little, the entire inheritance ground began to crack and transform in smoke.

Eccentric Thunder's figure slowly transformed into smoke, as soon as it vanished, the three layers of the dimension exploded completely.

Pillars of orange fire shot out in the sky in the spots where the entrances to the dimension were.

There were nine entrances in total but they were replaced by nine fiery pillars.

June turned due to the commotion that was happening behind her.

She was in a murky swamp, at tens of kilometers from the Shosti's domain.

'Master destroyed the separate dimension, it seems that the invaders were strong.'

She had learned all the defensive protocols of that place, she could immediately link the orange pillars to the destruction of the dimension.

'All of Master's wealth is with me and he even left me some of his lessons in the form of runes, he was already prepared for a similar situation. I should just go back to the mansion, I have a lot to study.'

She walked in the direction of the Ballor mansion, unaware that, upon her arrival, she would learn a lot more about the man that gave the inheritance to her.

Noah soon became publicly a criminal, the information about his past was revealed as it did his deeds.

The Balvan family actively cooperated with the Royal family to create a complete profile of Noah.

In just a few days after the destruction of Eccentric's inheritance ground, Noah became widely known throughout the nation.

His picture was affixed near the criminals' board of the Capital and a bounty was set.

However, no one was able to find him and many began to think that he had completely abandoned the nation.

Chapter 255 - 255. Running

A shadow ran near the western side of the continent.

It was fast, it shot through the plains without hesitation, only looking at what was in front of it.

That shadow was, of course, Noah.

He was clad in a tight black robe with a hood that covered his face and he was speeding in a straight line along the coastline, he was using it as his landmark.

'Two months have passed by now, I bet that the information about my element has become public already.'

Noah knew that the noble families would retort in some way to his absence to the meeting, he had already considered the worst possible outcome and he couldn't care less.

'Even if they label me as a criminal and start a man-hunt, I am already outside their reach.'

In the two months after the events of in the Bare Dungeon, Noah did everything he could to cover his tracks and escape the Utra nation.

He had destroyed his hunter and academy's tokens for fear of being tracked down by the Royals, he really didn't want to bet on Ivor's words.

Then, he had inspected Phoebe and Manuel's space-rings, gaining a large number of resources and potions before destroying the rings too.

Lastly, he had cut his hair short, he didn't think that a simple haircut would hide his identity in front of other cultivators but he believed that it could slow down the investigations.

As for his escape plan, it was quite simple.

The Bare Dungeon was already near the border of the nation, it was at only one week of travel from the Royal city after all, reaching the border took him no time.

Noah had chosen to move to the westernmost part of the country though before abandoning the nation and he had his reasons for that.

The first one was that he had no idea about the actual layout of the other countries, he could only use the coastline to be sure of his path.

The second one was that the western side of the country was the one with fewer cultivators!

At the center of the border, there was the Royal city and, on the eastern side, there was the academy.

Those two structures gathered the majority of cultivators of that part of the country, the others would just reside in their mansions and would generally avoid the areas populated by commoners.

However, Noah preferred to hide his presence even in front of those commoners.

During his travel, he had encountered many small or large villages that had only a few weak cultivators in them.

Those were the moments when he would use the Warp spell.

Noah had always held back in using that spell during his battles.

The main reason was that he wanted to hide his actual proficiency with it but there was more to it.

The Warp spell was hard to perform, it required a great deal of concentration and mental energy and required for the user to see or to sense the place where he would teleport.

Also, it needed some time to cast it, its efficiency in battle completely depended on the situation.

Yet, one big advantage was that it left no traces of the user.

Noah had used that spell as soon as he came out of the Bare Dungeon to make any possible spy of the Royals lose track of him.

Then, he had proceeded in using it every time he found some human's settlement, that was the best approach to prevent anyone from noticing him.

The distance crossed by one teleportation could only cover a few kilometers at best but it was enough to surpass those villages.

Another time when his spell had been required was when he had reached the border of the nation.

Noah was sure that there was a formation in place there so he had used the Warp spell repeatedly to cross it.

That formation mostly prevented outsiders from entering the country, it hadn't been created for the opposite situation but Noah still had chosen to use his spell, he really didn't want to notify the Royals of his escape after all.

The rest of his escape was spent running.

Two months spent running had allowed him to cross thousands of kilometers and, thanks to his rank 4 body, he had only needed to rest a few times to recover.

'Another village.'

Noah saw another human's settlement in the distance.

It didn't seem the kind of place that could be inhabited by cultivators but he still decided to resort to the Warp spell.

Noah focused his mental energy on the other side of the village and activated the spell, being immediately enveloped by a black fire only to reappear at a few kilometers in the distance.

Yet, as soon as he reappeared, he found two fishermen staring at him with wide eyes.

'Fuck, my mental sphere still can't give me a perfect perception when it comes to long distances.'

Noah uncovered his hood and smiled at the two commoners, all while performing a bow.

"Do you know which country is this?"

The two fishermen had seen that man coming out of the black smoke and were even more surprised when they saw how young it was.

"Th-this is Athor country, My Lord"

Noah nodded and continued to smile.

"Do you happen to know which countries are their allies?"

The fishermen thought for a while before shaking their heads.

"We are simple commoners, My Lord, we don't really understand the stuff about cultivation."

'It seems that I still can't stop.'

Noah released two strands of black smoke that enveloped the fishermen and performed another Warp further in the distance.

The partial Demonic form devoured those commoners in an instant, leaving no trace of them.

'I still don't know if I left the area of influence of the Utra nation!'

However, Noah didn't care at all about those two, he had decided to kill them as soon as they saw the black flames.

That world was a dangerous one.

One day you could meet a dragon and die under its might, in another one you could meet a man escaping from his country that was ready to do anything to cover his tracks.

'Luck can determine life and death, only personal power can cut the strings that control your fate.'

It was with that thought that Noah continued to speed in the distance, uncaring the beauty of the crystalline sea on his left.

Chapter 256 - 256. Slyfall

More time passed.

Noah had never stopped in his escape, he would only rest when his body reached its limits only to run again as soon as he recovered.

The continued use of the Warp spell and the relentless march were beginning to affect his psyche but he didn't dare to stop.

The Royals had cultivators in the heroic ranks at their disposal and Noah wouldn't bet on their negligence for his escape.

'If only I could stop overusing the Warp spell. Never mind, it's too dangerous.'

Noah was using his potions to refill as much mental energy as he could to support his spell.

The constant stress and efforts prevented for his mind to be at ease and slowed the pace at which his mental sphere produced energy, he had to resort to his stash of medicines to continue running.

Also, he could avoid using the Warp spell if he stopped crossing inhabited areas but he would risk entering in danger zones that way.

'It is clear that I still can't kill a rank 4 magical beast alone and I have already used the shard of the Demonic sword. I am at my weakest right now.'

Since he didn't know the actual layout of the continent, he could only cross inhabited areas because he was sure of their safety.

Humans could never develop in a danger zone, only special structures inhabited by cultivators could survive there.

Like that, his journey continued.

He crossed plains and mountains, small forests and lakes, always keeping the sea to his left side.

He had seen the sea in his previous life already, that sight was not enough to make him stop in wonder.

'How big is this damned continent! I would have crossed half of my previous world now.'

The speed that he was capable of with his rank 4 body was incredible but it still didn't seem enough to reach the domain of the Shandal Empire.

'Once I reach the area of influence of the Empire, I will be momentarily safe.'

That was the first stop planned in Noah's mind.

He had a lot to do.

There was the Bloodline Inheritance that still needed to be absorbed, Noah had momentarily sealed the head of the rank 4 worm in a barrel filled with the blood of the weaker worms that had been in his space-rings.

However, that was only a momentary solution, he could not completely stop the deterioration of the head.

Also, he had to forge his Demonic swords, his battle prowess was too low for him to be safe in a foreign country.

Then, he wanted to resume a normal pace of training and gather information about his whereabouts, he couldn't continue to run blindly in a straight line.

As for why he had chosen the Shandal Empire as his first stop, it was because it was the strongest nation in the continent!

'Ideally, since I'm on the coastline, I should arrive in one of the countries subjugated by the Empire, I should be quite safe there.'

He didn't dare to directly enter the Empire, he just wanted to lay low in one of the countries around it.

It was only on his fourth month of travel that he encountered some changes in the environment.

Noah found himself in front of an endless mountain range that seemed to cut the continent in two.

'These don't seem normal mountains, they seem the work of a formation master.'

Noah carefully neared the mountain range and felt an ominous sensation coming from them.

'It's either a formation or a danger zone, I can't simply cross it in both cases.'

He thought about the issue for a moment before two pairs of wings came out of his back.

Then, he flew in the direction of the sea to see if that sensation vanished.

There, he was surprised to see a large and seemingly bustling city right between the sea and the mountain range.

'What? How wasn't I able to sense it? Is it because of the formation?'

Noah was amazed by its concealment and could only address that ability to the formation.

'It doesn't seem possible to sneak inside the next country, I should just see if I can pay them.'

Noah landed in an empty spot on the sandy beach and calmly walked toward the main gate of the city.

That city had a simple defensive wall that surrounded it and many inscriptions could be seen on its surface.

'It should be more dangerous than it looks. I bet that it's one of the cores of the formation.'

Formations needed a constant supply of "Breath" to work and that city seemed to provide some of it.

"Welcome to the independent city of Slyfall, I need your identification token and one thousand Credits to let you enter."

A soldier in a rusty armor blocked him right in front of the gate.

Noah didn't answer but looked around to see if there was someone else observing him.

Yet, it seemed that the soldier was the only guard appointed for that spot.

"Who does this city serve?"

Noah asked in a plain tone.

The soldier seemed used to that question and showed a wide smile at his words.

"We serve everyone! The city is placed right between the areas of influence of two great nations so we can't really take sides. I have to say that we are more inclined toward the Empire though."

Noah nodded, he had guessed much already.

'To be part of the formation, this city must have the protection of a strong party. Their independence is just a façade for the gathering of information.'

"What if I gave you ten thousand Credits? Would that be enough to buy your silence?"

The soldier smiled again but shook his head.

"You must be a noble on the run, I have seen many of your kind. However, I still need to give you a token to allow your entrance, I can't just create a fak-"

"Thirty thousand and an Earth pill, you want to break through the solid stage, right?"

Noah raised his offer.

He had already noticed that the soldier was rank 1 cultivator at the peak of the liquid stage, the only thing that could hold him back from attempting the breakthrough was the lack of resources.

The soldier finally stopped smiling and looked at Noah with a bit of wariness in his eyes.

The hooded man in front of him had to be way stronger than him to discern so accurately his level.

It took the soldier just a few seconds for him to smile again and taking a token from his space-ring.

"Welcome to Slyfall, Mister Adam."

Chapter 257 - 257. Inheritance

The city of Slyfall was a simple one.

It wasn't luxurious or clean, it only featured a large market, a few hostels, and many taverns.

'This really resembles one of the pirates' hideouts of my previous world, I kind of like it.'

The streets were filled with drunkards and women with revealing clothes, what surprised Noah even more was that most of them were cultivators!

'It seems that I ended up in the gathering point of the criminals of both nations, I should go on my way as soon as I finish my most pressing matters.'

Noah had his hood lowered, the soldier had advised him not to wear it inside the city and he had finally understood why.

'Everyone here should have quite a record, they won't like someone unwilling to show his face. A hood would just attract trouble.'

He went looking for the best hostel that he could find and he rented a room for the exorbitant price of one hundred Credits per night.

Noah didn't care much about that price, he was in a seemingly lawless city after all, they could set any price they wanted.

Also, the one chosen by Noah was one of the best hostels in the city, he needed the right structure for what he was going to do.

'I can't just absorb the Bloodline Inheritance anywhere, I need a safe and silent space to focus completely on it.'

The records about the Bloodline Inheritance were scarce, Noah only knew how to absorb it and its effects.

Yet, what he knew for sure was that the head of the rank 4 worm was deteriorating and he needed to hurry in absorbing its sea of consciousness before it became ruined.

Noah immediately went to his room and closed the door behind him.

The room was simple but wide, it had a large bed and one couch with a mat laid on the floor.

Also, the density of "Breath" wasn't bad either, Noah guessed that all the expensive habitations had a way to increase its concentration.

'This will do, I don't think it will take more than two weeks.'

Noah had paid the rent for three weeks already, he needed that amount of time to return to his peak form and undergo the absorption.

Four months of constant march weighed on his physical condition, he couldn't just straight up cultivate again, he needed to rest.

Noah went directly to sleep, the fatigue of the travel forced him to rest for more than a half a day before his mind could be considered recovered.

'According to the records, I will undergo the life of the beasts while I absorb it.'

Noah ate a satisfying meal before sitting cross-legged on the mat on the floor.

Then, he took out the barrel where he had sealed the head of the rank 4 worm and he opened it.

A pungent smell immediately enveloped the room, four months were really too much even for a rank 4 material.

Noah stabbed his hand in the severed part of the head and took out a small dark-red crystal from it.

That was the solidified sea of consciousness of the magical beast, the Bloodline Inheritance that he had worked so hard to obtain.

'To think that this small thing is one of the best medicines for the mental sphere of a cultivator... My mind should be able to handle it, right?'

What worried Noah the most was the capability of his mind.

A Bloodline Inheritance essentially contained all the experiences of the magical beast and of its predecessors.

It could come in many forms, depending on how much time had passed from its creation.

Of course, the more a beast with a sea of consciousness lived, the more its mind would be valuable.

The sea of consciousness of a magical beast was essentially a worse version of the humans' one, it contained only raw thoughts and strong emotions, it couldn't really be used for the casting of spells and similar.

However, that was exactly why the cultivators could absorb it!

Their thoughts were denser, their emotions more diversified, they basically had a more complex mind.

Yet, if a beast had lived for too long, its mind could equal the might of the heroic ranks, making it impossible for cultivators in the human ranks to absorb it.

'It shouldn't have been more than twenty years, I don't believe that the Royals would have let it live if they had recognized the Inheritance.'

Noah didn't know it but the last cleansing performed by the Royals had happened only fifteen years ago, his mind could completely cope with the absorption process.

The crystal seemed frail, its surface was rough and uneven, it was really far away from a perfected sea of consciousness.

Noah exhaled loudly and then neared the crystal to the middle of his eyebrows.

The crystal crossed his skin and trespassed his skull, passing unhindered Noah's brain to reach for his sea of consciousness.

As soon as it entered Noah's mental sphere, its borders broke and the mental energy contained inside was poured in Noah's mind.

It was at that moment that he lost control of his body and began to dream.

Cultivators scarcely dreamt, as they mind improved, they would be more aware of their surroundings in their sleep.

Yet, Noah completely lost control of himself as his mind started to absorb the thoughts of the beast.

In the dream, Noah opened his eyes only to see a dark underground place.

He ran through tunnels and cavities by instinct, his mind was only led by one basic feeling: Hunger!

Noah had never felt so hungry before, it seemed something compulsory, an instinct that he could not suppress.

He followed the trail of the "Breath", he knew that it came from a living being.

However, when he arrived in the place where the "Breath" was exuded, he found himself in front of a hundred of worm's corpses.

Those were his companions, his pack, he was momentarily stunned by that sight.

Then, a human appeared in the air, his facial features were unclear but Noah clearly recognized the golden color of his armor.

The cultivator simply waved his hand, creating a dense layer of air that completely stomped Noah, reducing him in a meat paste.

It was at that moment that Noah died, the exact moment when hate appeared in his mind.

Chapter 258 - 258. Dream

Noah died but his will remained.

It wasn't a conscient will, only a sliver of the strong emotion that he had felt when he died.

His body was left on the ground to feed other worms, Noah felt as if his conscience was spread among other beings.

The hunger returned.

It was an instinct too strong to suppress, Noah had to eat or he would go crazy!

Yet, that place didn't have that much "Breath" to begin with, only the terrain offered some kind of nourishment.

Noah ate the terrain without hesitation, his mind was divided between ten or so worms but his experiences were the same.

All he did for years was excavating and eating terrain, without ever managing to satisfy his hunger.

Then, that feeling became even stronger.

Noah couldn't control himself, he went looking for his companions.

When he found another magical beast, he pounced at it without hesitation!

He fought, using his body to perform simple attacks.

The surprise effect didn't allow his opponent to defend, he was able to kill it in a few attacks.

Then, he ate it.

The feeling of having his hunger pleased was incomparable, he felt full, almost complete in some ways.

Yet, that moment of pleasure left him unguarded.

Other worms had watched that act of cannibalism and didn't hesitate to follow his example, they pounced at Noah from different angles, killing him in a few seconds.

Noah died again, but his will spread to those that had eaten him.

Those same events repeated themselves for many years.

It was a simple life, guided only by his instincts.

Then, the humans invaded his lair again.

The worms lost themselves at the sight of such an appealing prey but they couldn't match their power.

They could only jump at them while the humans simply waved their hands to kill tens of them at the same time.

Many of the worms carrying Noah's will died, increasing his hatred toward those powerful humans.

The corpses of the beasts became the nourishment for the new pack, spreading Noah's hatred in each surviving worm.

He was now inside each beast of the pack but they still had a different will, he couldn't control them.

Another life of cannibalism began, Noah found himself dying and eating at the same time.

That feeling seemed natural, he lived to satisfy his hunger after all, there was no ethic in the world of the magical beasts.

Yet, the humans would always come to kill him.

That cycle repeated itself many times, Noah felt his will becoming stronger and denser after every death.

Like that, his thoughts became more complex.

At first, it was only simple hatred, he hated those that had killed him so many times.

Then, he began to feel envious of them.

They moved their bodies in a strange way to obtain amazing effects and Noah wondered if he could do the same.

He began to actively feel his body.

It was soft but resilient, he wondered if he could use it to imitate the humans.

Yet, he was too weak and his conscience was still too spread, his thoughts only lasted for a few days before disappearing completely.

He spent hundreds of years like that.

Dying, eating, thinking, he felt the death of each worm, he felt the hunger of each worm.

Then, a change happened.

The humans began to feel threatened by them and decided to leave only a few beasts after their cleansing.

Those few remaining beasts fought themselves for the privilege of eating their dead companions, leaving only one of them alive.

Noah's will was finally concentrated in a single beast again.

The feeling was amazing, he had a clear mind and he could finally think before following his instincts.

That allowed him to survive more easily, it allowed him to actively choose when developing his pack and when to resort to cannibalism, it finally allowed him to actively use his body to imitate the humans.

Then, Noah saw himself.

He watched the entire fight against Daniel and his group from the point of view of the rank 4 creature.

Noah held on, his body was filled with injuries but he still performed the technique that he had spent years to create.

Yet, those efforts were in vain, he ultimately died again at the hands of the humans.

His will remained but it didn't spread to other beasts, it was held captive in a barrel inside his lifeless head.

Then Noah saw himself picking the Bloodline Inheritance and nearing it to his forehead, he felt himself disappearing, fusing with the mind of the human.

It was at that moment that Noah woke up and his consciousness returned to his human body.

He released an inhumane screech before thrashing himself around while holding his head, he felt as if his mental sphere was going to explode!

It took him a while to calm down, his mind was still sore, he couldn't assess its actual improvements.

However, he could focus again on the room and watch what he had done while he was dreaming.

The room was almost destroyed, Noah could see as every piece of furniture had been broken and bitten.

There were bite marks everywhere!

Noah inspected his mouth and found many pieces of wood between his teeth.

'Don't tell me that I have actually eaten part of the room.'

Noah inspected his body but found nothing wrong with it, even if he had eaten something strange, there were no apparent consequences.

'That was so strange, I have completely lost myself in the experiences of the worms. What a pitiful life they have.'

Noah clearly remembered every sensation of when he was a worm.

Yet, as a human, he couldn't imagine being completely driven by his instincts, his mind was simply too complex.

'That hunger... Is that what every magical beast feels? No wonder they are so aggressive, they literally need to eat or they would go mad.'

Noah could only have those few considerations before deciding that he was too tired.

The process of absorbing the Bloodline Inheritance had exhausted him, he needed to recover to assess his actual gains.

He went to sleep on the remaining part of the bed, hoping to have dreamless sleep.

Chapter 259 - 259. Map

When Noah woke up, he could clearly feel the benefits of the Bloodline Inheritance.

His mind was clearer, his thoughts faster, his mental sphere firm.

Every advancement of the sea of consciousness would actively increase the capabilities of a cultivator's mind: not only it made him smarter, but it also enlarged his point of view, allowing him to consider more possibilities that he thought impossible before.

Of course, what Noah immediately noticed was the increased size of his mental sphere.

'I've gained two to three years of training, the records about the Bloodline Inheritance were right, it really is the best item for the training of the mind.'

Absorbing the sea of consciousness of a magical beast directly increased the mental capabilities of a cultivator, there were really no other potions or pills that could achieve something like that.

However, such a sudden enlargement could lead to an injury or worse, Noah had relied once again on the advantage of his sturdy mind to absorb that inheritance.

'I should stop applying pressure on my mental sphere for a while to let it stabilize, I'm not resuming my training schedule just yet after all.'

Noah decided and focused on the gaseous "Breath" contained in his mind.

He immersed it in the crystalline sea inside his sphere, that water was the representation of his thoughts and will, he was going to refine that "Breath".

However, he didn't leave that energy inside the sea for long, he took it out as soon as he became able to control it.

Then, he simply dispersed that "Breath" in the air.

His mind had to always endure a constant internal pressure due to his blood companions and the "Breath" needed for the Elemental forging method, Noah had decided to remove one of those things to ease it.

'Without the "Breath" inside my mind, I basically feel no pressure at all.'

His normal state had been one on the verge of a splitting headache for the last two years, he had to admit that having a completely relaxed mind was a good feeling.

'I'll stay like this for a few weeks then I'll increase the quantity of "Breath" stored, I need to become a rank 3 mage as soon as possible.'

Of course, peace and relax were the last things that Noah wanted.

His dantian was improving at a fast pace since he obtained a rank 4 body but, even if it reached the liquid stage, the actual advantages would be limited.

Noah guessed that, if he reached the liquid stage of the second rank of the dantian, he would finally be able to kill a rank 4 beast all by himself.

'That would still require me to go all out but my attacks will surely inflict more damage. Yet, the third rank of the mind would put me on a completely different level.'

Since he was reborn in that world, Noah's biggest advantage had always been his fully-formed mind.

Then, Noah began to rely more on it because his most powerful spell depended on his mind.

'Performing the Demonic form spell with a rank 3 sea of consciousness would increase my battle prowess far more than when reaching the liquid stage. It is a completely different rank after all, it can't be compared to a more concentrated "Breath".'

Noah knew that both those breakthroughs were still quite far in the future, yet he couldn't help but be expectant toward them.

'I should cultivate for a few days and then be on my way, I don't trust that soldier nor anyone in this city, I need to reach some real independent country. Also, I might have an idea about a new technique.'

Noah did exactly as he planned.

He cultivated for a few days in order to revitalize his centers of power and return to his peak form.

The high density of "Breath" of the room coupled with his piece of "Breath" blessing created an environment that surpassed even the best training rooms

of wealthy nobles, his dantian was refilled in no time and Noah was even able to improve it by a bit.

'At least my body is autonomously reaching the peak of the lower tier of the fourth rank, my lack of body-nourishing methods isn't a pressing matter just yet.'

After he had recovered, he left the room in a hurry, it was best to disappear before the poor state of the habitation was discovered.

Noah went for the market of the city, he needed to find information about the actual layout of the continent, he couldn't just blindly follow the coastline like he had done for the past for months.

The journey from that place would be somewhat more dangerous than before, he was now marching toward a powerful nation instead of running away from it.

Noah wanted to avoid meeting soldiers of the empire at all costs, all he wanted to do was to lay low for a few years in some messy country in order to work on himself.

Yet, detailed maps were hard to find in that environment.

Most of them simply shown the form of the continent, they didn't have any detail on them with the exception of a few big cities.

"Don't you have one with political borders and danger zones?"

Noah asked a merchant that was proudly showing his maps to him.

"Are you kidding? That stuff belongs to rulers and powerful organizations, if I had something that precious, I wouldn't have to set a shop in the middle of the street!"

The merchant's answer made Noah frown.

'In the Capital, all the shops had access to high-quality items. Things are really different in the small cities.'

"Can't you at least tell me where I can find one of them?"

Noah insisted, he was really in need of a detailed map.

"Yeah! Knock on the Lord's mansion and ask for one! Stop botheri-"

The merchant's phrase was interrupted by Noah unleashing his cold pressure and nearing his face.

"Look, I don't want troubles. Tell me where I can find the map and I'll reward you. Let's do this the nice way."

Noah smiled to the merchant but the latter couldn't feel any good intentions coming from that expression.

He then understood that Noah was being serious and he lowered his head to hide his mouth from the people in the street.

"The Broken Cup has an underground chamber with stolen items. They should be quite precious so that is the only place that could have what you are looking for."

Chapter 260 - 260. Gillian

'Underground chamber with stolen items? I can already smell the trouble from here.'

Noah fell deep in thought after learning that information.

'Those items must come from wealthy cultivators, there is nothing that prevents them from stealing them again from me after my purchase.'

Noah was aware that the best way to maximize profits was to rob your customers, those that seemed weak at least.

'I am alone and lost, I would be their perfect target. Dammit!'

Noah threw a few thousand Credits to the merchant before opening his mouth to speak.

"Where is this place and how do I enter that room?"

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A few minutes later, Noah found himself in front of a simple-looking tavern.

It had a wooden tag that depicted a broken cup, Noah knew that he had arrived at the right place.

The tavern was small, it only had two floors filled with wooden tables on which men and women happily drank.

The main hall was messy and the sound of cheers and shouts could be heard coming from each group of people.

'So many cultivators, they don't seem particularly strong though.'

Noah crossed the main hall and reached for the reception desk, yet, he was soon interrupted by a few women with revealing clothes.

"Hey handsome, why don't you buy us a drink?"

Three young women approached him, they immediately tried to lean on him or to grab his arms.

However, they soon stopped in place, petrified by the cold gaze that Noah showed them.

He then continued to walk toward the desk as if nothing had happened, uncaring of the mocking that followed his actions.

"Hmph, I hate men that don't know how to have some fun!"

"He doesn't deserve us! His thing must have some kind of malfunction anyway."

"That's right, only eunuchs are able to turn us down!"

Yet, seeing that their words had no effect on him, they soon stopped, searching for another man to exploit.

"What can I do for you?"

A waitress spoke to Noah as soon as he reached the desk.

Noah didn't answer, he took a small bag from his space-ring and handed it to her.

The waitress was confused, she inspected the bag only to find that contained five thousand Credits.

It was at that moment that Noah spoke.

"I need to meet with Miss Gillian, I have some business with her."

The waitress stood in place for a while before hiding the bag inside her robe.

"Wait here, someone will come for you."

She then filled a jug with wine and handed it to him before hurrying somewhere.

Noah inspected the wine and slowly tasted it, its quality was far worse than the one he usually had in the Capital but he still drank it, he wanted to show his goodwill to anyone that was observing him.

It was only when he emptied his jug that another waitress reached for him and spoke with her head lowered.

"Miss Gillian is waiting for you, follow me."

Noah followed the waitress in a deeper part of the hall where they entered a small corridor that had many doors on its sides.

The waitress then went to one of them and pressed on some specific points of the door, activating some kind of inscriptions that kept it locked.

The door opened, showing a dark staircase that led toward an underground area.

"Miss Gillian is down there, I can't escort you anymore."

Noah nodded and carefully went down the stairs, enveloping his figure in a layer of mental energy and focusing his senses.

At the bottom of the stairs, Noah could see a wide table that radiated a soft light.

A middle-aged woman was supporting herself on that table, she had long brown hair and was smoking from a long pipe, filling the room with a strange scent.

'That smoke should have relaxing properties, it's not strong enough to affect me though.'

"So young and yet so lonely, I wonder what course of events led you here in this forgotten city."

Gillian spoke, laying her pipe on the table and crossing her legs as he sat on it.

That gesture was slow but firm, Noah couldn't help but think that it had a more profound meaning.

"Your mind is also quite strong, there aren't many men that can look at me and still be so stern, it seems that the scent of the Pink Rose has no effect on you."

Gillian continued to assess Noah, she was quite surprised to see someone with a strong mind at such a young age.

Noah bowed and didn't waste time in further greetings.

"I've been told that you might have something I need."

"Who told you that?"

"Someone."

Silence enveloped the room but Gillian nodded at his answer.

"Young, handsome, and righteous, are you sure that you don't want to entertain me for a while before we start doing business?"

Noah bowed again but shook his head.

"I'm tempted but I'm in a hurry, I'm sure that anyone would be willing to please you after I'm gone."

Noah gently refused her offer while still complimenting her, surprising Gillian even more.

"So, you even know your way with words. Tell me, what brings you here?"

"I'm looking for a map of the continent, a detailed one. It should feature the political borders and the known danger zones at least."

Gillian fell deep in thought before tapping a few times on the table behind her.

The light of the table flickered a few times before three items appeared on it.

They were three simple-looking scrolls but Noah could immediately notice that they were inscribed items.

"I have three items that meet your requirements, their prices indicate how many details there are on them. The cheaper one is twenty thousand Credits, the most expensive one is fifty thousand Credits."

'As expected, they are way overpriced. Luckily, money isn't really a problem for now.'

Noah neared the table but the scrolls immediately disappeared and Gillian released a soft laugh.

"I don't do business with men that I don't trust."

She left the table and neared Noah with those same slow movements as before.

"And I don't trust men than don't have time to please a woman."

She then placed a hand on his waist and used his other one to slowly caress his face.

Noah watched the scene unfolding and sighed internally before opening his mouth to speak.

"Is this really necessary?"

Gillian laughed again and nodded.

"If you want the map, you need to earn my trust."