

Chapter 291 - 291. Black robes

Noah continued to kill as many blue cultivators as he could as the battle kept going.

They were the easiest targets on the battlefield, he couldn't find isolated red cultivators anymore.

Yet, that didn't discourage Noah, he kept on lowering the number of blue robes to force an opening in the red ones' defenses.

Time passed.

The battles between cultivators could last a lot, they had great reserves of energy and strong bodies, victory couldn't be decided in just a few minutes.

That's why, as the hours passed, Noah found fewer and fewer targets to kill.

His actions had finally aroused the wariness of the Empire, they had begun to fight in an extremely careful way.

'They are not leaving me any opening. Should I just join a battle?'

The army of the Odrea nation had completely overwhelmed the Empire by then, only the red cultivators and a few hundred blue ones were left on the battlefield.

'I don't really want to... I don't fight well with allies and I don't want to end up in a fight with two or more red robes.'

His new spell needed eye contact to work, Noah could only hit one cultivator with each activation.

If he was to fight against two or more cultivators in the solid stage, Noah's only option would be to escape, he simply wasn't strong enough for that kind of battle.

'This is getting boring, I could be training right now...'

Noah scratched his head, no one was coming at him and he didn't want to join any battle, he found himself with nothing to do on the battlefield.

However, an event forced him to focus again.

From the bottom of both armies, right when the sun was about to fall into the horizon, the cultivators with black robes took a step forward!

'Are they going to fight?'

Noah's eyes shone with interest at that sight.

Cultivators in the third rank were on a completely different level, he couldn't even hope to touch them.

'Their battle should be interesting!'

It was with that thought in mind that Noah moved toward the sidelines of the battlefield to find a safe spot where to look at their battle.

Black robes walked slowly from both sides toward the center of the valley, the cultivators engaged in battles interrupted their fights at the sight of their passage.

Some of them directly walked right between them, uncaring of the attacks that were about to be launched.

Yet, the cultivators from both sides would just stop when they passed, they wouldn't dare to break their concentration and incur in their wrath.

Their gazes were fixed on the nearing opponents, fifty rank 3 cultivators against fifty rank 3 cultivators, Noah was expectant toward that battle.

It couldn't be helped, he had some sort of reverence toward power, he wanted to know more about the upper stages of cultivation.

After all, the only warrior on that level that he fought was William and he was just training him.

The gazes of all the soldiers moved toward the black robes, they maintained their attention on the enemies near them but they still wanted to take a look at that battle.

Then, the clash happened.

Just as they arrived at one hundred meters of distance from each other, the rank 3 cultivators of both sides jumped ahead.

A loud explosion resounded in the valley, the clash of those two sides created shockwaves that made the ground tremble and crack.

The cultivators that were too close to their battle were swept away due to the might of the impact, the amount of "Breath" released by their attacks was simply too much to withstand.

'Amazing.'

Noah judged in his mind as he stared at the battle.

The weapons of the soldiers in the third rank were all inscribed, a normal weapon could not handle the energy that they released as they fought.

Martial arts were performed with extreme precision, each of their forms produced incredible effects that reverberated through the entire valley.

Air slashes, afterimages, piercing strikes, Noah could recognize each of those forms but the power behind them elevated those movements toward a higher realm, something he couldn't still hope to reach.

The black cultivators were fighting one versus one battles, they were in the same number after all and no one of the bystanders could interfere in their fights.

The other soldiers slowly resumed their battles, they couldn't just stand there, they still had their personal reasons to fight.

Only Noah could somewhat watch the battle of the rank 3 cultivators in its entirety, the soldiers of the Empire avoided him while those from the Odrea nation held the advantage already, there was really nothing that he needed to do.

He stood on the sidelines, his back was on the rocky wall of the mountain and his gaze was fixed at the center of the battlefield where the battle at the apex of the human ranks was held.

'I can't even distinguish in which stage they are, they simply seem too strong in my eyes.'

Noah carefully analyzed each of their movements, both sides were experienced, it was almost impossible to reach the third rank while being unskilled.

'They are not using spells either, their battle is just for show.'

Noah was a bit disappointed by that but he could understand the reason behind that choice.

Cultivators in the third rank were the most powerful asset in the war between the Odrea nation and the Empire, their value surpassed any number of blue and red cultivators.

Also, they were extremely valuable outside of that limited environment, Noah remembered how lofty their positions were in the Utra nation.

The war continued for another hour keeping that rhythm when the sun ultimately disappeared and the darkness enveloped the valley.

The soldiers immediately stopped fighting, they were scared that another attack would break the rules of the agreement between the two countries and produce some repercussions so they just stopped altogether.

The war was over, it was time to gather the dead and reorganize for the next month!

Chapter 292 - 292. Inscription master

The soldiers dispersed quickly, they returned to their respective sides and regrouped around their commanders.

The Odrea nation had clearly won but there wasn't any happiness in its soldiers' expressions, they knew that that victory didn't amount to much.

Each of their loss was permanent while the Empire could refill its ranks with an incessant stream of cultivators, they were just surviving after all.

"Another brilliant victory from your side, you lost only forty blue robes and a couple of red ones."

Seth announced as he turned toward Lisa and bowed.

"I believe that we will see each other again in one month."

He left as soon as he said those words, climbing down the mountain from outside the formation.

Lisa had a sour expression, her mind was already planning the substitutes for each of the deceased.

"Rejoice, My Lady, we have never killed so many of them. That outsider surely knows his way in battles."

One of her protectors tried to raise her morale and slightly managed to do so.

Lisa nodded at his words, Noah's actions had indeed helped in shifting the scales of balance in their favor.

"Those swords of his... You didn't mention them when he was captured."

Noah's weapons had surprised even the soldiers of the Empire, it was impossible for Lisa to overlook them.

"I will ask Logan again but I think that he simply didn't use them in the chase. He was probably keeping them as his trump card."

The protector spoke again but Lisa shook her head.

"He would have surely tried to escape using those swords if he had them before the chase. He didn't come to the last battle because he needed time to prepare... I believe that he has just created them."

Lisa's words made the eyes of the protector widen in surprise.

"Are you saying that he is an inscription master? But there were no visible inscriptions on the blades!"

The protector understood the meaning behind her words and replied in an astonished manner.

Inscription masters were far more valuable than simple cultivators, especially in a country that had sold all its precious cultivation methods to the Empire.

"Grandpa Luke, you are the one that taught me that the world is big and the ways of cultivation are endless. Our ancestor was an expert in formations, our knowledge is limited to that field and it has mostly disappeared after his death, we can't presume that the world stood still after that."

Lisa's words were right.

Cultivators would always test new methods for their training, the academy itself was one of the best areas of research of that world.

Schools would improve as time moved onward, the old techniques would become unsuitable when compared to the new methods.

"You might be right. Do you want me to summon him?"

Luke asked after considering her words but Lisa shook her head.

"That guy is slippery, he fooled the entire army of the Empire with his blue robe, he would just lie if we force him. I need to speak to him privately."

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Noah returned to his reinforced room.

The corpses of the two red cultivators didn't have much on them and their space-rings were about the same.

The only valuable thing was a reagent for the third rank of the dantian that Noah carefully stored for future usage but the other loot included only an inscribed weapon and a few thousand Credits.

'What's even the point of accumulating wealth if I can't use it?'

Noah cursed in his mind at the sight of his belongings.

He had many inscribed weapons for the total value of forty to fifty thousand Credits, a seemingly endless stash of curative potions and pills, four Earth pills, and one hundred and fifty thousand Credits in their crystal form, he was considerably rich for his status.

Yet, he had no use for most of those items.

The inscribed weapons could only be sold, his Demonic swords were far more powerful than them.

The potion and pills were only useful in battle, Noah was always careful to have a large amount of them but their number only continued to increase after every battle!

The Earth pills were completely useless at his level, he had forced the breakthrough on the liquid stage by just using his mental energy after all, their effects could be neglected.

As for his money, there wasn't a market that had something valuable in the Odrea nation, he had no reason to spend them.

'Maybe I should stop taking the inscribed weapons, I really don't see a reason to do it.'

Weapons in the second rank could be valued ten thousand Credits or more but the ones collected by Noah were either dented or almost destroyed, their actual value was far lower than that.

'Well, I still have a lot of storage space left, I'm basically only using one of my four space-rings.'

Noah tossed the problem of his useless items in the back of his mind, he had more pressing matters to attend.

He took his black sabers out in the open and laid them on his crossed legs, he wanted to inspect their state after the battle.

'Basically no dents, they have never been stopped after all, they literally cut through anything.'

He was especially satisfied with the performance of his new weapons, they completely stood up to his expectations.

'The color seems to have faded a bit though, is the black smoke inside them diminishing due to their usage?'

Those inscribed items were far from perfect, Noah was aware of that.

The moment they met a weapon that could match their power, their internal stability would be tested.

However, Noah left the improvements for another time in the future, he didn't have the power and the materials to create a better version of the Demonic sword anyway.

'I should focus on cultivation from now on, that's one of the advantages of being stuck here at least.'

Just as he thought that, however, a loud knock resounded from the door of his room.

Noah didn't have time to stand up that the door was opened, revealing Lisa and Luke on the entrance.

"What's the point of knocking if then you just open it?"

Noah loudly complained, storing the black sabers back in his space-ring.

That action wasn't missed by Lisa who smiled radiantly at that sight.

"You want us to call you Adam but your real name is Noah. Tell me, why didn't you tell us that you could perform inscriptions?"

Chapter 293 - 293. Mausoleum

'They noticed.'

Noah thought in his mind as his gaze sharpened.

The Elemental forging method was quite atypical as an inscription method, it was a dying school after all.

Yet, Lisa managed to recognize it, Noah couldn't help but think that she had paid attention to his performance during the war.

"I'm no master, I just know some tricks."

Noah answered with vague words, he wasn't exactly lying though.

His ability in creating inscribed weapons derived from his constant experimentation, he had used the complete knowledge of the previous

masters of that method and many efforts to succeed in creating his second stable product, he was far away from the title of "master".

Also, the real reason why he had managed to forge something stable in such a small amount of time was that his mental sphere had improved a lot after absorbing the Bloodline Inheritance, he could control the forging process with far more precision.

The level of the sea of consciousness of a cultivator was the biggest limit to a practitioner of the Elemental forging method, however, in Noah's case, it was actually an advantage.

His mental sphere was stronger than his dantian, which allowed him to freely absorb "Breath" from it, shortening the absorption process by a lot.

He could also have an easier time manipulating the materials since the energies involved would always be on a lower level than his mind.

He had realized long ago that the weakness of his inscription method was mitigated in his case.

"Weapons that can destroy spells in the second rank are interesting tricks. Can you mass-produce them?"

"No."

Noah immediately answered Lisa's question.

Not only the forging process was hard and took a long time, but the materials required for the creation of the Demonic swords were quite rare too.

Also, he was the only one that could wield them due to the proprieties of the black smoke inside them.

"Then, can you create just a few of them for our elite soldiers?"

"No."

Noah refused once again Lisa's request.

Lisa was becoming impatient at the sight of the young man uncaringly closing his eyes to start cultivating.

"Remember that you are our prisoner!"

Noah snorted at those words.

"It's precisely because I'm a prisoner that I can do whatever I want. You wanted me to put some efforts into the monthly game that you call war and, for that, you've given me a spell. Now you want me to mass-produce inscribed weapons when you don't even know if I'm able to satisfy that request. Why don't you just let go of this land and escape with your people? What's even the point of struggling so much when your hopes are in random outsiders?"

He was quite angered.

Since his birth in this world, Noah had always been the prisoner of some organization.

The Balvan family, the Royal dynasty, and, ultimately, the Odra country.

Every time he took a step toward freedom, he would always find someone able to entrap him, that cycle was starting to annoy him.

That's why he spoke with such sharp words.

What was a country after all?

Was it the ground in a certain area of a continent?

Was it the people that composed it?

Noah had never cared for such divisions, everything was a creation of the humans after all.

You could take a piece of land and divide it into two different countries, but that piece of land would still be one in the eyes of an outsider.

Borders and similar ideas were meaningless in Noah's mind even before his rebirth and his second life didn't change his thoughts.

"How dare you!? The Lord is always thinking about our well-being, she has never stopped caring for us! She is so young and yet she is giving her everything for the country of our ancestor! How can someone like you understand such feelings?"

Luke couldn't withstand Noah's attitude any longer and exploded in a loud reprimand.

However, Lisa had begun to understand Noah's character.

'He is lawless, without any bond in the world. He is living only for himself, lying and cheating on each of his steps, such a lonely life.'

She thought and she couldn't help to pity him a bit.

She was able to endure the situation of the country thanks to the constant support of its citizens, she cared for them and they did the same.

Noah, instead, was alone.

The world itself was his biggest enemy due to his rare aptitude and exceptional talent, he had no one to rely on and he had to make the best out of each situation.

"Come with me."

Lisa broke the silence and began to walk toward the main building of the city.

Luke and Noah were confused but they still followed her, it was needless to say that Noah was quite wary of the old man at his side.

'Where are we going?'

Lisa led him back to the main hall of the castle in the center of the city.

The room was deserted, only Noah, Luke, and Lisa were inside it.

"Our country once was the overlord of the western side of the central part of the continent, our borders reached the mountain range that divides the two areas of influence on the southern side and the mystical fog right before the Papral nation on the northern side."

Lisa spoke with a reverent tone, that was the apex of her country after all, she was extremely proud of its past.

"Yet, we had a mortal enemy, our neighbor, the Shandal Empire."

She reached the back of the room and pressed her hand on the wall, filling a gap in a formation that was placed there.

Luke's eyes widened in surprise and he was about to speak but Lisa promptly shook her head, stopping him from acting.

"Our ancestor lost the race for the divine ranks against the God of the Empire and I believe that you are aware of how things developed after that."

The wall opened, revealing a rocky downward passage covered with inscriptions.

"Cultivators in the heroic ranks need far more "Breath" than you can imagine, an entire country could be sucked dry by a rank 6 existence. That's why they need to create special environments to continue cultivating."

Noah was beginning to understand the meaning behind her words and his gaze started to inspect the end on the passage with interest.

"Welcome to our ancestor's training cave, we call it Mausoleum."

Chapter 294 - 294. Crown

A wave of dense "Breath" came out from the bottom of the passage and swept over Noah and the other two cultivators.

'Mausoleum? Is this some sort of inscribed room?'

Noah had lived in habitations with an enhanced density of "Breath", the capital of the Utra nation was filled with such buildings.

However, they were always tuned for cultivators in the human ranks, the most valuable ones were in the center of the city, near the Royal Mansion.

Generally speaking, a higher density of "Breath" quickened the cultivation speed but only in certain quantities.

Each rank of the dantian had a different purity of "Breath", cultivators in the first rank couldn't just absorb the "Breath" in rooms made for rank 3 cultivators, their dantian simply couldn't endure such a training speed.

That's why it was always better to have a slow but constant training rather than a fast and immediate one, putting too much stress on that organ would just produce injuries.

Yet, the "Breath" in the passage was barely enough for cultivators in the second rank, Noah didn't understand how a mighty rank 6 existence could be satisfied with just that.

Lisa understood his confusion and continued her explanation.

"The formation around the country is powered by the "Breath" inside it, our ancestor used his whole essence as its core in order to surpass the limits of the heroic ranks. The defensive formation will always be his masterpiece and the proof that he was worthy of reaching the divine ranks, he simply needed more time."

Then, she pointed at the various inscriptions on the walls.

"This formation, however, was used to create his training chamber. It gathers the "Breath" from the underground and it's linked to the sea where the density of "Breath" is generally higher. Not only did it prevent the creation of danger zones but it also gave hope to his successors."

The inscriptions on the wall formed intricate diagrams, they even ended up in runes that flickered with a pale white light.

'Such a majestic work, it should be on par with Eccentric Thunder's dimension.'

The records about these mighty existences were taught in the academy, Noah was aware that Eccentric Thunder had been at the peak of the heroic ranks in his prime.

'He created his inheritance right before undergoing the Heaven Tribulation for the divine ranks, this ancestor should have had a similar thought when he created this environment.'

"The Mausoleum has six layers, each one of them is specific for a rank of the dantian. This is just the first one, cultivators in the first rank are currently training here, please don't disturb them."

At the end of the passage, a wide shining room unfolded in front of Noah's eyes.

The underground room was filled with mats and many youths could be seen quietly cultivating on them.

They were a bit more than fifteen years old but their concentration surprised even Noah.

'At least a thousand of them, these kids should be the new generation of the nation. There is already someone in the liquid stage between them.'

Noah had to admit that such a feat surprised him.

'The pressure radiated from the inscriptions also affects the mental sphere, the ancestor really thought about everything.'

The light in the room was generated by the formation.

Lines and runes shone with a pale white light that covered the entirety of the room, exuding a halo that pressed on the mental sphere of the cultivators, increasing its sturdiness.

Lisa never stopped walking and reached for a passage at the end of the room.

As soon as she entered the passage though, her brows knitted together as if she was suffering from some sort of mental attack.

Luke sighed and promptly enveloped her with a layer of mental energy, mitigating the pressure in the passage.

'Oh? Even the weight of the formation increases as we descend.'

Noah barely noticed the increased pressure, his mind was too stable to be affected by that.

Yet, Lisa was only a rank 1 mage, her mental sphere could not endure that environment.

"In the second layer, cultivators in the second rank are training."

Noah had understood by then the layout of the Mausoleum, it was simple but efficient, it helped both the dantian and the sea of consciousness, truly an excellent training ground.

"So, you lasted until now because of this place. Your higher experience in combat coupled with a faster cultivation speed was barely enough to keep you alive."

Noah commented as he inspected the luminous lines of the corridor, he really couldn't understand the meaning behind those inscriptions.

"Hmph, the Empire thinks that our soldiers will be depleted in ten years. We can last at least for another century with this place."

Lisa snorted as she thought about Seth's words and explained the situation to Noah.

"How isn't it aware of this place? I thought that the deal forced you to give up all the cultivation methods in the heroic ranks. This place is useful till the sixth rank, right?"

Noah expressed his confusion, he wouldn't believe that the Empire didn't mention such an amazing place in the requirements of the agreement.

"This formation can't be moved so it's protected by the formation on the borders of the country. Also, it can't be considered a cultivation method, we can't surpass the human ranks without techniques after all. I believe that the God and a few higher-ups of the Empire are aware of this place, but the common soldiers should be in the dark. They probably hid this information to give hope to their troops."

'It seems more like a loophole in the agreement rather than an explanation but, well, it's not really my business.'

"Why did you show me this place?"

Noah moved the topic back to his situation as they reached the second layer.

The room there was a bit smaller than the previous one but there were still a few hundreds of cultivators training there, Noah could recognize a few of them from the battle on the valley.

"Inscribe for us and I will allow you to train here. Of course, if you could make cultivation techniques to break through the heroic ranks, I would be even willing to give you my crown."

Chapter 295 - 295. Regret

Noah's gaze inevitably went on the golden crown on Lisa's head.

That ornament was a symbol of power, of rule over a country and its citizens.

'Becoming the king of the Odrea nation, marry one of their women, have children, defy the Empire... I've read too many stories like that.'

The hero joins the suppressed country and saves the day against the terrible and awful enemy that only wants more power, giving his everything for the greater good of his subjects.

'Yet, I'm the terrible and awful enemy only interested in power here.'

In a world where humans could become deities, power surpassed any ethics.

'My mother was a good woman, she was abused and was ultimately forced to kill herself because she was weak; June was only a kid when her family started to train her like a beast. Countries, laws, they have no value...'

His mind then recalled the dream in the test of the attitude at the academy.

Noah clearly remembered his feelings at the sight of countless human figures kneeling toward him while he was sitting on the throne.

He felt nothing.

Only the brilliant stars in the distant sky could move him, his ambition continuously sharpened with the passage of time, becoming a pure will that dictated his every move.

He had one regret though.

Lily, the woman that had suffered in his place to give him enough time to become independent, the woman that was happy to see her son choosing cultivation over her.

The suffused moans coming from her room still resounded in Noah's mind and each of her bruises was a weight over his heart, it was only thanks to his innate detachment that he was able to suppress his killing intent when he was in the inner circle of the Balvan mansion.

'I have no interest in that crown.'

He sighed as he reached that conclusion in his mind.

'Well, there is also a problem with my inscription method, I can't really live up to their standards.'

Noah organized his thoughts before giving an answer to Lisa.

"My inscription method can only produce darkness-type inscribed items. Maybe, in the future, I will be able to avoid this limitation, but my experience is simply too little right now."

He was a man of two worlds, he was quite sure that, as his ability improved, he would be able to modify the forging process to better suit his necessities.

Yet, the method always stressed to use an element matching your aptitude, not only absorbing "Breath" of another element required a completely different process, but also its manipulation would be harder.

The aptitude was innate, Noah would find manipulating "Breath" of another element more difficult.

"Cultivation techniques are the same, my level is too low to even create something for me and they are further limited by my element. Both your requests are simply outside the range of my abilities."

Noah's explanation made Lisa wear a disappointed expression.

Of all the outsiders that have come to her country, Noah was the only one that could perform inscriptions, that art was taught only by top-tier organizations and similar.

"Can't you just teach your inscription method to us? You don't seem the kind of person bound by honor if the price meets your standards."

Lisa directly asked for the complete method, in her mind, that was the only solution.

However, Noah shook his head.

"My method is flawed, I believe that it will kill your country before the Empire breaks through the formation."

Noah was being honest.

Among all the practitioners of the Elemental forging method, he was the only one having it quite easy.

He could skip the long absorption processes because he was taking "Breath" directly from his dantian and his mental sphere was always stronger than the purity of that "Breath", allowing him to easily suppress it.

Yet, how many cultivators had the sea of consciousness on a higher level than the dantian?

Noah couldn't think of anyone, he was the only known person that had that quality.

"Is it that dangerous? My men aren't afraid of death! I believe that we will ultimately succeed!"

Lisa didn't give up, the biggest opportunity of her life had just appeared, she couldn't just let it go.

Noah moved his gaze toward Luke and wore a bitter smile before speaking.

"Will you ever store "Breath" in your sea of consciousness?"

Luke snorted and laughed in response.

Yet, seeing the bitter smile that continued to stay on Noah's expression, his laugh stopped, transforming in disbelief.

"A-are you serious? That's madness!"

Noah simply shrugged his shoulders before replying in a soft voice.

"It's just the only method I could learn, nothing much."

Lisa's gaze moved between Luke and Noah with a confused expression.

She wasn't that knowledgeable about the topic of cultivation, she could not understand what they were talking about.

Luke noticed her behavior and sighed as he put a hand over her shoulder.

"My Lady, it's not doable. He is right, most of us would die."

His words seemed to have more weight on her mind since she ultimately gave up at the thought of obtaining an inscription method.

"I can create consumable weapons though. Their power will depend on the materials and on their elements but they should be quite useful for the blue soldiers."

Noah said.

He had already trained with materials that were of a conflicting element, the power of the items created in that way would be lower but they could still be useful in the monthly battles.

Some light returned to Lisa's eyes as she heard those words, the casualties each month were mostly blue soldiers, increasing their battle prowess would surely have positive effects in the long-run.

"That would be enough! What do you need to start? How much time? How many weapons can you deliver for the battle in thirty days?"

A storm of question hit Noah.

It couldn't be helped, Lisa handled all the matters concerning the country, she needed as much information as she could to accurately plan the next battle.

Noah, however, had just begun to imagine the blueprint of that disposable weapon.

Seeing that she was impatient for answers, he could only investigate about their reserves.

"Do you have bodies of magical beasts stored somewhere?"

Chapter 296 - 296. Variety

"That... we have tons of them in our inventory. They are usually used by our blacksmiths to forge weapons but, since the number of our soldiers continued to decline, we have more than we need."

"Do you have rank 4 magical beasts among them?"

Noah's request surprised Lisa but she still nodded.

Rank 4 corpses were hard to process and it would be a waste to use them to create simple weapons, they had basically been untouched since the death of the ancestor.

"Good, I need to inspect them. My method requires precious materials, I need a certain combination of body-parts to create something effective."

Rank 3 materials were too frail, they could barely handle Noah's "Breath" and mental energy.

Also, using rank 4 beasts would almost ensure the power of the inscribed item, it will be in the second rank by simply using only one of those materials.

"We will bring you to the inventory tomorrow. You should rest now, I believe that you are still tired from the war."

Lisa spoke in a concerned tone.

The battle had ended only a few hours ago, Noah could still feel its weight all over his body.

However, he shook his head at those words.

"I cultivate at night."

It was with those words that he exited the passage and entered the second layer.

He walked calmly in the bright room, the pressure radiated from the formation was still not enough to halt his advance.

The pressure increased as he moved toward the end of the underground chamber, Noah guessed that the ancestor had planned that when he created that training ground.

'The end of the second layer should be for those nearing the third rank of the dantian, yet, my mental sphere should be able to endure the pressure.'

The density of the "Breath" slightly increased as he moved forward, Noah found its concentration acceptable as he reached the end of the room.

'The pressure on my mind is also quite strong, I should cultivate here from the time being.'

The piece of "Breath" blessing came out from his space-ring and Noah calmly sat on it.

His back was on the wall and his body faced the passage for the first layer where Luke and Lisa were staring at him with incredulous expressions.

Even some of the soldiers in the room had opened their eyes to look at the young man calmly cultivating over the square blue crystal, the density of "Breath" had increased because of that, it was impossible to overlook such a change.

"How can his sea of consciousness be so stable? And where did he find such a precious mineral?"

Lisa watched Noah closing his eyes and cultivate, he seemed unmoved by the radiation of the formation.

"He is indeed full of surprises."

Luke said before taking Lisa away from the Mausoleum.

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Noah cultivated for the entirety of the night.

He stopped as soon as the quantity of "Breath" absorbed by the black vortex began to diminish, signaling the arrival of the day.

Even in that room and with the "Breath" blessing, the density of "Breath" wasn't enough to avoid the limitation of his cultivation technique.

'I wish I had that big boulder found in the sixth layer of the Royal Inheritance, I would reach the solid stage in no time with that!'

He then remembered his nature and smiled bitterly as he took back the mineral below him and walked outside of the Mausoleum.

'I think it's for the best that I don't have it, I can't really control myself when it comes to training.'

He returned to his room and took out the Kesier rune, he wouldn't neglect his mental sphere just because of his fatigue.

'The pressure of the Mausoleum should further increase the sturdiness of my mind, it will be beneficial in the long-run but it would just slow my training speed if I was to memorize the rune there.'

The Kesier rune enlarged his mental sphere, training in an environment that pressed on it was detrimental.

That's why Noah exited the Mausoleum under the unwilling gazes of the soldiers, the density of "Breath" had immediately decreased as soon as he stored his mineral.

The whole morning was spent like that, Noah had basically never stopped training after the battle of the previous day.

It was precisely when he stored the rune and prepared himself to rest that the door of the room opened and a soldier became visible behind it.

"The Lord has summoned you."

Noah sighed and made a fast calculation in his mind.

"Tell her to wait one time and two quarter hours, I need to rest."

Noah was basically asking for three hours of sleep.

The soldier was surprised by his manners but he ultimately acknowledged his words, Lisa had been extremely precise in her orders.

His performance in the war and his ability in performing inscriptions increased his importance in the eyes of the other soldiers.

Coupled with the fact that he was able to cultivate at the end of the second layer, Noah's imagine in their minds had become far loftier.

The soldier simply closed the door and waited outside, Noah fell asleep as soon as he laid on the mat.

Three hours were enough for his mental sphere to be completely refilled, he was nearing the third rank after all.

The fatigue also quickly vanished, he had a rank 4 body, its regenerative proprieties and endurance were inhumane.

When he woke up, he hastily bathed before following the soldier.

They went toward the outskirts of the city where Lisa and her two protectors were calmly waiting for Noah.

They didn't seem annoyed by the delay of his arrival, the reports had clearly stated that Noah had spent the whole night cultivating.

"We have a formation around the inventory to diminish the rate at which the materials deteriorate, please follow me."

Lisa spoke, before leading him in a simple-looking building outside of the range of the inhabited buildings.

'How many corpses can this structure even store?'

Noah had his doubts but they were soon solved as soon as he entered the building.

Inside, thousands of magical beasts' bodies were casually laid on the terrain.

The space inside the structure was far bigger than the one he had imagined from outside it, Noah couldn't help but think of it as a separate dimension.

"Will this number do?"

Lisa honestly asked, she really didn't know the number of materials required for inscriptions.

"Yes, this will definitely do."

Noah's answered, his eyes shone at the sight of such a variety of magical beasts.

Chapter 297 - 297. Instability

"I will begin to work immediately, do you have a reinforced room nearby?"

Noah felt restless, he had never had access to so many materials, his mind was being inspired by simply looking at them.

"No, we never really needed one near the inventory. I can order someone to bring them to you, just give me a list."

Noah nodded as he neared some of the corpses to check their conditions.

They were visibly old but the most important parts were still somewhat usable, he just had to remove the rotten portions during the forging.

"I will need a complete register of these bodies, the rank and their state should also be added to their information."

"That's not a problem. The formation keeps tracks of those characteristics already, we just need to make a written copy for you to inspect."

Lisa easily agreed to Noah's demands.

"Then, I'll go back to my room, I have to prepare."

Noah returned to his reinforced room.

The prospect of undergoing such an intensive session of forging had put him in a good mood.

He gladly welcomed that free training that Lisa had offered him, his ability in the method would only benefit from that.

Also, since the Elemental forging method was his only real chance in creating techniques of higher ranks, he didn't mind strengthening his foundation in it.

'I wonder how I should proceed...'

Noah began to think about the item that he was going to create to arm the soldiers as he absorbed "Breath" in his sea of consciousness.

A long forging session was about to start, he needed a large amount of harmless "Breath" before the materials arrived.

The first item that appeared in his mind was the Moon needle.

He was already experienced with its form and it was also extremely easy to create, its usage was quite straightforward too.

'I should try that first.'

The list of the corpses arrived, Noah was quite satisfied with the accumulation of the country throughout the years.

'The fact that they didn't have any usage for them is actually in my favor, I can freely choose any combination of materials that I want.'

Noah selected many materials, the majority of them were in the fourth rank.

They arrived shortly after he gave the list to the soldier outside his room, all the corpses that he had requested were inside a space-ring, he immediately began to take the pieces that he needed from each of them.

Then, he set his schedule.

The night was reserved for the Dark vortex technique but the high density of "Breath" forced Noah to reduce the time spent cultivating to prevent too much stress from accumulating on the dantian.

That created a window of time where he could rest, moving the training with the Kesier rune to the afternoon right before he went to the Mausoleum.

The mornings, the moment of the day where he was at his peak, were used for his experiments.

Noah immediately attempted in the creation of a second prototype of the Moon needle, he was using materials of various elements before moving on those of the darkness one.

He would gladly request for those of the darkness element as an additional reward for his services if he managed to create items with materials useless to him.

He didn't think that he could simply steal them, there had to be at least a few knowledgeable cultivators paying attention to him.

The first round of experiments begun, his will was skillfully imbued in the "Breath" inside his mind, the liquid black lake over the sea became a sharp saber without errors.

Yet, he wasn't used to those new materials, coupled with the different elements, his first tests turned to be explosive failures.

BOOOOM!

An explosion resounded inside his reinforced room.

Only a few days had passed since his deal with Lisa and his cultivation was greatly benefitting from the new environment.

However, his experiments weren't going that well.

The conflicting elements was a bigger problem than he had predicted, there seemed to be a fixed failure rate due to that.

'Mh, even if I ultimately find the right composition, I would lose twenty percent of the materials in the forging process. These explosions though aren't affected by that.'

The power released by the destabilization of the internal composition of the items was equal to the full power that he injected in them, it didn't diminish due to the conflicting element.

Then, he was hit by a realization!

'Why can't I simply create exploding items? They would be just as the grenades of my previous world!'

That idea seemed so doable that Noah immediately stopped the experiments on the improved Moon needles to begin with that new item.

'The instability between the materials won't be a disadvantage anymore, I can use it as the actual weapon.'

He called for the soldier outside his room and gave him another list of materials, he was impatient beyond reason.

'The difficulty should be in forging something highly unstable but that can maintain that status until "Breath" is injected in it.'

The "Breath" had to be the trigger for the explosion but he had also to consider the delay needed for a cultivator to throw it.

His experiments resumed as soon as the new corpses arrived, Noah seemed especially captivated by the thought of applying the knowledge of his previous world in this one.

A month passed in which explosions continuously reverberated in the room, their might was so scary that Luke was forced to personally visit him to be sure of his safety.

Yet, when he entered the room, he saw Noah with disheveled hair and a ragged and burned robe.

He held a simple-looking brown sphere that had spikes all over its body.

"What?"

Noah impatiently asked, his days were so full that he barely had any time to eat.

"The monthly battle is tomorrow, I was wondering if you had succeeded in your task."

Noah was surprised by that statement, the cycle of training and forging made him lose track of the passage of time.

He straightened what remained of his robe and handed the sphere to Luke.

"This is called Instability, it's the prototype of the weapon that I will create for your soldiers. Be careful though, I still have to tune the delay before the explosion."

Chapter 298 - 298. Demonstration

Instability was an inscribed item created from two rank 4 magical beasts.

The core of the item was obtained by the skin of a Magmatic whale, it was a really hard material that could contain large quantities of energy.

The skin was processed in the form of a sphere that was then coated with the spikes of a Brown hedgehog.

Both materials came from rank 4 creatures and had different elements: the whale was a fire-type beast while the hedgehog was of the earth element.

The item formed in that way was highly unstable, Noah had to use the Magmatic whale as its core just to force it to maintain its spherical form.

As for the will imbued in the "Breath" inside it, Noah quickly found a suitable one.

The sharpness of the saber that cut the sky wasn't a good match and the propulsion of a plane setting off was the same, Noah had to imagine something different for the Instability.

Luckily for him, his previous world didn't lack images and movies portraying explosions, Noah had just to think at the most powerful one and then increase its might inside his mind.

The result of that mental journey was a supernova destroying every planet in its reach.

"How does it work?"

Luke inspected with great interest the spiked sphere in his hands, he couldn't help but feel the large quantity of "Breath" contained inside it.

"You inject "Breath" inside it and then you throw it. An explosion with the power of the liquid stage of the second rank will occur, creating damages in the area of the impact. The spikes around it will be shot together with the explosion and, since they come from a rank 4 beast, they are potentially able to hurt even red cultivators."

Luke listened to Noah's explanation with wide eyes.

From what he understood, the item in his hands had the power of a spell with the only disadvantage being that it could only be used once.

Luke's eyes began to be filled with eagerness as he stared at that simple-looking sphere.

"As I said already, the delay before the explosion must be tuned before it can be used in battle, you don't want that thing to explode in your hands, right?"

Noah guessed the meaning behind Luke's gaze and promptly warned him, he had been injured more than once as he experimented with the Instability.

"When will it be ready for the monthly battles?"

Luke gave the sphere back to Noah as he asked that question.

The power inside the item was the proof that Noah could really inscribe weapons, his tone immediately became more respectful.

"I should have a few prototypes for the testing phase next month, I need to change its composition to optimize your resources and I want to reduce the variabilities to the minimum to make it more reliable. This one should be the most powerful in its category, do you want to see how it works?"

Noah raised the spiked sphere in the air and smiled toward Luke, he was also quite eager to test its power.

The theory was all there but he had to limit its tests during the past month, it wasn't exactly safe to activate a grenade in a closed environment.

"Sure! Any empty area is fine, right?"

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One hour later, Noah, Luke, Lisa, her other protector, and Logan, stood in an empty mountain right over a slope.

The Odrea nation was filled with mountains and its population was concentrated in the main city, it wasn't hard to find a place that met Noah's requirements.

"This is a highly unstable item, its internal composition has a delicate balance that can be disrupted even by a small quantity of "Breath". In my inscription method, such an item would often be labeled as a failure, yet, I managed to momentarily halt the destabilization to use its explosion as the intended effect."

Noah explained the composition of the sphere to the other cultivators, he wanted to be sure that they understood how dangerous the Instability was.

"There are three conflicting elements inside it: fire for the Magmatic whale, earth for the Brown hedgehog, and darkness because of my "Breath". Its full power will be released only if one of these three elements triggers the explosion, a fourth element would just weaken its effects."

"Breath" had to be injected inside the item to activate it, Noah was basically saying that its full potential could be achieved only if the cultivator using it had one of those three elements.

"My finished product will have a set delay based on the amount of "Breath" that you inject in it but now I will just show its power."

Noah's explanation ended and he looked toward the two protectors.

Luke nodded and pressed his fellow guardian with his gaze.

The latter snorted and created a layer made of blue water in front of the group.

That was a protective spell powered by the power of a rank 3 mage, it was the best form of protection that Lisa could think of.

"Thank you, Grandpa Leo."

Lisa thanked him before turning her gaze toward Noah.

"Hmph, I still believe that it's a waste to use two rank 4 materials to create a disposable item that can't even reach the third rank."

Leo expressed his disagreement with Noah's forging.

"I agree, I will use the next month to replace the skin of the whale, I believe that I can obtain a similar power even with its rank 3 version."

Noah spoke, approving Leo's complaint.

Then, he injected "Breath" in the sphere before throwing it over the defensive layer of water.

He didn't follow the trail of the instability with his eyes but hurriedly crouched behind the layer, he wanted to be sure of his safety.

The sphere wasn't able to fly that far away, Noah had injected too much "Breath", accelerating the internal destabilization.

BOOOM!

An explosion rang in the sky, the Instability exploded right next to the water wall.

Yet, the power of the liquid stage couldn't even make the spell of a rank 3 mage tremble, the cultivators behind it could clearly make out the power behind the blast.

However, the spikes came immediately after.

They were fuming due to the high temperatures released from the blast and they shot in every direction.

Tens of heated spikes crashed on the layer of water created by Leo, stabbing themselves inside it.

Chapter 299 - 299. Second battle

The cultivators on the desolate mountain stared with wide eyes at the spikes stabbed in the layer of water.

"I wanted to replace the spikes with a rank 3 material too but I don't think that something on that level would survive the explosion. Also, it will lower the actual damage that its capable of so I need to stick with it."

Noah explained, standing up from his crouching position and carefully inspecting the damages on Leo's spell.

The spikes didn't manage to break through it but they still did some damage, Noah concluded that they were the most powerful aspect of the Instability.

Leo watched his spell with a complex expression.

Noah's weapon was almost useless against rank 3 cultivators but it seemed to be quite effective against those in the second rank.

The casualties in the monthly battles were always red or blue cultivators, increasing their battle prowess would sharply lower that number.

"You said that you could create something similar with just a single rank 4 material?"

Leo asked.

"Yes, it should be doable. The power of the explosion originates from my "Breath" after all, I just need to find a quantity that can be sustained by a rank 3 material and I will be ready to perfect it."

Noah's answer was honest, he wouldn't lie about that.

The Odra nation was providing him an endless stream of materials for his experiments, his ability in the Elemental forging method was greatly benefitting from that, he didn't want to stop.

"So, what do you think?"

Lisa asked Leo.

He was the cultivator appointed to control Noah's expenditure of precious materials, he had the last word on his experiments.

"If a single rank 4 material can save our soldiers' lives, I don't see why I should prohibit its usage."

Leo recognized the power behind Noah's weapon and ultimately approved his creation.

"Then, it's settled. I will start the new rounds of inscriptions after the battle, I should be able to provide some prototypes for the battle next month."

Noah concluded, moving to return to his room.

"You don't have to fight if you are tired. We can handle the battle ourselves."

Lisa spoke with a bit of hesitation, the value of Noah's life has increased by a lot after the performance of his creation.

However, Noah simply shrugged his shoulders.

"I have still ninety-eight red robes to kill, how would I reach the required number if I don't fight?"

He left after saying that, he seemed completely uncaring toward tomorrow's battle.

"My Lady, strong personalities are usually the most independent ones, I don't think we will be able to make him join our cause."

Luke spoke with a soft voice as he watched Noah's figure disappearing in the distance.

She calmly answered, there was wisdom in her eyes as she replied to her protector.

"There is still time. The Empire isn't stupid, they can't allow for so many red robes to die at the hands of a blue one."

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Lisa was right.

The next day, Noah went to the valley where the war was fought and joined the blue troops like he did the other time.

Yet, he didn't recklessly charge inside the enemy lines at that time, such a surprise effect could be used only once.

He simply limited himself to kill as many blue cultivators as he could, calmly waiting for the red ones to join the battle.

However, he soon discovered that he couldn't find a single cultivator in the solid stage alone.

They were always in pairs, it seemed that the Empire had given strict orders to them.

'Damn, I will be forced to wait till I have another breakthrough if things continue like this.'

Noah moved his attention back on the blue cultivators, if the Empire didn't want to give him an opening, he would create it!

However, he found out that even the blue soldiers had become wary of his presence.

Every time he neared a battle, the soldiers of the Empire would shout warnings to raise their attention.

"The hooded devil is coming here!"

"Watch your backs, he is hiding somewhere!"

"Oh no! The hooded devil took Samir! Regroup around the commander!"

They seemed to have precise battle formations to counter his fighting tactic.

Even if Noah managed to kill some of the isolated blue soldiers, they wouldn't abandon the formation.

Instead, they would group around a pair of red soldiers in a defensive manner, Noah felt that it was impossible to near them while remaining unnoticed.

'I guess I've gained a battle title.'

Noah sighed at that sight and simply wandered around the battlefield, casually taking the lives of the weaker or isolated soldiers.

Then, as the night neared, the black cultivators entered the battlefield and began to fight at its center.

Noah found a safe position where to watch their battle, even though he couldn't understand their actual power, he was still inspired by their show of strength.

The battle then ended, the Odrea nation had clearly won again but their casualties were larger than the previous month.

Noah had managed to tilt the scales in their favor last time but he couldn't affect this battle, he felt that the Empire was too wary of his actions.

'It seems that I can only place my hopes in the forging, I will remain here for quite some time.'

That realization didn't discourage Noah.

The formation around the country blocked most of the probing of the outside forces and the environment inside it was quite beneficial for Noah's cultivation.

'I should use my time here to solidify my foundation in the Elemental forging method. My mental sphere will be the first to have the breakthrough, I will wait for that before doing a scene.'

It was with those thoughts that he went for the Mausoleum, it was nighttime, it was time to train his dantian.

'I have just reached the liquid stage, it will take some time even with this density. Oh well, nothing I can do about it.'

He calmed his mind and sat on top of his "Breath" blessing carefully placed at the end of the second layer of the Mausoleum.

Chapter 300 - 300. Finished product

Noah had created a working prototype, now it was time to perfect it.

The first challenge was to use a weaker core for the Instability, the reserves of the Odra nation were incredible but even those couldn't sustain the mass production of disposable items.

The outer layer of the inscribed item was made from the spikes of a rank 4 creature, the rest of its body remained untouched.

Instead, the core needed the skin of the Magmatic whale which was its most precious part, the rest of the corpse would become almost worthless after it was skinned.

That's why Noah wanted to use its rank 3 version, the proprieties of the skin were the same, only its durability was affected.

Noah managed to recreate the Instability using the rank 3 material after a week of tests, he had ultimately decided to diminish the "Breath" contained in the sphere to solve the issue.

The item forged in that way came out as a weaker version of the first prototype but the depletion of the materials became far more sustainable.

After all, it was obvious for the inventory to have more beasts in the human ranks, there were simply more of them in the wild.

Also, some of them could even be hunted in the nation.

The formation prevented the creation of danger zones but magical beasts in the human ranks still appeared, it was impossible to completely halt their birth.

'Theoretically speaking, the outer layer can be formed from any kind of spiked beast, I would only need a few days to become used to the new composition.'

Noah judged, analyzing the new Instability in his hands.

The issue with rank 4 materials was that they were fewer in number, there was a limit to how many of them the inventory held.

Yet, since Noah simply needed sharp and resistant materials, he could freely replace the spikes of the Brown hedgehog with any other beast with similar properties.

'Now, I need to tune the delay before the explosion. Ideally, it should go from a minimum of one instant to a maximum of twenty seconds.'

The second challenge consisted of setting the internal structure in a way that could make it possible for a cultivator to control the speed of its destabilization.

The "Breath" was the trigger for the explosion but the quantity injected in the item had to decide the speed of the internal destabilization: a small amount of "Breath" for a delayed explosion and a large amount for a quick one.

That wasn't hard to accomplish.

Noah had already more than one month of experience with that type of item and, since its composition had been weakened, he discovered that it had become easier to manipulate its structure.

Only one last challenge remained.

'The main quality of every disposable item is the uniformity between each of its copies. The Instabilities have to work all in the same way and with the same requirements... I can only surpass this hurdle with constant practice.'

Each creation couldn't be exactly the same as the previous one, Noah was only a human, not a machine.

Yet, he was also a cultivator, his mind had long surpassed the limits of a simple human, he could work with far greater precision.

That's why he didn't give up and reduced the differences between each product to the minimum until, during the last week, he managed to produce a batch of fourteen Instabilities that were almost identical.

'Next month, I should be able to start the mass production. Now I just have to test them in a real battle.'

His eyes shone with a cold light at the sight of his finished products.

They were still brown and covered with spikes but their size was smaller than the first prototype, they were just slightly bigger than a man's fist.

'Power in the middle tier of the second stage, their explosion shouldn't be able to injure a prepared red cultivator but they should do some damage if they catch him by surprise. Also, the explosion is not meant to kill but to shoot the spikes.'

He didn't lose track of the passage of time that month, he was aware that the battle was held in the following day.

Luke arrived in the afternoon, he wanted to warn Noah about the incoming battle and was relieved to see his robe being intact as he entered the room.

"I suppose that this month went better than the previous one."

He smiled seeing that Noah was getting ready to rest, which meant that he had not forgotten about the battle.

"I have a finished product, I will personally test it tomorrow. If everything works as intended, I will start to arm your soldiers."

Noah explained.

The forging had been perfected, he had reached the limits of what the closed-door testing could show, only a real battle could expose any eventual flaw in his creation.

"Oh? Will you show us another amazing performance?"

Noah smiled at that question and his aura was enveloped by a chilling battle intent as he answered.

"They won't even know what hit them."

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The next day, the soldiers gathered again in the valley after the main road of the Odra country.

"Beware, the hooded devil is joining the battlefield!"

Logan mocked Noah as he wore his hood and entered the ranks of the blue soldiers.

'Well, I wonder what they will call me after today.'

Noah sighed, he couldn't control the titles that his enemies gave to him but he didn't care much about them either.

A title was simply the proof that his performance had put him on a higher level compared to the other blue soldiers, it meant that his battle prowess deserved some sort of recognition.

The line of blue soldiers was deployed and the battle began.

The exchange of long-distance spells occurred again, the battles in the valley always started with those attacks.

Then, just as the vanguard of both armies was about to clash, Noah jumped ahead and made his way between the enemy lines.

He was barging in the enemy's army alone for the second time!