

Chapter 471 - 471. Harmony

Rank 4 mages had a mental energy that could affect the material world.

Also, they were able to create wills that carried part of their thoughts.

Eccentric Thunder, Divine Demon, Noah had met the wills of those powerful cultivators but he had never been able to create one of his own.

Yet, after being in the fourth rank of the sea of consciousness for a few months, he had managed to do it.

Noah's black figure was formed by the condensed thoughts that carried his hatred toward anyone and anything that tried to control and exploit him.

Rhys, the Royals, Heaven and Earth, the hatred that targeted them was condensed in a form made of mental energy that Noah could use for his needs.

Of course, Noah was still far away from creating a will that could think, he couldn't be compared to Eccentric Thunder or Divine Demon after all.

'This should be enough.'

Noah thought as he pressed a finger on his forehead and slowly detached it in a pulling motion.

Noah's black figure was pulled by his finger and appeared in the material world, it was only the size of a man's fist and it floated in the air but its eyes quickly went on Noah's body.

The figure analyzed Noah's body with a gaze full of hatred, it seemed ready to pounce him but Noah's words stopped its tracks.

"Not me, not yet."

Noah spoke while pointing at the woman chained on the wall.

His will turned its head to the slave and revealed a menacing smile before diving directly into her body.

The slave shivered, she was awakened by the changes happening inside her body but she couldn't understand what was going on.

It was as if an external force was devouring something inside her without causing her any pain, actually, she felt even lighter as time passed.

Noah analyzed the work of his will, part of it was consumed every time a piece of Heaven and Earth's will was destroyed.

Yet, the "Breath" inside her body that was left without a will soon stopped working properly, Noah could see how her tissues began to die after his will swept them.

'Almost ninety percent of the rank 4 body of a cultivator is reconstructed after the Pain Tribulation but my will was only able to clean seventy percent of it. Well, I can still use her to practice.'

Noah thought after his will inside the slave's body was depleted, it didn't manage to complete its task since a bit of Heaven and Earth's will still remained inside the woman but Noah didn't expect much from his first attempt.

His hands quickly went on the woman and the magical beast's corpse next to her, he was going to perform the fusion even if he was sure that it would fail, he couldn't just waste her without gathering any experience.

The remaining skin of the beast liquefied and fused with the wounded one of the slave, there was no rejection that time, the two beings were forged together as if they were beings in the third ranks.

'The laws contained in the body of the beast are enough to stabilize the forged body!'

Noah exclaimed in his mind when he saw that the skin of the woman stopped dying after it was fused with that of the beast.

He was worried that, by removing Heaven and Earth's will from the body of the slave, he would need to create something in its place.

Yet, the laws contained in the body of the beast would simply take its place after the fusion, making the dying tissues work again.

The bits of Heaven and Earth's will inside the beast's body were removed while Noah liquefied it through his refined "Breath", making it the perfect glue that kept the slave's body working.

Noah hurried the fusion as much as he could, he needed to fuse the dying tissues of the woman before they fell apart, something that would unavoidably lead to a failure in the procedure.

Thanks to his training and mastery, Noah succeeded in fusing the dying tissues with the magical beast, even if he had to leave some unstable spots.

However, he then met the parts of her body that his will wasn't able to clean and the self-destruction happened again.

The slave died at that point, there was nothing that Noah could have done to prevent it.

Yet, he now knew that he had found the right method, he had just to master it!

'I need to create a stronger will and I need to harmonize the capabilities of the rank 4 bodies so that the hybrid won't suffer from rejections. Once I've completed these steps, it would be my turn.'

Noah thought as he quickly cleaned the area and went to pick another slave, his gaze showed the eagerness that he felt as he approached the end of his experiments.

Humans with a rank 4 body had special characteristics depending on their body-nourishing method.

Noah had a black membrane around his heart which contained liquid "Breath" that he could inject in his circulatory system, that feature was specific for the Yin body method in which he had trained.

Some of the slaves had similar features, rank 4 body-nourishing methods increased in value if they added those special qualities to a cultivator, it was normal for the slaves to have chosen to train in them if they had the chance.

Yet, they were a hindrance toward the creation of a harmonious hybrid, they were the opposite of the tails and wings of the magical beasts, something that belonged only to the human world.

Noah didn't want to remove those abilities from the slaves before fusing them with a magical beast, he wanted for the hybrids to keep them, he was striving for perfection after all.

The only way to succeed though was through his experiments.

In less than a month, the other nineteen slaves died and Noah was forced to purchase more of them, as well as requesting more magical beasts from the Coral archipelago.

Chapter 472 - 472. Archives

Noah continued his experiments in his underground facility which soon began to be sieged again by a barrage of bolts of lightning launched by the black clouds in the sky.

Elder Ian continuously destroyed them but more clouds gathered in less than half a day, even he started to wonder about what kind of act was angering Heaven so much.

Yet, Noah spoke to him only when he needed more resources, he had bought almost one hundred slaves with a rank 4 body and requested for the same number of rank 4 creatures by then.

That high number of purchases eventually caught the attention of the stronger forces in the area, it didn't take much before the Empire discovered the encampment that the Hive had set.

Cultivators with a rank 4 body usually had a rank 2 dantian, it was normal for the big nations to keep track of those trades, especially when they happened in their area of influence.

Once that information reached one big nation, it quickly spread through the entirety of the continent.

However, none of the big nations acted, they had their own problems and attacking an encampment in a neutral nation wouldn't give them any benefits.

On the other hand, all the nations and cultivators looking for a way out of the control of the three big nations saw the encampment as a sign of hope, some of them even started to make preparations to migrate there.

Of course, the Hive had set other encampments throughout the continent but none of them was as eye-catching as the one in Efrana nation.

The reason behind such visibility was Noah and his purchases.

One day though, the black clouds didn't form again after Elder Ian destroyed them.

Silence reigned in that area inside the mystical fog, it seemed as if everything happening inside the underground structure had suddenly stopped.

Noah was sitting in the experimentation area, some traces of the corrosive black smoke still lingered in the air before they dispersed in the air.

He was alone, the entirety of his facility was empty, no traces of slaves or magical beasts could be found and even the wall in front of him didn't have anyone chained on it.

Normally, once emptied his resources, Noah would request more of them but that didn't happen.

He sat still with his eyes closed, it seemed that his mind was engrossed in something so important that he didn't care about planning his next move.

'How would I describe myself?'

Noah thought.

No one could answer that question for him, no one had never become close to him enough to understand the depths of his personality.

'I'm ambitious but that's a given, I need to focus on the small nuances that define myself.'

His ambition was something that defined his entire self but that also gave birth to all his different traits.

'I'm cold and aloof, arrogant, selfish, cynical, overbearing, and ruthless, this should cover what can be considered as bad traits. Yet, many magical beasts behave in those ways.'

Noah knew himself deeply, the Elemental forging method had forced him to understand what drove his life, it was normal for him to have a clear understanding of himself.

'I'm hardworking to the point of sacrificing myself without minding it too much, I'm focused and determined, and I'm strong.'

Those thoughts concerned what he considered his good sides but Noah didn't stop his brainstorming there.

'I have been a lone cultivator, a prisoner, a criminal, a soldier. I'm a bastard that has managed to rise to power but that it's still unable to exact its vengeance. I'm something that wasn't supposed to exist.'

His analysis even concerned his past, the events that had turned a twenty years old transmigrator with no care for life into a cultivator ready to sacrifice everything to obtain more power.

'My personality definitely resembles a snake-type magical beast but I don't want to settle for something that isn't the best. It seems that I need to do some research.'

Noah opened his eyes after his thoughts reached that point.

He knew magical beasts very well, it was his field of specialization after all.

That's why he knew that his personality wasn't fit for a dragon, those creatures were prideful and shining, they didn't match Noah's uncaring and reserved attitude at all.

Also, almost all the magical beasts would form packs to increase their power, hierarchy was something deeply instilled in their nature.

Noah, instead, was a loner and he was one due to his choices, that aspect of him didn't seem to find a match in the world of the magical beasts.

A message was sent to Elder Ian who then redirected it to the Coral archipelago.

Noah's request that time concerned the archives of the Hive and even specific researches that had to be purchased in other countries.

For the first time after graduating from the academy, Noah felt the need to study magical beasts more deeply.

A pile of books and scrolls were soon sent to Noah's underground structure.

The topics listed on their pages focused on dragon-types and snake-types magical beasts which were Noah's main target, he hoped to find a species that had the characteristics that he was interested in, no matter how rare it was.

The amount of information that the Hive could gain access to was immense, more and more books were sent to Noah's underground facility as he continued to be immersed in his studies.

The world was vast, filled with strange and peculiar creatures, Noah learned names of magical beasts that existed only in legends but which existence had never been confirmed.

Then, he found something that seemed to perfectly fit him.

'Cursed dragon, a wingless species of dragon-type magical beasts of the darkness element. It is said that this particular species of dragons has been punished by the world because its flames surpassed the boundaries set by Heaven and Earth, the latter removed its wings and reduced its reproductive capacity, bringing balance among the strongest kind of magical beasts. Cursed dragons couldn't compete with other species of dragons after having lost the ability to fly and were exiled in the depths of the Granite Abyss. It is unclear if this species is still alive since its specimens have not been seen for many years.'

Chapter 473 - 473. Granite Abyss

Mutations, the passage of time, or even the simple evolution process filled the world with unusual and rare species of magical beasts.

Nothing stood still, magical beasts evolved and changed as time passed, some species were extinct while others seemed to appear out of nowhere.

Noah read that small piece of information about the Cursed dragons and knew that he had found his target but he still needed to learn more about it.

Another request was sent to the archipelago, Noah demanded any sort of information about Cursed dragons and specified that he was ready to purchase it with his Credits if needed.

The Hive was put in a troublesome situation, magical beasts weren't its area of specialization and, even if it was a powerful organization, their archives couldn't compare to those of the three big nations.

Yet, that hindrance didn't stop it from obtaining more information.

The Coral archipelago had sealed peaceful agreements with the three big nations, negotiations could be set quite easily.

Noah had to wait a few weeks and spend another million but, in the end, another series of small books and old scrolls were sent to his underground structure.

'The Utra nation surely is far ahead in these fields compared to the Shandal Empire and the Papral nation.'

Noah thought as he began to study those reports.

Those pieces of information all came from the Utra nation, the Elbas family had pushed the studies of anything related to the "Breath" toward new horizons, the academy was its pride and most important accomplishment.

In that safe environment, the best minds of the entire nation could research and create wonders but, to do so, they needed a solid foundation that covered all the areas concerning the cultivation journey.

That's why the Royals held many forgotten data and unorthodox researches in their archives, they were needed to push the discoveries of the researchers of the academy.

'Cursed dragons were said to have the peculiar ability to divert part of the "Breath" normally used for their growth toward the strengthening of their flames.'

'Millenia ago, a species of dragons had flames so strong that Heaven and Earth were forced to act to restore balance among their kind. Such species was then maimed and its original name was forgotten, we simply call them "Cursed" because of their history.'

'The Granite abyss is a pale brown canyon where many species of dragons live. The food chain is quite strict, the creatures near to its surface are the strongest while its depths hide the weaker ones. Yet, it is said that a particular kind of wingless dragons rules its darkest parts.'

'Cursed dragons have developed an indifferent behavior once lost most of their reproductive capacity, their instincts had probably told them that there was no point in forming packs when their reproduction was almost impossible.'

Noah read all those pieces of information and sorted them inside his mind.

Many reports didn't strictly mention the Cursed dragons but only hinted about them.

Also, many scrolls only contained hypothesis that hadn't been verified, Noah was searching for a species that had disappeared from the surface of the world for a long time after all.

'Dragons with a grudge with Heaven and Earth, they saw their incredible capabilities being suppressed by a stronger power. They don't form packs, they hide from the fauna on the surface. Defeated, exiled, maimed... I've made my mind.'

Noah stored all the scrolls and books in his space-ring and stood up, he couldn't wait anymore, he had been able to contain his eagerness while he

tuned the procedure but, now that everything was ready, he couldn't waste even a second.

He had seen the power held by the hybrids with a rank 4 body, he had even feared that some of them would have been able to break free from their chains at some point.

It must be said that the enslaving chains were a technology limited to the Empire, those inscribed items were specifically created for each slave to increase their binding power, rumors said that one of their core materials was the blood of the cultivator that they restricted, breaking them wasn't an easy task at all.

That discovery made Noah even more determined in pursuing that path, his resolution increased depending on the power that he was chasing.

'Now, where is this Granite Abyss?'

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The Granite Abyss was a danger zone near the mountain chain that divided the areas of influence of the Utra nation and the Shandal Empire.

It was located on the eastern side of the continent but not near the coastline, a thick forest filled its surface and hid the long cavity that was the entrance to the canyon, many inattentive beasts or cultivators would just fall in it if they didn't pay attention to their steps.

Noah stood at the edge of the canyon, the trees behind him hid the magical beasts that didn't dare to near that place while he gazed at the depths of the gorge.

The gap on the ground was long but narrow, the sunlight could only illuminate a few hundred meters of the gorge, leaving its depths in constant darkness.

Roars and occasional lights could be sensed coming from the profundities of the Granite Abyss, Noah's eyes weren't able to see their sources but he could clearly hear them due to his sea of consciousness.

A talisman was held tightly in Noah's hand, its purple light was hidden inside Noah's grasp.

Noah was alone as he made his mind one last time.

'It seems that the Hive is really investing in me, Chasing Demon has personally created this inscribed item when he heard that I had to reach this place.'

Noah thought as he gazed the talisman in his hand before storing it inside his ring.

Due to the peculiar location of the Granite Abyss, the Hive was unable to send an elder to investigate the existence of the Cursed dragons and to capture a specimen at the peak of the lower tier of the fourth rank.

That place was inside the area of influence of the Empire after all, a heroic cultivator from another nation couldn't randomly appear there even if it was only a danger zone.

Yet, Noah couldn't give up on his body-nourishing method just because of politics and decided to make the journey alone.

Chapter 474 - 474. Nests

The journey to arrive at the Granite Abyss had been quite troublesome.

Efrana nation was in the opposite part of the continent, Noah had to use the teleportation matrix inside his mansion to return to the Coral archipelago and

then use another matrix there to reach the closest encampment to his destination.

The Hive had set a total of four encampments throughout the continent, three of them were in the area of influence of the Empire while one of them was in the Papral nation.

It had been impossible for the Hive to pass unnoticed in the area of influence of the Utra nation, the Elbas family was too afraid that the information about the Royal Inheritance would reach enemy forces now that Noah had a foothold so the western coastline and the city of Slyfall had been put under strict surveillance.

Then, Noah had to move on foot alongside the mountain chain that divided the two big nations to lower his chances of being discovered and leave its perimeter only when he neared the forest around the Granite Abyss.

Noah's experiments had exposed the encampment in Efrana nation but the other three were still hidden, the Hive couldn't use its cultivators to escort him due to the risk of revealing itself.

Also, he couldn't even bring his mansion with him, the priority of the Hive was to recruit cultivators and the encampment in Efrana nation would remain in place only for a short time since it had been exposed, the archipelago had sealed peaceful relations with the three big nation but it couldn't steal their resources out in the open, not for too long at least.

Yet, leaving his mansion behind didn't mean that Noah had been left barehanded.

Noah had the flags filled with protective runes with him, Elder Iris had personally filled them with her "Breath" so that he could simply lay them on the ground and they would activate.

Also, there was the talisman created by Chasing Demon.

He had met Chasing Demon again when he returned to the archipelago, he didn't explain the details behind his experiments but he had said that the journey concerned the creation of his technique.

Chasing Demon didn't hesitate to make the necessary preparations after he heard that and he created the talisman while giving him unclear explanations to its functions.

'He only said to break it if I'm about to die, I wonder what it does.'

Noah thought as a pair of wings spread behind his back and he jumped off the cliff, flying toward the depths of the Granite Abyss.

His consciousness enveloped his descending figure, the layers of mental energy had kept him hidden from the magical beasts during his voyage, allowing him to reach his destination without being attacked by those creatures.

Noah intended to do the same as he explored the Abyss but he soon noticed that something was off about that place.

'It's strange, this darkness is unnatural.'

The sunlight could only illuminate the initial part of the canyon but Noah had a rank 4 body and a rank 4 mental sphere, seeing in the darkness wasn't a problem for someone with those centers of power.

Yet, as he descended in the darkness, he realized that his sight was restricted to a distance of a few dozens of meters.

'It's as if any trace of light has been forcibly removed...'

Noah thought as he slowed his descent.

Being unable to rely on his eyes wasn't really a problem, his mind was far better on that field.

However, Noah couldn't help but wonder about the cause behind such a peculiar phenomenon.

His thoughts were soon interrupted though since a series of presences began to near and encircle him.

'It seems that, in this narrow environment, my mental energy isn't enough to hide my presence. Well, maybe they are simply too used to living in the darkness.'

Noah stopped his descent when he felt that those presences continued to near him, his mind could already identify their species and their rank.

'Five rank 4 Abyssal dragons, four in the lower tier and one in the middle tier. I guess it's time to see how strong I am right now.'

A cold aura surrounded Noah as his consciousness fixed itself on the five dragons that had encircled him.

Then, part of his mental energy and "Breath" was depleted and a barrage of ethereal claws appeared in the air around him.

The Ghostly claws spell began to show its real power now that Noah had become a rank 4 mage, more than three hundred claws materialized around him and shot toward the five huge figures.

The dragons couldn't even react, the ethereal claws crossed their scales and reached for their organs in less than a second, their hearts directly exploded under the assault of Noah's spell.

Dying cries filled the gorge as the wings of the Abyssal dragons stopped their motions and their corpses fell lifelessly in the darkness below them.

Five magical beasts in the fourth rank couldn't even make Noah wield his sabers, his power was half-way toward that of a complete heroic cultivator by

then, the spells that used mostly mental energy were his most powerful weapon.

The Granite Abyss seemed to take life when the five corpses fell, dragons came out of their nests to try to seize the falling magical beasts.

Tongues of flames, roars, and battle cries filled the gorge as more and more dragons appeared and began to fight for the five dead creatures.

Noah studied the scene for a short time before he decided to resume his descent.

He didn't care about those dragons, his target was somewhere at the bottom of the canyon if the reports were right and if that species had managed to survive until that day.

Also, there were more than one hundred dragons in the fourth rank engaged in battle, Noah didn't want to go all out to clear the passage, he would rather sneak past them while they were busy fighting.

Heilong's wings flapped behind his back as he crossed the crowd of powerful beasts fighting each other, some dragons would notice and attack him as he descended but Noah simply released another series of ethereal claws to take care of those foolish creatures.

Just like that, Noah crossed the battlefield and flew deeper into the darkness, his mind was already able to find traces of the bottom of the Granite Abyss.

Chapter 475 - 475. White light

Noah encountered more dragons as he dove deeper into the Granite Abyss.

They were mostly rank 4 creatures with a few beasts in the third rank appearing after he reached a certain depth, taking care of them wasn't a problem.

Yet, Noah had a wary expression as he continued to descend, there was something completely off about that environment.

It wasn't something that concerned the species of beasts in there, Abyssal dragons, Void dragons, Black dragons, all those species were described in the reports about the Granite Abyss that he had studied before going there.

What didn't make sense was the light.

It wasn't just the illumination inside the gorge, the darkness that filled that place was unnatural, it was able to affect Noah's eyes which was something extremely strange.

Even the tongues of flames released by the dragons that Noah had met along his way seemed paler, it was as if they missed part of their color.

Noah didn't think too much about that, the world he lived in was strange, the "Breath" had given birth to creatures and environments with capabilities that defied logic, he couldn't find an explanation to everything.

Also, he had a target, he didn't come there to explore the canyon.

Yet, he couldn't help but pay more attention to his surroundings, his consciousness expanded till its limit to give Noah a clear understanding of what was around him.

Eventually, he sensed that the bottom was right below him and he didn't hesitate to land on it.

Heilong's wings folded themselves behind his back but remained out in the open, Noah wanted to be ready for any situation in that strange place.

The Granite Abyss was narrow but long, its sides were filled with cavities of various width that were used by the many dragons as nests, Noah guessed that those cavities had been created by the same dragons that inhabited them.

Yet, the rocky walls at the bottom where almost smooth, no dents or holes could be found on their surface, it was as if something had flattened them.

'Not even fifty meters large, I wonder if this species of dragons really lives in this narrow place.'

Noah thought as he investigated the area.

The Granite Abyss stretched for many kilometers but its width wasn't that great, especially at its bottom.

'I wonder why dragons would choose this place as their nest...'

Noah wondered as he began to walk forward, the path behind him continued only for a few hundred meters according to the cavity on the surface, he would just explore it later if he didn't find anything on the other side.

The bottom of the canyon seemed deserted but the peculiarity of that place was enhanced at its deepest point, Noah couldn't see anything at all, it was as if he had gone completely blind.

He walked for a few hundred meters without encountering any changes, everything around him was silent, the only thing that could be heard was the cries of the dragons in the cavities above him.

Then, a sudden danger was sensed by his consciousness.

Noah was a rank 4 mage, there were a few things that could make him fear for his life in a normal danger zone.

However, his mental sphere wasn't lying to him, Noah knew that he had to avoid what was coming for him at all cost.

The danger closed in at an incredible speed, Noah saw a white light on the road in front of him becoming closer and closer.

The bottom of the canyon lit up, Noah was about to be engulfed by the white light when his figure became ethereal.

A wave of pain filled his body when the light submerged him and filled the area where he had come from.

Noah had used the Ethereal form spell while being a rank 4 mage, there was almost nothing in that rank that could have hurt him through his spell.

'Rank 5!'

Noah immediately understood the power of the creature that had launched the attack, he quickly decided that the Granite Abyss was too dangerous and that he needed to escape.

The wave of light vanished, the attack had stopped and Noah returned material a few seconds after that, he spat a mouthful of blood as black veins covered his skin and Heilong's wings unfolded behind his back, ready to take him out of that place.

Yet, right before he activated his martial art and shot in the air, the cries of the dragons above him resounded in unison.

Noah was forced to stop his actions, the wave of light released by the rank 5 creature still lingered in the environment, giving him the ability to see what was happening above him.

All the dragons in the upper parts of the canyon were peeking from their cavities and looking somewhere at the bottom of the gorge.

Then, tongues of flames shot from them and landed somewhere at a few kilometers in front of Noah.

The light radiated by the flames made Noah able to clearly see the scene, he saw how the attacks of the dragons landed on a huge figure in the distance.

The figure was fifteen meters long and stood still on its four huge legs, the barrage of flames didn't seem able to hurt it but it was enough to keep it locked in its position.

Black scales covered its body which seemed to affect the light radiated by the flames that landed on them, softening their colors as they neared them.

The huge reptilian head of the creature was lowered as it endured the attacks, Noah's eyes went on its back where he noticed the absence of wings.

The rank 5 creature resembled a dragon in every aspect except for the absence of wings.

White flames burned on the surface of the walls next to Noah, he realized in that moment of peace that the wave of light that had engulfed him was, in fact, fire!

Also, Noah could sense that "Breath" of the darkness element fueled those white flames, that was the last detail that he needed to confirm the idea that had formed in his mind when he saw the wingless reptile.

'Rank 5 Cursed dragon!'

Chapter 476 - 476. Prey

Noah seemed petrified as he stared at the mighty beast being suppressed by the barrage of flames of the dragons in the upper part of the Granite Abyss.

The attacks of more than one hundred rank 4 creatures kept the Cursed dragon still, unable to move and react.

Noah focused on the scene while the liquid "Breath" in his circulatory system healed the internal injuries caused by the white flames of the dragon, he began to understand the situation as he analyzed what was happening in front of him.

'The Cursed dragon is malnourished and old, it can't express its full power. Also, it can't fly, the other dragons can simply attack it from time to time until it ultimately dies.'

Noah could finally understand why that many powerful dragons had chosen to set their nests there.

A rank 5 magical beast was a being that contained an unimaginable amount of "Breath", even a dying specimen in that rank would be the most desired meal of any rank 4 creature.

'They are waiting for the moment when it dies, I bet this place will fall into chaos once that happens.'

Noah could clearly imagine the scenes following the rank 5 dragon's death.

The creatures in the upper parts of the canyon would engage in a fierce battle for the chance to eat its corpse, the winner would see its power increase by many levels after all.

The barrage of flames continued for a while and it stopped only when the rank 5 dragon fell on the ground, exhausted by the incessant attacks.

The Cursed dragon seemed to fall in some sort of slumber when it fell, the other dragons stopped releasing flames only when the first snore resounded in the area.

Then, a peculiar thing happened.

The light that still lingered in the area dimmed as if absorbed by something.

It didn't happen immediately, Noah saw his vision grew darker every time the Cursed dragon breathed.

'The records said that Cursed dragons could use part of the absorbed "Breath" to increase the power of their flames, I didn't expect it to be the "Breath" contained in the light.'

Noah thought as his vision turned completely dark.

A place where not even cultivators with a rank 4 body could see and white flames, it didn't take even an instant for Noah to make that connection.

'A creature of the darkness element that uses light to empower its flames, how amazing this species was when it had wings?'

Noah was amazed.

Magical beasts could absorb "Breath" of any element but the ability of the Cursed dragons surpassed anything that he could imagine.

After all, light was everywhere in the world, which meant that the growth of their flames virtually had no limits!

'Dammit, now I desire it even more.'

Noah cursed in his mind as he took a pill from his space-ring and directly ate it.

The injuries suffered while he was in the ethereal form began to heal at a faster speed due to the effects of the pill, Noah could stop using the liquid "Breath" inside the membrane around his heart at that point.

The ability of his body would have been enough to heal his injuries but Noah wanted to be ready to go all out!

He had confirmed the existence of the Cursed dragons and he had been amazed by their powers, now he only needed to find a specimen that matched the rank of his body.

'I should confirm something first.'

Noah thought as Heilong's wings flapped softly and lifted him in the air.

Noah flew slowly, he didn't want to make any unnecessary sound as he reached an area above the rank 5 creature.

Then, he expanded his consciousness and analyzed the ground around it.

'The terrain in a one hundred meters area around it is completely burned, it seems that the dragons above don't allow it to move even. Perfect!'

Noah had to analyze the ground before he could have any hope to find a rank 4 Cursed dragon.

According to the status of the ground around the rank 5 creature, the dragons in the upper parts of the Granite Abyss seemed to suppress it every time it moved.

They had reacted before when the beast attacked Noah and it seemed that they did the same whenever it moved.

No other traces of burned terrain could be found outside that area, meaning that the dragon had been forced to stay in that position for a long time!

The reason why Noah was so happy about that discovery was simple: If the dragon couldn't move, then it couldn't hunt!

Since it couldn't hunt, there was the chance that weaker creatures of its same species were still around at the bottom of the canyon!

Noah didn't waste time after that discovery, he didn't know when the rank 5 dragon would wake up and launch another wave of those threatening white flames, he didn't want to remain in that place for longer than necessary.

He directly flew past the sleeping dragon while keeping his consciousness focused on the ground, he was almost certain that he wouldn't find another creature as powerful as that one but he hoped that there would be at least some weaker than it.

Soon, his eyes lit up when his consciousness sensed that other lifeforms were either sleeping or hiding in some cavities that had begun to appear.

They were weak, only in the second or third rank, Noah couldn't count more than twenty of them.

Yet, they were all big wingless reptiles that seemed smaller versions of the rank 5 creature being kept still a few hundred meters behind.

'There must be at least one! I'd rather not feed a dragon in the third rank until it reaches the heroic ranks.'

Noah continued in his search until, eventually, he found what he was looking for.

Two wingless dragons roared at each other as they came out of their cavities, it seemed that the events with the rank 5 creature had awakened them.

Noah sensed their power, they were both in the fourth rank, one near the peak of the lower tier and one at the beginning of the middle tier, their scales were filled with dents and scars, it seemed that it wasn't the first time that they fought.

'Why would it attack something stronger?'

Noah wondered before he understood the situation: The specimen near the peak of the lower tier was a male while the other was a female, the former was probably attacking it to force itself on the other.

'This place has driven you crazy enough.'

Noah thought as he dove toward the two dragons, hundred ethereal claws materialized around him and shot toward the middle tier specimen, killing it in an instant.

There were less than thirty specimens left of the Cursed dragon species and Noah had just killed one of them!

Then, Noah landed in front of the other rank 4 dragon while storing the one that he had just killed, he couldn't help but wear a cold smile as he looked at his prey.

Chapter 477 - 477. Restoring

Noah focused on the rank 4 dragon in the lower tier, his consciousness enveloped its body and thoroughly analyzed it.

'It's wounded, malnourished, and its mental state isn't exactly optimal. Also, its rank is a bit off from what I need, it seems that I need to adjust it a bit before killing it.'

Noah thought as the Cursed dragon angrily roared toward him, it seemed really disappointed to have lost the chance to satisfy its s.e.x.u.a.l urges.

Yet, Noah's focus was on the insides of his space-ring where the spirit automaton was preparing a series of potions and pills under Noah's orders.

'First, let's fix those scales.'

Noah's eyes shone as the wings behind his back spread and a shockwave was released under his feet, the dragon pounced at him only to discover that he had completely disappeared.

Then, the dragon felt a burning sensation coming from its back, a dense substance was being spread on its body which seemed to affect the state of its scales.

The burning sensation came from the regenerative properties of its body which had been momentarily enhanced by the dense substance, the scales and the scars all over the body of the dragon began to heal at a fast pace, it took only a few minutes for it to be completely fixed.

'Now, malnourishment and rank.'

Noah thought as he floated in the air above the unaware dragon and analyzed its body.

He couldn't use the Cursed dragon for the fusion just yet, he needed to bring it to an optimal state before it could become a material that reached his standards.

Noah dove toward the dragon, a pill was in his hands as he fixed his focus on the mouth of the creature.

The dragon was confused, it was used to live in the darkness but even its sight was affected there, it could only understand Noah's position due to his smell and presence which weren't that reliable.

That allowed Noah to suddenly appear in front of it and throw the pill directly inside its mouth, the pill immediately melted when it touched the saliva of the dragon, releasing many nourishing substances that were absorbed by its body.

The dragon felt a surge of strength starting from its mouth and filling its body, its atrophied muscles began to swell under the effects of Noah's pill, the dragon was slowly returning to its peak form!

Noah knew that it would have been impossible to find a specimen that matched his standards even before he decided to explore the Granite Abyss, he considered himself lucky enough that the Cursed dragon species was still alive after all.

That's why he had sorted the necessary resources for the task before reaching the canyon, the knowledge of the spirit automaton of his ring had been of incredible help when he selected the drugs that would have had the best effects on magical beasts.

Of course, Noah was using rank 4 drugs.

It took a while for the dragon to reach its peak state, Noah had returned in his position above it while the body of the beast absorbed the nutrients.

'After its state is fixed, its mind should resume working properly.'

Noah thought as he waited for the dragon's next move.

The beast had its head lowered, Noah guessed that it was probably bathing in the feeling of returning to its peak after who knows how much time.

Then, it abruptly raised its head and released a gray ray made of flames that aimed for Noah!

Noah was a bit surprised by that sudden action but he soon became relieved.

Heilong's wings swung right before Noah turned ethereal and was enveloped by the gray flames, he didn't feel any pain at that time which allowed him to focus solely on the nature of the attack.

'It seems that its flames aren't at the same level as the rank 5 creature, there isn't enough light for both of them. Yet, it has recovered its mental state at least.'

Noah thought as the attack ended and he returned material, interrupting his falling motion.

The Cursed dragon had immediately attacked Noah as soon as its strength was restored, it seemed that its senses were now able to pinpoint his position.

Yet, when it understood that its attack didn't have any effect, it began to retreat, it had realized that its enemy was too strong.

Noah dove again in its direction as he heaved a sigh of relief, the beast had recovered its survival instincts after its body had been restored.

'One leg should be enough.'

Noah evaluated as the huge leg of a rank 4 dragon at the peak of the middle tier appeared in his hands, he then threw it on the escaping dragon's path before flying higher in the air.

The Cursed dragon stopped its tracks when that appealing food appeared in front of it, it quickly analyzed its surrounding before seizing the leg with its fangs and retreating in its cavity.

Then, Noah waited.

His consciousness never left the insides of the cavity, he saw how the Cursed dragon ate the body parts that came from his stash of dragon's corpses and absorbed the "Breath" that it contained.

As that "Breath" was absorbed, the power of the dragon increased, reaching the peak of the lower tier.

It was at that point that Noah landed on the bottom of the gorge and entered the cavity where his prey was eating.

Part of the leg had yet to be eaten but the dragon couldn't focus on it, its gaze went on the small intruder that was slowly walking toward it.

'Who knows for how long it has lived in this place... Well, its species is done for anyway.'

Noah thought as he analyzed the cavity.

It wasn't even fifteen meters wide, the Cursed dragon could barely fit inside it.

The dragon was about to roar at him but a sudden feeling of weakness enveloped its body as four black lines formed a rectangle around its figure.

The Cursed dragon felt as if it was about to faint due to the effects of Noah's spell but it couldn't even move before a series of sharp claws stabbed specific spots inside its body.

It had just recovered its strength and even reached the peak of the tier but it couldn't do anything against the human that was walking toward it.

It died quickly, Noah had become too used to kill rank 4 beasts with the Ghostly claws spell during his experiments, not even a drop of blood was spilled on the ground as he stored its corpse inside his space-ring.

Chapter 478 - 478. Death

The spirit automaton automatically moved the corpse of the Cursed dragon inside the formation that stored magical beasts.

Meanwhile, Noah exited the cavity and looked above him, toward the surface.

His consciousness reached for the edges of the Granite Abyss and black flames enveloped him after he found a place where to teleport, he was back next to the forest one second later.

'My mental energy will refill shortly but my dantian needs a bit of time, I can dissect the female Cursed dragon in the meantime.'

Noah thought as he randomly chose a spot a bit away from the entrance of the canyon and ordered Heilong to dig a small cave.

The Blood companion didn't waste time, it came out in the open as soon as Noah undressed his upper clothes, his robe had two holes sewed on the back since it had been specifically made for Noah and his wings.

The physical power of a rank 4 creature was incredible, a cave was quickly dug in the terrain and Noah retracted Heilong as he placed eight small flags on the ground to cover the area where his cave was.

The runes on the flags lit up and covered the terrain delimited by them, a shield formed in less than a second, Noah nodded in satisfaction when he saw that he could finally obtain the body-nourishing method that he had worked so hard to create.

'After almost half a year, I've finally reached this point.'

Noah thought as he crossed the shield and entered the cave.

He had experimented on so many humans and magical beasts, consumed an unimaginable amount of mental energy, and constantly used the Divine deduction technique only to reach that point.

Yet, there was one last thing that he had to do.

The body of the middle tier Cursed dragon was laid on the terrain of the cave, Noah quickly wielded a white saber and opened its corpse in two.

He had to understand the most important parts of that almost extinct species of dragon, that part was vital to the success of the procedure.

It didn't take much though for Noah to find what he was looking for.

Dragons were similar between each other, all those species that could emit flames mainly relied on two organs: Their lungs!

Cursed dragons were the same, the female specimen that Noah was analyzing had two shining gray lungs, their color was similar to the flames of the lower tier specimen, they only seemed to be a bit whiter.

'It seems that it has absorbed more light than my prey. Well, I'm ready now.'

Noah thought as he sat on the ground to cultivate and stored the open corpse of the creature, "Breath" was absorbed and refined by his mind as he filled his dantian.

There was no better meaning than his ambition for the "Breath" to utilize in the fusion, Noah only added a tinge of his hatred to improve the removal of Heaven and Earth's will from the beast.

Also, the negative thoughts carrying his hatred were condensed, a black figure identical to Noah soon rose from the sea inside his mental sphere.

Then, Noah continued to cultivate until his dantian was full, his sea of consciousness refilled autonomously during that process.

When everything was ready, Noah completely undressed and took out the corpse of the Cursed dragon at the peak of the lower tier of the fourth rank from his space-ring.

He took a deep breath before laying himself on top of the corpse, he needed to maintain physical contact with the beast during the fusion, his hands would surely lose their grip once the pain started.

Noah pressed a finger on his forehead and took out the will carrying his hatred, it was as big as his chest, he had improved a lot in the creation of wills from his first time.

"It's finally my time, go ahead."

Noah spoke to his will, the latter dove inside his body and began to destroy every trace of Heaven and Earth's will from his tissues, Noah felt himself becoming lighter as the process continued.

'Now the fusion.'

His will was consumed, Noah felt that his tissues were already beginning to die, there was no turning back at that point.

The refined "Breath" inside his sea of consciousness went on the corpse of the dragon below him and began to liquefy its scaled skin, then, Noah controlled it to enter his body.

A wave of pain filled the entirety of his body, Noah felt that external substance forcibly making its way inside his skin, modifying it and fusing with it.

However, Noah was someone who had trained in the Forging of the Seven Hells method and who had survived the Pain Tribulation.

Also, differently from the cultivators on whom he had practiced the procedure, he was a rank 4 mage, his control and endurance had long surpassed what the word human could include.

Noah fought against time as he endured the fusion, more and more of his tissues died as he tried to speed up the process.

The skin finished fusing soon, Heilong's tattoo wasn't affected since it wasn't part of Noah's body to begin with.

The muscles fused shortly after, Noah endured the pain as his figure fell inside the crumbling corpse of the dragon.

The bones fused, Noah felt his skeletal system cracking and reforming every time part of the bones of the magical beast liquefied and mixed with his.

Then, it was time for the internal organs.

The procedure had never been so smooth, Noah was using his body and his "Breath", he felt an innate sense of familiarity when handling materials of the darkness element.

Almost all the organs fused, only his heart and lungs remained untouched by the fusion.

Thunders began to resound outside of his cave but Noah couldn't hear them, his everything was focused on those last steps.

Noah was laying on top of the heart and lungs of the dragons but, soon, the heart melted and entered his body.

The substance carrying his "Breath" reached for his heart and surrounded the black membrane around it.

The membrane retracted due to the effects of the fusion, it mixed with Noah's heart which then was modified by the substance coming from the beast, forming a sturdy and black heart.

Then, the lungs of the dragons melted.

Noah's body touched the terrain as the last organs of the beasts entered his body and modified Noah's last untouched tissues, a pair of gray lungs were formed due to the procedure.

Thunders continued to crack in the area outside his cave, bolts of lightning continuously crashed on the shield created by the eight flags but were unable to break through it.

Noah's body began to stabilize, the will contained inside the body of the beast filled the empty spots left by Noah's will.

Noah felt his mind becoming dark, the harmonization was completed but his body was starting to shut down.

Its functions slowed down until they completely stopped, Noah's heart stopped beating and he stopped breathing.

Chapter 479 - 479. Roar

The black clouds above Noah's cave halted their attack when Noah's body shut down, their ominous aura though continued to remain fixed on the underground area where Noah seemed to have died.

He laid lifelessly on the red ground, the blood of the magical beast had tainted the terrain as its body parts were being fused with Noah, even his body had been covered by that scarlet liquid as he sunk inside the melting corpse of the beast.

Everything remained still, the black clouds in the sky were waiting to see if Noah had really died!

Noah had been extremely methodical as he perfected the procedure.

The rank 4 bodies of the cultivators often had some peculiarities that distinguished them between each other, the same procedure couldn't be applied to everyone.

As Noah continued with his experiments, Noah had become used to harmonizing the various qualities of those bodies, he had planned the way to keep the membrane around his heart even before researching the Cursed dragons.

Yet, there was one aspect that all the hybrids forged with rank 4 magical beasts had: They needed a reboot!

Removing Heaven and Earth's will and filling those empty spots with the one contained in the body of the beasts was an invasive maneuver, it wasn't enough to just fuse them, the body needed to stabilize and shut down before it could live again.

Thump Thump

A heartbeat resounded in the silence of the cave, sparks filled the surface of the black clouds as they prepared themselves to resume their attacks.

The "Breath" around Noah's body began to converge toward his figure, it seemed that some sort of natural force was attracting it.

Thump Thump

Another heartbeat echoed in the underground area, the "Breath" near Noah entered his body, filling it with life and completing the harmonization of its tissues.

Thump Thump

What followed the third heartbeat was a loud roar.

Noah opened his eyes and roared, that cry came from the deepest parts of his mind, it was the instinctive act of a newborn being!

Then, he inhaled, his lungs filled themselves with air but "Breath" was also absorbed during that simple gesture.

Noah could clearly feel how the "Breath" that entered his body was dismantled and reduced to its most basic form, it became a simple form of pure energy that didn't belong to any element!

That energy was then absorbed by his body, nourishing and strengthening it.

'So, that's how they do it. The bodies of the magical beasts naturally destroy the "Breath" to absorb the purer form of energy that such destruction creates. They have never been able to feed on "Breath" of a different element, their nourishment is the pure energy contained in it!'

Noah understood the training process of the magical beasts only when he felt it happening inside his body, the more basic but purer energy that they absorbed was something that even mages in the heroic ranks couldn't see!

'Maybe, only gods have the means to look for this type of energy, I know for sure that I couldn't have done it with my rank 4 sea of consciousness.'

Noah thought as he continued to bathe in the feeling of having his body growing stronger while breathing, it was something so amazing that he couldn't think of anything else.

'It's so strange though. Magical beasts have this innate ability since birth, even those in the first rank can do it, it's as if they are the natural predators of the "Breath".'

Every living being of that world absorbed "Breath" to become stronger.

Noah wasn't sure about how magical plants worked but he knew that cultivators were limited to the "Breath" of their aptitude.

Magical beasts, instead, could reach for the energy inside the "Breath" of any element since their birth, he didn't think that Heaven and Earth would have left such troublesome beings alive if they had the chance.

'Maybe, it's something that has to do with their fairness, they need a natural enemy to be nigh-omniscient entities.'

It was only after Noah reached that point with his thoughts that he heard the lightning storm happening above his cave.

The black clouds in the sky had resumed their assault when Noah released his cry, an immense hatred rose from the bottom of Noah's mind and filled the entirety of his body.

Noah quickly stood up and was about to launch himself outside the protective shield when he abruptly stopped his tracks and closed his eyes.

His focus went on the insides of his mental sphere where dark-red water was spreading inside his crystalline sea.

The dark-red water represented the thoughts and instincts of the Cursed dragon with which he had fused, his normal mental state seemed to be affected as more of his sea was being tainted by the spreading dark-red water.

However, the mind of a beast couldn't compare to that of a human, especially that of a rank 4 mage.

Noah used his mental energy to surround the dark-red water, the thoughts of the beast were soon contained in a small area.

'I need them.'

Noah knew that he wouldn't be able to properly use his new body without the instincts of the dragon, he needed them to become a perfect hybrid.

That's why, instead of destroying that water, he slowly assimilated it inside his sea.

The color of his sea slightly changed as it fused with the thoughts of the beast, shades of red appeared on the azure water which continued to be crystalline even after the two minds became one.

Noah regained complete control even if he knew that some traits of the dragon's behavior now were part of his personality.

He began to feel everything more clearly, his senses sharpened as both body and mind harmonized.

The incredible hatred toward the presence of Heaven and Earth's will was surpassed only by the endless hunger that he felt, it was a sensation so strong that he understood why the hybrids that he had previously created seemed to go insane.

However, his powerful mind was enough to make him maintain his calm.

Noah opened his eyes again, the same cold aura was radiated by them but his ice-blue irises were now cut in half by vertical pupils, his eyes were those of a dragon.

'I'll take care of my hunger later, I need to disperse those clouds first.'

Noah thought as he stepped toward the exit of his cave, a pair of black sabers appeared in his hands as a low growl was emitted by his throat.

As soon as he stepped outside the shield created by the inscribed flags, a lightning bolt fell toward him.

Noah didn't hesitate, he swung his sabers to perform the Second Form of the Ashura and destroy the incoming bolt of lightning.

Yet, even though his execution was perfect and his "Breath" was depleted, no effects followed his gesture, the saber simply slashed the air before the lightning bolt hit it.

Chapter 480 - 480. Flames

The Demonic sword hit by the lightning bolt shattered, the power released by the black clouds was meant to stop peak rank 3 cultivators from reaching the heroic ranks, Noah's inscribed item couldn't resist that attack even if it was at the peak of the third rank.

Yet, the corrosive smoke contained in Noah's weapon was enough to deplete part of the lightning's power, only a small portion of its strength remained when it reached Noah's body.

Noah endured the scorching sensation that filled his right arm as he was flung back in the distance, he managed to stop himself only after he had clashed in a few trees.

'I'm an idiot.'

Noah smiled as his black heart pumped more blood inside his circulatory system, the black membrane of the Yin body had become one with his organ, he could now utilize all the liquid "Breath" inside his body to empower his regenerative capabilities.

'I didn't think that the body of a hybrid would become so strong that martial arts meant for humans would become unusable.'

The reason why he had been unable to use his martial art was simple: He couldn't use the physical strength needed to execute those forms.

It wasn't that he lacked control, his body was simply so strong that he couldn't force it to return to human standards!

During his experiments, Noah had tested that the hybrids were able to use their dantians and to perform spells, he was too engrossed in the procedure to

consider other aspects, there weren't problems with the centers of power after all.

The forms of a martial art were tuned on the physical strength of the humans, magical beasts couldn't use them even if they had a humanoid shape.

Simply speaking, Noah couldn't use the strength of a human even if he wanted to!

Another lightning bolt shot from the sky in his direction, Noah saw the attack coming and closed his eyes to focus on his lungs.

He took a deep breath, the colors in the area around him dimmed as "Breath" converged inside his body.

Then, right before the lightning could reach him, a wave of gray flames clashed with it.

Noah felt his throat heating up as he released flames from his mouth, his instincts knew too well how to launch that attack, he was a hybrid after all!

The lightning bolt slowed its advance, its piercing power was slowly making its way among the gray flames but black flames covered Noah's figure before it could reach him.

Noah reappeared in the air, a pair of large wings were spread on his back, he kicked the air a couple of times before nodding in satisfaction.

The black clouds above him released another lightning bolt but a shockwave spread under Noah's feet before it could reach him, making him disappear from his position in less than an instant.

The Shadow sprint martial art was something that Noah had personally created, he could tune it quite freely and perform it even with his new body.

Of course, his new physical power made the martial art stronger which inevitably increased the consumption of refined "Breath" inside his mind, his liquid "Breath" was simply too weak compared to his new form.

Noah zigzagged in the air, dodging all the lightning bolts coming for him as he closed with the black clouds, his cold reptilian eyes radiated the immense hatred that he felt when looking at them.

Truth to be told, he could have just safely waited for the power contained in the clouds to be depleted inside his cave.

Yet, he wanted to test his new power to quickly increase the familiarity with his new body and he wanted to gather experience in that kind of battle, he was facing some sort of Heaven Tribulation after all, he needed to understand how threatening it was since he would face it again before becoming a rank 4 cultivator.

Also, the instincts of the Cursed dragon species that were now part of him told him to defy that suppression and to destroy anything related to Heaven and Earth, Noah decided to let those feeling envelop him since he had already decided to fight the black clouds.

He had never felt so good while flying, he sensed that every part of his body cheered whenever he controlled Heilong's wings to fly higher.

The cursed species was once again in the sky, wielding the power needed to defy the entities that had once removed its wings!

Noah became closer to the black clouds every time he dodged a lightning bolt, it didn't take much before he was directly below them.

He couldn't use any offensive martial art and he knew only one spell able to target the area of a hundred meters that the clouds covered.

Noah felt the "Breath" inside his dantian being rapidly depleted as his figure began to emit an ominous black smoke, it took only a matter of seconds before his human appearance turned into the one of a fiend.

A long tail stretched from the bottom of his back and two curved horns had appeared on the sides of his forehead, the black armor made of smoke made its appearance for the first time after Noah had become a rank 4 mage.

Noah had always avoided using the complete Demonic form due to its high consumption of "Breath" and mental energy, that feature could only be worsened after Noah utilized it with his sea of consciousness in the heroic ranks.

However, he needed his strongest attack at that moment.

The light in the area around him dimmed as he took a deep breath, a crack appeared on the smoke over his mouth as he made that gesture.

His lungs seemed to become whiter as the light in the environment was absorbed, gray flames soon formed inside them and shot outside when those organs contracted.

Noah released a wave of gray flames which were soon surrounded by the black smoke of the Demonic form.

Those flames were part of him, his spell only empowered them.

The black clouds released another series of lightning bolts, Noah's flames had been unable to fend them off previously but the corrosive smoke around them was now paving a way toward the clouds, destroying everything on their path.

The bolts of lightning were consumed by Noah's spell, his attack soon reached the black clouds where it released its destructive power.

The pillar of gray light pierced the clouds while carrying the corrosive smoke with it, the power accumulated by Heaven and Earth began to disperse as the composition of the clouds was destroyed.

Noah's flames pierced their form while his spell consumed them from the inside, Noah's full power offensive could match the attack of a heroic cultivator!

Noah dispersed the black smoke around him as he saw the black clouds vanishing, he couldn't help but raise his head and roar when he understood that he had won.