

Chapter 521

Noah's body had reached the peak of the middle tier after he ate the woman's dantian, he only needed to accumulate enough nourishments now to reach the upper tier .

Yet, he needed to heal it before he could start accumulating "Breath", his injuries weren't that severe, but they still needed some care .

His mind went through the battle that he had just fought as he flew back to the teleportation matrix, his analysis of that fight left him utterly disappointed in his battle prowess .

'I would be dead if she understood my identity faster . '

Noah thought as he reviewed the woman's abilities .

He knew that he wouldn't have had a chance if the heroic cultivator had been prepared for him .

The woman could have just used her spears and eagle to keep him away, she only had to focus on her defense to win the battle harmlessly .

'I can't rely on the surprise effect every time, my secret art allows me to make up for my lack of spells, but it doesn't give me a win condition, I can only match experienced heroic cultivators with it . '

Noah only had three offensive spells, and two of them were mental attacks, he was extremely lacking in that field .

'Heilong is too weak for my current level, and I need to find a way to create spells with the Elemental forging method . Other than that, I can only wait for my centers of power to improve . '

Heilong was just a magical beast in the lower tier that had been empowered by Noah's meaning, it couldn't match the attacks of heroic cultivators .

'It would be nice if I had a pair of peak rank 4 Blood companions, my mind can surely handle them, and I can further boost their power with the Elemental forging method... I might actually cover part of my weaknesses with them . '

Noah quickly found a solution to his first problem .

'I don't really need Blood companions to fly anymore, I can choose magical beasts for their best traits and empower them so that they can be useful in battles against heroic cultivators . '

His dragon's side didn't like the idea of losing its wings again, but Noah didn't care much, he couldn't be bothered to keep an ability useless to him .

'As for the spells, I don't even know where to start . '

Noah sighed as he thought that before putting the issue in the back of his mind .

He couldn't force his inspiration, using the Divine deduction technique often was the best that he could do now that he had no ideas .

Noah continued to fly for a few days before a familiar figure appeared in his line of sight .

"What the hell happened?"

Elder Hope asked when she saw Noah's pitiful state .

He was extremely skinny, and his skin was still burned in some spots, especially on his right arm .

Also, only a few strands of what once was his robe covered his body, even part of his hair had been burned during the battle .

"The three big nations have sealed pacts to divide the coastlines between themselves, I believe that the southern coast might belong to the Utra nation . "

Noah spoke, uncaring of the elder's gaze on his body, there were problems more immediate than his aspect .

Elder Hope was stunned by his words and quickly contacted Elder Austin and the other elders with a fire aptitude, the lava lake wasn't as safe as they believed .

"Did someone chase you? You said that you had been found . "

Elder Hope asked, her inscribed notebook was still in her hands .

"The cultivator that found me is dead, and no one else was with her . "

Elder Hope's eyes widened when she heard his words .

The Demon Prince of the Hive, who had just reached the fourth rank, was already able to battle against other heroic cultivators!

"Are you sure? Did you really kill her?"

Noah shrugged his shoulders at that question, the taste of the woman's dantian still lingered in his mouth, he didn't need any other proof about her death .

"Did she send a distress call? Did she contact anyone during the fight? Where did you hide her corpse? What about her belongings?"

Elder Hope stormed Noah with questions, but he simply shook his head as he continued to fly toward the forest of White woods .

"Her corpse is well hidden, and her space-ring is there too . I can't be sure about anything else . "

Noah briefly described the environment in the grassland to reassure Elder Hope, she heaved a sigh of relief when she heard the specifics about the woman's death .

"No one is coming for us, so I don't think she managed to warn anyone . Yet, I'm sure that the situation will become tense, even the three big nations can't take the loss of a heroic cultivator lightly . "

Elder Hope concluded as she increased her flying speed, Noah followed her as he continuously ate pieces of magical beasts to recover .

The duo returned in the forest of White woods, where Elder Morgan and Elder Duke were waiting for them .

"We must accelerate the creation of defensive measures, there is a high chance that a battle is looming upon us . Abandoning this formation must be treated as the last resort . "

Elder Hope ordered the two elders who were protecting the teleportation matrix .

She knew the value of the new continent, she didn't want to retreat so quickly .

"I've already contacted Elder Laurel, she is on her way back here . Link the defensive measures with the White woods, I want to take at least a few heroic cultivators down in case we are forced to leave this place . "

Elder Morgan and Elder Duke repeatedly nodded at her words and began to prepare the materials needed for the creation of a defensive formation .

"What about Elder Austin?"

Noah asked when he saw that Elder Hope didn't mention him .

Elder Hope revealed a complicated expression before answering Noah .

"He said that his understanding of the fire element is improving at an incredible speed and that he is nearing a breakthrough . He asks for

reinforcements, but he has specified that the teleportation matrix is the top priority . "

Noah understood the meaning behind her words and nodded before shooting in the air in the direction of the southern coast .

Chapter 522

Elder Hope was specialized in the gathering of information, and she was the perfect person to guard the teleportation matrix .

Elder Duke and Elder Morgan were the experts in the formation's field, and they were the only ones who could deploy defensive measures around the connection with the Coral archipelago .

Elder Laurel was an expert in the magical plants' field, and she was the only one that could give insights on how to use the capabilities of the White woods to the group's advantage .

Elder Austin, Elder Jason, and Elder Pansy were busy cultivating next to the lava lake, and they were unwilling to abandon that area, they requested reinforcements as a consequence of that unwillingness .

The only heroic cultivator available for that role was Noah .

'I understand their eagerness to cultivate there, but the situation isn't that favorable, the safest option would be to temporary retreat next to the teleportation matrix and slowly enlarge the area under our control . '

Noah thought as he flew toward the southern coast, his mouth continuously chewed pieces of magical beasts to nourish his body .

A few weeks had passed since he left the forest of White woods, Noah didn't hurry toward the lava lake, his priority was to heal his body .

His complexion had mostly recovered after he continuously fed himself, only some bruises were left on his right hand, but they would take less than a day to heal .

After that, he could finally begin to accumulate the "Breath" necessary for the breakthrough in the upper tier, Noah knew that his body would improve by a large margin after it stepped inside the last tier of the fourth rank .

He hadn't needed to accumulate "Breath" for the breakthrough in the middle tier, his body had been at the peak of the lower tier for many years after all, it had already gathered enough nourishments .

Noah increased his flying speed after even his right hand healed, he had no reason to hesitate anymore, and he didn't want to risk enraging the leader of his group .

He wore a simple black robe as he reached for the lava lake, the embroidery on the clothes of the Hive could reveal his identity, he would rather avoid that possibility .

Noah flew past the desert inhabited by the rank 5 Giant sandworm and reached the rocky wasteland filled with red rivers, he soon found three familiar figures floating cross-legged above the red lake .

"You took your time . "

Elder Austin spoke as he opened his eyes and straightened his position before turning toward Noah .

Noah simply performed a slight bow before turning his gaze toward the east, he was almost sure that the forces of the Utra nation were exploring the areas in that direction .

"The news has already spread, Elder Cheryl of the Fiery will sect died due to the attack of a dangerous magical plant . The forces of the Council have been able to recover only her space-ring, everything else about her has vanished . "

Elder Austin spoke in a calm tone as he continued to stare him, Noah felt the scorching gaze of the leader of his group fixed on him .

"Did they discover us?"

Noah asked, turning himself to face the leader .

Elder Austin sighed before revealing a smile and retracting the heat radiated by his gaze .

"No, but the situation is still quite messy . The Council doesn't believe that Elder Cheryl has died due to her inattention and puts the blame on the other two big nations . On the other hand, the Elbas family denies any involvement in the matter, and the Empire simply doesn't answer to the Papral nation, it seems that you have ruined the peace that lasted for more than four years . "

Elder Austin spoke while keeping his smile, he seemed quite amused by that turn of events .

"How is the Hive aware of these details?"

Noah asked when he understood that something was off about Elder Austin's statement .

The three big nations had always been quite secretive about the matters concerning the new continent, it didn't make sense for the Hive to suddenly own all those reports .

Elder Austin released a loud laugh when he heard those words before complimenting Noah .

"You indeed deserve the title of Demon Prince! It's not even a year since you became a heroic cultivator, but you are already going around killing old monsters who have lived for centuries! Good, good!"

Elder Austin threw a small shining orb at Noah when he finished speaking, Noah's mental waves scanned the item as soon as he caught it .

Noah couldn't help but wear a surprised expression when he read the contents of the orb, he raised his gaze toward the leader as if asking if what he was reading was true .

The information contained in the orb explained in detail the events that followed the fall of the piece of Immortal Lands from the Council's point of view .

Anything regarding the traces left by divine beings had been omitted, but Noah could clearly understand how the territories of the new continent had been divided through the years with those reports .

"How did we obtain something like this?"

Noah directly asked, the source of that information had to be trustworthy for Elder Austin to be so sure about the contents of the orb .

"Why do you ask? Only the Papral nation can have such detailed information ."

Noah was surprised once again after he heard the leader's words, there was no reason for the Council to hand those reports .

Then, an absurd possibility formed in his mind .

"Don't tell me, they want to cooperate!"

Elder Austin nodded when he saw that Noah had understood the situation and began to explain the matter in detail .

"Yes, well, not exactly cooperation . The political situation on the new continent is tense, one misstep might cause a war, and the defeated would be forced to leave these lands . The Council doesn't know which faction killed

Elder Cheryl, but it doesn't want to be the only big nation to suffer casualties . To put it simply, they want to hire us to attack the other factions . "

Chapter 523

Many nations had tried to rebel against the influence of the three big nations, but the Hive was the only organization that had managed to claim real independence .

The borders of the Coral archipelago were protected by the copying technique retrieved in Divine Demon's separate dimension, and a rank 6 existence ruled those islands, the three big nations couldn't affect that domain without suffering losses .

The Hive could develop away from the clutches of those forces, improving and solidifying its foundation, becoming something similar to a fourth influent power in the old continent .

Yet, the road to becoming the fourth big nation was still long, especially since the Hive was lacking in heroic assets, the only way to improve in that field was to nurture large numbers of human cultivators after all .

Heroic cultivators were so crucial in an organization that the Papral nation was ready to hire the Hive to make the other factions suffer some losses, the Council didn't want to be the only power weakened by the exploration of the new land .

"We can't become the disposable weapon of the Papral nation . "

Noah said after Elder Austin explained the situation .

The Council's offer was extremely appealing, and he was sure that the reports about the new continent weren't the only rewards that the Hive could obtain from it .

However, messing with the big nations wasn't something that could be done easily, the Hive simply didn't have the power to endure possible aftermaths .

"True, but we can't continue exploring this land in secret either . All the coasts will eventually fall under the control of the three big nations, which will force us to return to the archipelago . We need the support of the Papral nation to remain here openly . "

Elder Austin spoke, and Noah couldn't help but think that his words made sense .

The Hive had found only three areas from which it could gain some profits: The forest of White woods, the azure plain, and the wasteland filled with rivers of lava .

The desert with the sandworms and the grassland with the yellowish moss were quite barren and could only offer a stream of magical beasts and plants, and there wasn't much that could be gained from them .

The lake inhabited by the particular species of octopuses and the rivers occupied by the Poisonous frogs could hide something interesting, but exploring those areas was a difficult task, those missions would require a team of fully prepared heroic cultivators to be completed .

The mountainous landscape seemed interesting, but Noah had been forced to interrupt his exploration due to the appearance of Elder Cheryl, it would be impossible to return there after the forces of the Council had been alerted .

Those were the areas that the Hive had been able to explore in that short period and with that little manpower .

The main issue, though, was that the Hive needed time to obtain benefits from those zones .

The azure plain needed to be freed from the magical beasts so that the azure bushes growing there could be plundered and transformed into a stable source of income .

The forest of White woods needed to be deeply studied before those magical plants could be used as a defensive measure, Elder Laurel alone wasn't enough for the task since she could barely affect the strongest trees .

The lava lake had to be transformed into a proper cultivation area for elders with a fire aptitude, and even the source of its heat had to be seized, which was something that only Chasing Demon could be able to do .

All in all, the Hive needed time and the permission to remain in the new continent, things that only one of the three big nations could provide .

"I understand your concerns, but the archipelago can't let go of this chance . Our home is safe, and the possible gains outclass the possible losses, we just have to pay attention . "

Elder Austin spoke again when he saw that Noah was lost in his thoughts .

'Paying attention isn't really enough, but he should have some sort of plan since he looks so confident . '

Noah returned to reality when he heard the leader's words and temporarily suppressed his doubts about that task to question him .

"What do you have in mind?"

Elder Austin revealed a smile when he saw that Noah had agreed to the mission and walked next to him as he pointed toward the eastern coast .

"We will form a small team lead by a rank 5 elder specialized in ambushes . The team will continue exploring the southern coast until it finds traces of the heroic cultivators of the Utra nation, only to take them by surprise and retreat . "

Elder Austin's index traced red lines on the air, a small version of the continent was soon drawn in front of Noah .

"Anonymity is key, the Elbas family must think that the assassins come from one of the other two factions to force it to act against them . We will decide the next move after we understand how the Utra nation answers to our provocation . "

Noah nodded at those words .

The presence of a rank 5 heroic cultivator specialized in ambushes would facilitate the task, especially if their targets were in the fourth rank .

"The threat of assassins running freely on the continent will force the three factions to slow down their exploration, giving us more time to stabilize our gains . I believe the Hive has already prepared an alibi in case its implication is questioned . "

Noah continued the leader's speech, and the task became more doable the more he analyzed it in his mind .

Elder Austin nodded before explaining as he dispersed the flames still lingering in the air .

"Of course . The Hive will openly invade one of the nations in the area of influence of the Empire . We will use that war to train the new human assets and to pretend to be too busy to mind the new continent, it is a win-win situation . "

Noah couldn't help but think about Odrea nation when he heard that the Hive wanted to train human cultivators through a war, but his mind quickly went back on the main topic as it gave voice to a request .

"I want the corpses of the cultivators that we kill . "

In the forest of White woods, on the terrain under the white crowns of the trees.

The light of the teleportation matrix shone, revealing a short figure that wore a simple white robe.

Elder Hope kowtowed when the figure was revealed, her forehead touched the ground as respectful words came out of her mouth.

"Welcome to the new continent, Master!"

Noah and the other cultivators of Hive were all there, they were welcoming the new rank 5 cultivator that had come in their aid from the archipelago.

"Welcome to the Immortal Lands, Julia! With you here, only a handful of us remains in the Coral archipelago!"

Elder Austin exclaimed as he greeted the middle-aged woman that came out of the teleportation matrix.

Noah's gaze was on her, she had long gray hair and gray eyes, her gaze didn't shine like that of most cultivators, something that Noah found quite peculiar.

'It's so strange, it's as if she isn't here at all.'

Noah thought as he inspected Elder Julia.

He could clearly make out her appearance, but his consciousness found it hard to analyze her, his mental waves just went through her as if she was made of air.

Elder Julia shot an expressionless look at Noah before focusing on the kneeling Elder Hope, and warmth appeared on her face when she looked at her disciple.

"Don't worry about the Prince, he did the same with me."

Elder Austin spoke as he flew in the air, Elder Julia followed him, and together they disappeared in the sky over the white crowns of the magical plants.

Only then did the others breathe a sigh of relief, being next to two rank 5 existences had made them quite tense.

"You should be more respectful toward your seniors."

Elder Hope stood up and spoke to Noah, it was clear that she didn't appreciate the probing of her master.

"Sorry, it's a bad habit of mine."

Noah plainly answered as he sat on the ground and began to stare the fifth Kesier rune.

The truth was that Noah didn't really care about seniority or similar, he simply knew that those powerful beings wouldn't punish him due to his privileged position.

Heroic cultivators in the fifth rank had a superior understanding of the laws carried by their element compared to Noah, and he couldn't let go of the possibility to gain some inspiration from them.

'Elder Julia resembles thin air, my consciousness was completely unable to sense her. Amazing.'

Noah thought as he continued to train with the Kesier rune, every existence in the fifth rank was always able to leave a deep impression on him.

'The Hive should only have seven or eight cultivators in the fifth rank in total and, now, two of them are here. The forces of each relevant organization on the old continent are slowly being drawn here, attracted by opportunities that the Mortal Lands can't offer.'

Mental energy was expended to fuel the Divine deduction technique, it was needless to say that Noah's sea of consciousness emptied itself at high speed since he was also staring at the rune at that moment.

'I'm the mistake that keeps on living, the void that exists, but where am I going?'

Noah would often ponder about himself and then about the laws of the darkness element with the help of the Divine deduction technique, he knew that he would need that kind of understanding sooner or later.

'Power is my purpose and goal because power stands above everything. Power to rise in the sky so that I can obtain an even stronger power, an endless journey, just like a saber that uses the hindrances on its path to reach higher levels of sharpness.'

Noah felt as if his understanding increasing slightly, but he didn't notice any improvement in his absorption of "Breath".

'It seems that I need to link the understanding about myself with that of the laws of the darkness element for my dantian to obtain some benefits.'

He felt no disappointment in that realization, he knew that it would take time to advance in that field, even with the help of the technique created by Divine Demon.

Noah was different from the other rank 4 cultivators, he already had his personal cultivation technique, meaning that he wouldn't encounter any hindrance in the path to the fifth rank.

Elder Julia and Elder Austin descended from the sky and landed on the ground a few minutes later, it seemed that their conversation had ended and that they were ready to inform the rest of the group about it.

"Elder Julia will cover some of you with her abilities, allowing you to take by surprise the explorers that you find one the road. Yet, she refuses to attack anyone who isn't on her level."

Elder Austin spoke, he seemed quite disappointed in that outcome.

"Hmph, juniors should fight juniors. They won't reach our level if we solve all their problems."

Elder Julia snorted as she replied to Elder Austin's words, her expression showed how determined she was in her decision.

'That's actually perfect.'

Noah thought when he understood that he could benefit from that situation.

Personally joining the battles not only would allow him to gather dantians more quickly, but it would also give him insights on how to improve his battle prowess.

His experience in battles in the heroic ranks was lacking after all, he knew that he needed to improve his battle style, but he wasn't sure about what he needed to prioritize.

Also, he agreed with Elder Julia's reasoning, there was no point in having your centers of power in the fourth rank if you didn't know how to use them properly.

The team tasked for the ambushes was quickly created, Noah, Hope, Jason, and Pansy would fly along the southern coastline looking for cultivators coming from the Utra nation.

Elder Julia would be with them, hiding their presence and ready to intervene in case a powerful existence appeared.

Laurel, Morgan, and Duke would remain in the forest of White woods and work on building defensive measures while Elder Austin would resume his cultivation above the lava lake.

In less than a day, six figures shot in the air and flew toward the southern coast, ready to perform their roles.

Chapter 525 - 525. Ambush

Four figures flew past the rocky wasteland filled with rivers of lava, they flew east, along the southern coastline.

Vegetation began to appear as the group from the Hive crossed the explored areas, their gazes though didn't linger too much on the environment, their consciousnesses were searching for other targets.

'They can't sense us, Elder Julia's methods are amazing! Well, she is a rank 5 cultivator after all.'

Noah thought as he flew alongside his companions.

Packs of Ape-types magical beasts had appeared on the terrain below them, but they didn't seem to notice the presence of the cultivators in the sky, even a rank 5 specimen that had appeared seemed completely unable to sense them.

Elder Julia was escorting them during that mission and was using her methods to hide their presence, Noah knew that she was somewhere near them, but he couldn't even sense a faint trace of her aura.

They would still be spotted if they entered the field of view of one of those creatures, but their auras were wholly concealed, sneaking on them wouldn't be a problem at all.

Of course, their mission didn't concern the magical beasts, but the heroic cultivators of the Utra nation, ambushing the latter would obviously be a bit harder.

Small trees and magical beasts filled the area after the rocky wasteland, lifeforms began to appear often as the group put some distance from the lava lake.

They flew slowly and took many breaks, Elder Hope was tasked to inspect their surroundings, and her investigative methods took time.

Yet, no one complained, their priority was to maintain their anonymity, they couldn't risk being spotted by an enemy before they had completed their preparations.

Days passed, the group continued to fly along the southern coast without encountering any sign of the forces of the Ultra nation, it seemed that those areas had yet to be explored by humans.

However, after three weeks of careful exploration, Elder Hope finally found a trace.

"Someone is flying at one day of travel ahead of us. I don't hear anyone else, we should have found another lone explorer."

Elder Hope spoke as she removed her hands from her ears, she had used the same investigative method from when they were traveling above the sea around the new continent.

Noah and the others nodded at her words before descending on the terrain, Elder Julia's methods hid their presence but not their bodies, they still needed to hide to ambush the explorer.

The group carefully walked across the land, avoiding any pack of magical beasts that appeared on their path, they didn't want to reveal their position by battling with those creatures.

It took a bit more than a day for the cultivators of the Hive to locate the position of the explorer, but, in the end, they saw the lonely figure flying in the air and analyzing the environment below it.

The cultivator was an old man with a long white beard and no hair, he was at the peak of the gaseous stage of the fourth rank, but it seemed that time had negatively affected his power.

He radiated a soft aura, but his consciousness seemed fragile, his mental waves could analyze the ground below him only for a few seconds before they dispersed.

"He is going to die in a few years anyway, this kill barely counts as an achievement."

Elder Pansy spoke when she saw the state of the cultivator, her evaluation was on point, the explorer would only be able to live for a few years unless he increased his power.

Of course, Noah didn't care about how honorable his actions were.

He completely ignored Elder Pansy's words as his gaze went on the emblem on the robe worn by explorer, he recognized that symbol.

"Shosti family."

Noah murmured when he recognized the origin of the explorer, his companions could clearly hear his words and shot questioning gazes in his direction.

"Large-size noble family of the Utra country."

Noah explained in a few words, and his companions nodded when they understood that they had found a suitable target.

Each one of them quickly prepared for the ambush.

Noah wielded his Demonic swords, Elder Hope took out her peculiar knife, Elder Pansy laid a long iron stick on her shoulders, and Elder Jason tightened his grip on his sword, they were ready to attack.

The heroic cultivator from the Shosti family continued to fly, he was unaware that four assassins were hiding under the trees below him, waiting for him to reach a specific spot in the sky.

Then, all of a sudden, four black lines appeared around him and formed a shining rectangle that encircled him.

He felt weak when the light of the spell hit him, it took a good amount of his concentration to repel the weakening effects that were assaulting his body.

A blue light shone from his body, which seemed to improve his complexion temporarily, he quickly moved to escape the area of the rectangle when a sharp sound reached his ears and destabilized his concentration.

The heroic cultivator from the Shosti family lost the foothold under his left leg when his concentration was broken, he was about to cast another spell when more than thirty fireballs shot from the terrain and crashed on him.

A loud explosion occurred, and a gray cloud formed in the sky, a fuming figure came out of the smoke and loudly coughed as it tried to straighten its position.

The heroic cultivator had survived, but most of his robe had been burned, and even his beard didn't survive the attack, anger could be clearly seen on his expression as he shouted to the ground below.

"Who dares!?"

His question though wasn't answered by words but by the appearance of black flames from behind his back.

The cultivator from the Shosti family sensed that threat and turned to block the attack.

A small blue shield appeared in his right hand, and a harpoon was wielded in his left one, he raised his shield to defend from the assault but his eyes widened when he saw the face of his assassin.

Long black hair, shining icy-blue eyes, and soft edges, he knew that youthful aspect too well to be mistaken.

"Noah Balvan! How?"

Noah's sabers clashed with the shield as he spoke those words, he wasn't able to pierce it without the activation of his secret art, but cracks still appeared on its surface due to the immense strength behind Noah's slash.

The noble was about to speak again, but a sharp pain on his back forced him to suppress his surprise and use all his focus to try to survive that situation, desperation began to fill his mind when he saw that a stick and a sword were aiming for his head.

Chapter 526 - 526. Pointers

The cultivator from the Shosti family released his most powerful defensive spell when he saw those two dangerous attacks, a torrent of water engulfed his figure and stopped the advance of both stick and sword.

Noah didn't wait for the torrent to disperse, his eyes released a mental beam, and a hundred ethereal claws shot toward his enemy, he used his mental attacks to pierce the cultivator's defense.

His Death area spell was still active, and the heroic cultivator was already injured, he didn't manage to keep the torrent of water active when Noah's mental attacks landed on his mind and internal organs.

The water dispersed and fell on the ground below, the cultivator wasn't even able to make it detonate to repel his assailants, leaving him defenseless between the three assassins.

Jason and Patsy attacked once again with their weapons, flames covered the surface of both stick and sword as they reached for the old cultivator's body.

The man from the Shosti family was about to raise his harpoon and shield to block the attacks, but a series of wind blades stabbed his back again, stopping his attempt to defend.

The fiery stick landed on the cultivator's shoulder, releasing a shockwave that cracked the bones in that area and spread flames that burned his skin and muscles.

The sword stabbed his abdomen, burning a large part of his internal organs.

The noble was about to die, life was abandoning his body, it would be just a matter of seconds before the flames burned the entirety of its figure.

Yet, at that point, a black saber slashed his low-waist horizontally, severing his lower body from the rest of his abdomen.

Noah quickly stored the lower body of the cultivator and sent precise orders to the spirit automaton of his space-ring, he relied on his rank 6 inscribed item to preserve the dantian of the noble.

A surprised expression never left the face of the noble, he remained shocked even in his death.

Elder Hope appeared from his hiding spot when the noble died, she wanted to enjoy that victory with her companions.

However, the voice of her master resounded in the area and suppressed her excitement.

"You are lucky that I'm here."

Elder Julia appeared next to the group and raised her hand, where a dense sphere of mental energy was restrained.

The sphere played the images of the noble's battle and showed the faces of Noah, Jason, and Pansy in detail.

"You have been too slow and have given too much space to your enemy, allowing him to send a distress call to his allies. Luckily for the Hive, I've intercepted it."

Elder Julia explained the situation as she shattered the sphere with her grip, the noble's mental energy dispersed in the air, vanishing in the world.

"You three."

Elder Julia pointed at Jason, Pansy, and Hope as she continued to speak.

"You have spent too much time in seclusion, your techniques are good, but you have forgotten how powerful heroic cultivators are. You must use your consciousnesses to restrain your enemies and your strongest attacks to end the battles quickly, don't rely on your martial arts if they aren't as effective as the Prince's."

Elder Julia gave pointers about the battle, her status as a rank 5 cultivator allowed her to see any flaws in the three elders' combat style.

"As for you, Prince."

Elder Julia turned to Noah as the focus of the conversation went on him.

"You must also learn to use your consciousness better, but your biggest flaw is the simplicity of your attacks. There is no point in having a powerful offensive if it can be countered easily. Well, you have been in the fourth rank for less than a year, your battle prowess is already amazing considering that short period. Just remember my words when you are about to create or purchase a technique or spell."

Noah performed a simple bow when he heard those words.

He knew that Elder Julia was right, he had reached a similar conclusion some time ago.

The problem with his consciousness was that his enemies either matched or surpassed its level, making his mental energy unable to affect his enemies without the usage of his mental spells.

As for his offensive, his martial art needed to be simple so that he could perform it while activating the secret art, he could add more complex forms only after his expertise increased.

It was pointless to speak about his spells, he had yet to learn how to create them.

'The fastest way to improve my battle prowess is through Blood companions.'

Noah thought once again about that solution, his mind began to explore the best pair of magical beasts that could help him improve his combat style.

Elder Julia waved her hand after she finished giving pointers, the upper part of the noble's corpse was in Jason's hands, but it was soon cut in countless pieces by the elder's spell.

The pieces fell in the ground below, Jason didn't even go after the falling space-ring when he saw that Elder Julia shook her head toward him.

"Leave it here, we need for the forces of the Utra nation to find the remains of its corpse. Also, his assassination would resemble Elder Cheryl's, which might push the Elbas family to attack the Empire. We should return to the teleportation matrix now and wait for the reaction of the Royals and noble families."

Elder Julia explained once again before disappearing from the group's sight.

Noah directly began to fly toward the western coast, he had decided to use this waiting period to create the Blood companions that he needed, and, to do so, he needed to return to the old continent.

The environment of the new continent was richer of rank 4 magical beasts, but he needed specific creatures, beings that he wasn't sure could be found on the new land.

The rest of the group quickly followed him, their minds were still playing Elder Julia's advice while they chased behind him.

They were so immersed in their thoughts that they didn't notice that a bloodied shining sphere appeared in Noah's hands and was quickly eaten by him.

Chapter 527

Noah knew his weaknesses better than anyone else, he was the only one that knew the full extent of his power after all .

His body was accumulating "Breath" for the breakthrough in the upper tier, that process required an incredible amount of energy, even the noble's dantian wasn't able to start the transformation .

It had to be said though that even his body couldn't absorb all the "Breath" contained in what he ate, part of it was lost when it became nourishment .

Magical beasts were powerful and had a simple cultivation journey, but even they weren't perfect, they would have already conquered the Mortal Lands if they could just absorb all the "Breath" that their prey contained .

Yet, Noah was sure that his breakthrough would arrive soon since he was accumulating an insane amount of nourishments in the new continent .

His dantian and mind were improving quite fast too, his sea of consciousness had always been his most significant advantage, and his dantian greatly benefitted from the Black hole cultivation technique and his understanding of the laws of the darkness element .

The only problem was his battle prowess .

His offense was simply lacking, he had grown so fast that most of the scrolls obtained in Divine Demon's inheritance had already become unusable .

He was able to fight toe to toe with other heroic cultivators only thanks to his body, but that approach had too many flaws, he couldn't rely on it for too long .

Once its power was discovered, the heroic cultivators fighting Noah would do anything in their power to stop him from entering melee combat, leaving him with no methods to defeat his opponents .

However, his martial arts couldn't be improved at the moment, and he had yet to invent a method to create spells, he could only use Blood companions to enhance his battle prowess .

Noah used the teleportation matrix in the forest of White woods to return to the old continent, the formation brought him back directly in the Coral archipelago .

He didn't have much time since the Utra nation would soon discover the death of the noble from the Shosti family and react, he needed to be there to benefit from that situation .

Of course, Noah had already decided which magical beasts he needed .

His expertise in the magical beasts' field continued to grow as he kept exploring new areas, and his dragon's instincts allowed him to evaluate his candidates better .

Noah didn't stop on the archipelago and directly took another teleportation matrix, the Hive had set up many footholds throughout the continent, it was easy to find a formation that could bring him near the danger zones where his targets lived .

He first went near the territories of the Shandal Empire, in a grassland filled with rabbit-type magical beasts .

He didn't have a various offensive, so he needed a sneaky and fast Blood companion that could fill the openings left by his martial art, something that could be deadly if one overlooked it .

What Noah believed was the perfect creature for that role was the Night falcon .

Noah knew that the wings of a Night falcon wouldn't improve his flying speed, falcons rarely surpassed one meter of height in that world .

Yet, he needed it for its speed and aerial maneuverability, its sharp beak and claws were deadly weapons when matched with its incredible speed .

Also, Night falcons could merge with the darkness to increase their speed, Noah was almost sure that they could use the blackness of the Demonic form to their advantage .

Noah found baiting a peak rank 4 Night falcon out quite problematic, he had to gather a high number of rabbit's corpses to make one of them descend from the sky .

At that point, a well-aimed slash, empowered by his secret art and while the falcon was stunned by his ethereal claws, was enough to take it down .

Noah quickly performed the procedure needed for the creation of a Blood companion and left the area, reaching for the teleportation matrix that would take him back to the archipelago .

The will of a peak rank 4 creature weighed on his mind, but he could easily withstand that pressure, only another beast on that level could make his mental sphere feel something .

Of course, Noah wouldn't stop at one Blood companion since he had more room inside his sea of consciousness .

'Considering that I have to remove Heilong, I have more than enough space for another peak rank 4 creature . '

Noah thought as he went for another teleportation matrix as soon as he returned to the archipelago .

His destination at that time was a waterfall in the territories in the area of influence of the Papral nation .

The environment near the waterfall was a danger zone inhabited by a peculiar species of turtle-type magical beasts .

This species was called Dark turtles due to the color of their shells, and the specimens could add defensive layers over their already sturdy shells .

Now that Noah had decided to remove Heilong from his mind, he needed another defensive method that didn't deplete much energy, something reliable that he could use even hundreds of times in battle without becoming exhausted .

Finding a peak rank 4 Dark turtle was easier than baiting out the falcon, but its killing took far more time .

Noah found himself having to deal with a numerous pack of Dark turtles, which had many specimens in the fourth rank .

His mental attacks were deflected by the defensive layers that appeared over the shells of the creatures, forcing him to rely on his secret art to kill those beasts .

In the end, he killed the entire pack and performed the procedure described by the Body-inscription spell with the peak rank 4 specimen after making some room inside his mind .

Heilong's ethereal figure inside his mind shattered and fell on the sea below, the blood that made the tattoo on Noah's skin left his body as he killed his companion .

In a bit more than a week, Noah had successfully killed two peak rank 4 magical beasts of the darkness element and transformed them into his Blood companions, empowering their abilities with the Elemental forging method .

After the tattoo of the Dark turtle began to move on his chest, Noah knew that it was time to return to the new continent .

Chapter 528 - 528. Dark blast

The situation in the new continent had evolved in the short period in which Noah had left.

The forces of the Utra nation noticed the disappearance of the heroic cultivator from the Shosti family and managed to trace his space-ring, confirming the death of the noble.

The news further shook the foundations of the peaceful behavior of the three big nations in the new land, it seemed evident to them that one of those forces had begun attacking the others.

Yet, it must be said that each one of those powers had different ideas on the identity of the assailants.

The Papral nation believed that either the Empire or the Utra nation had struck first, it was aware that the Hive had carried the latest assassination, but it didn't know for sure who killed Elder Cheryl.

The Elbas family believed that the Empire was behind those attacks since it was the only nation that had yet to suffer any loss.

Also, the Empire was the only nation that had the power to fight both the Utra nation and Papral nation for the control of the new continent.

The Shandal Empire, instead, was clueless about the recent events, its heroic cultivators tried to set up meetings with the other two forces, but they were rejected every time, it was clear that it was the main suspect.

All in all, the political situation became tense, it seemed that even the slightest spark could ignite a war for the control of those territories.

There were even internal problems in the ranks of the Papral nation and the Utra nation.

The Council and the Elbas family had been forced to request for the help of the sects and noble families to match the exploration speed of the forces of the Empire.

Their forces were fragmented, they didn't follow the orders of the central powers that strictly, leading to the creation of small alliances that explored different areas on their own.

That behavior could be seen more often after the assassinations, distrust toward the Council and Elbas family was in the minds of the heroic cultivators coming from the sects and noble families.

The power of those two big nations became even more fragmented because of that, forcing the Council and the Royals to create a common enemy that could unite their ranks once again.

The only available enemy in the new continent was, of course, the Shandal Empire.

Meanwhile, the cultivators of the Hive waited for the right moment to act again.

They safely remained in the territories that they had discovered, either cultivating next to the lava lake or improving the defenses around the teleportation matrix.

The three big nations weren't aware of their presence there, not even the Papral nation could guess that they had already created a reasonably stable encampment.

Reports continuously arrived in Elder Austin's hands, the Papral nation respected its side of the deal by keeping the Hive informed about the political and geographical situation of the piece of Immortal Lands.

"They are going to tear each other apart, it should be a nice show."

Elder Jason spoke when Elder Austin informed the rest of the group about the current situation.

They were next to the lava lake, only Elder Duke, Elder Morgan, and Elder Laurel were absent, they had remained in the forest of White woods to handle the defenses around the formation.

"The issue is: Can we benefit from this situation? I know that we might manage to take a share of these lands, but I wonder if we could just inflict more damage to the three big nations."

Elder Hope spoke when she heard Jason's words, her thoughts matched Noah's for what concerned that situation.

Noah was there too.

He had been tasked to patrol the areas around the lava lake as soon as he returned to the new continent, and had gathered with his companions since Elder Austin was going to share the information obtained from the Papral nation.

He had gladly accepted his new task, that role allowed him to hunt freely and to keep accumulating the nourishments needed for the breakthrough, he was sure that it wouldn't take much for his transformation to occur.

'I wonder who will strike first, they should all envy some of the resources belonging to the others by now, four years of peace are too much for them.'

Noah thought as he prepared himself to return in the wild, there was nothing left to do there anyway.

"Prince, wait a moment."

Elder Austin called him before he could leave the lava lake.

Noah turned only to see that Elder Austin was handing him a simple space-ring.

Elder Austin's laugh answered his questioning gaze before he added a few words to explain that gesture.

"The death of the noble has put the Elbas family in a difficult position. Between the Cause growing stronger in the old continent and the distrust on this one, the Royals desperately need allies. The Patriarch has managed to exploit this situation to end the matter about your attempted assassination near Afria nation, he said that you would like it."

Noah's eyes lit up when he heard those words, he quickly took the ring and inspected its insides with his mental energy.

The ring contained only an old scroll, but Noah's eagerness to read its contents increased when he saw it.

Noah descended on the ground at some distance from the lava lake and found a safe spot where he could inspect the scroll, the contents of the ring were emptied as soon as he found it.

'To think that the Elbas family would actually help in solving the issue with my battle prowess.'

Noah thought when he realized that the scroll contained a rank 4 spell of the darkness element!

'Dark blast, it's a spell that acc.u.mulates a large amount of "Breath" and mental energy into a black form before launching it to destroy a wide area. The amount of energies acc.u.mulated will affect the power of the spell, meaning that I can even empty my centers of power to make it as destructive as possible. It should be useful.'

Noah read the spell before taking a look at its diagram, he was going to memorize it immediately!

Chapter 529

Weeks passed on the piece of Immortal Lands, and the political situation between the three big nations only became tenser in that period .

Meanwhile, the cultivators from the Hive kept observing the situation as they continued to solidify their position in the new lands .

The defenses around the teleportation matrix kept accumulating, Elder Laurel even began to use the White woods as a form of protection .

Those that weren't busy with the formation, instead, kept doing their best to increase their power and to accumulate resources in the explored areas .

Elder Hope took care of pillaging the azure plain, a consistent stream of Azure Credits reached the Coral archipelago and improved the financial situation of the Hive .

The lava lake benefitted the cultivators with a fire aptitude, their understanding of the laws carried by the "Breath" of the fire element improved daily .

Elder Julia was nowhere to be seen, she only appeared when Elder Austin shared the information sent by the Papral nation .

Noah continued to hunt magical beasts, he needed to become accustomed to his new Blood companions and spell, but he mostly kept fighting to accumulate the necessary nourishments for the breakthrough .

At some point though, he felt that his hunger had disappeared, only to be replaced by a faint drowsiness .

'Finally . '

Noah thought as he dug a cave in the terrain, his instincts knew exactly what was happening .

The hunger of the magical beasts disappeared only when their form reached the maximum amount of "Breath" that they could store, that feeling would reappear once their body evolved .

Noah sat cross-legged inside his cave as he immersed himself in his drowsiness, he felt a warm sensation enveloping his body as he entered in some sort of trance .

His tissues became denser, and his bones sturdier, even his internal organs were empowered in that process so that they could fuel the higher power that his body was reaching .

The transformation that time took longer, Noah felt that the changes inside his body stabilized only after half a day .

Yet, when he opened his eyes, he was greeted by an incredible confidence in his physical strength, as well as an even stronger hunger .

'The aggression of the magical beasts increases with their rank, it seems that their hunger causes their behavior . '

Noah thought as he stood up and prepared himself to resume his hunt .

He needed to stabilize his condition and tune his martial arts to his new strength, he had yet to discover what his body was capable of now .

It had taken him about five years to reach the upper tier, that achievement was something often seen in the human world, but it was rare than ever in the magical beasts' environment .

Magical beasts rarely had the chance to eat creatures on their same or higher level, and it was almost impossible for them to have access to the dantians of rank 4 cultivators .

They usually took decades to accumulate the nourishments needed to evolve, their main food was the weaker magical beasts in their packs after all .

However, Noah was a cultivator, his battle prowess allowed him to feed on creatures that surpassed the power of his body .

The harsher requirements of his body were easily satisfied with his hunts and assassinations, allowing him to reach the upper tier of the fourth rank in just five years .

'I wonder how much it will take to reach the fifth rank, I will probably have to hibernate at that point . '

Noah smirked when thought about that .

His breakthrough to the middle tier had been quite human while that to the upper tier already matched the evolution process of the magical beasts, his existence was slowly attuning with his hybrid status .

Noah enjoyed the feeling of having all three of his centers of power improve steadily, he hadn't grown this fast since his period in the Royal academy .

The lack of a rank 5 body-nourishing method had stopped his progress in that field for a long time, Noah had to become a heroic cultivator before he could see all his centers of power improve together .

Noah spent the next days becoming used to his new body, it didn't take much to tune his martial arts to his new strength, but he still felt amazed by the new power that he could express .

He was a hybrid in the upper tier now, the last stage of the fourth rank, he could tear magical beasts in the middle tier apart with his bare hands .

It was needless to say how much his power increased when he used the secret art .

That peaceful situation though changed when the next update from the Papral nation arrived .

Six figures gathered in the air above the lava lake, they encircled Elder Austin as they waited for him to share the reports that he had just received .

Astonished gazes were shot in Noah's direction, his companions immediately noticed his breakthrough .

Also, some kind of cold, savage aura surrounded him, his time spent in the wilderness affected his mental state and, consequently, the aura that he radiated .

Yet, before anyone could compliment him or ask questions, Elder Austin spoke, claiming the attention of the group .

"The Council and Elbas family have reached an agreement, they will attack the territories controlled by the Shandal Empire to unite the forces under them and appease their disappointment . Our time has come . "

Elder Austin wore a smile as he spoke, the situation that the Hive was waiting for had finally arrived, that was their chance to attack the areas controlled by the three big nations!

"Who is our target?"

Elder Jason asked, he seemed the most eager of the group .

The answer to his question didn't come from Elder Austin but Noah .

"We will attack the Elbas family, of course . "

Elder Austin nodded as he looked at him, the Demon Prince of the Hive matched all the standards that the most promising cultivator of an organization must have .

"Prepare yourselves, we will attack as soon as the three big nations are locked in a battle . "

Elder Austin spoke before dismissing the group, battle intent shone in his eyes as he disappeared from his position to make his preparations .

Chapter 530

The Utra nation was the only force that the Hive could target .

The Papral nation knew about the existence of a fourth force on the new continent, and the Shandal Empire was about to be attacked by two big countries, targeting the Elbas family was the only option that the cultivators from the Hive had .

Also, the southern coast was connected with the territories under the control of the Royals, the Hive had to weaken them if it wanted to maintain control over the lava lake .

The lava lake was the most crucial territory discovered by the Hive, it was a place that contained traces left by divine beings after all, nothing could match the value of that place .

Two weeks passed after Elder Austin shared the information concerning the attack on the Empire, the Papral nation didn't contact the Hive in that period .

Then, on the morning of the fourteenth day, the inscribed notebooks of the rank 4 cultivators of the Hive notified them that they had to gather in the area where the noble of the Shosti family had died .

Seven heroic cultivators gathered over the land inhabited by species of ape-types magical beasts, with the five rank 4 cultivators standing behind the two elders in the fifth rank .

Only Elder Duke and Elder Morgan were absent, they had to defend the teleportation matrix while the rest of the group tried to benefit from the battle between the three big nations .

"We kill everyone on our path and explore the territories on the other side of the southern coast . They will probably notice that someone else is scheming behind their back, but we won't be the first suspects if we leave no survivors . You will take care of the cultivators in the fourth rank, leave the stronger ones to us . Good luck . "

Elder Austin spoke a few words before disappearing right in front of the other elders .

Elder Julia waved her hand before doing the same .

A peculiar gale swept the five cultivators, the wind seemed to affect their consciousnesses, Elder Julia was covering their presences once again .

A series of nods were exchanged between the five of them before they began to fly east, they moved carefully, wary of any possible threat that could appear in front of them .

The environment below them changed as they advanced along the southern coast, even the temperature diminished as a tall snowy mountain appeared in their fields of view .

The mountain radiated a dangerous aura, it seemed that something powerful ruled that territory .

"It's a magical beast, we can fly past it . "

Noah spoke to his companions through his consciousness .

His instincts clearly told him that the powerful creature inhabiting the snowy mountain was a magical beast, he had felt some sort of primordial fear when he entered its range .

Yet, it was pointless to explore it now since it didn't seem to contain something that belonged to the divine ranks, the group could just investigate it on its way back to the lava lake .

The cultivators from the Hive flew around the mountain, avoiding becoming too close to its sides .

Snow fell on that area, the coldness radiated by those snowflakes seemed able to affect even rank 4 cultivators since Noah's companions shivered from time to time .

Only Noah was unaffected by that environment, his body burned more "Breath" to fend off that coldness, but it didn't suffer any damage .

'I might be able to block some of the weakest attacks of a heroic cultivator with my body alone now, I should have more confidence in my status as a hybrid . '

Noah thought when he saw that his body didn't suffer the slightest damage in that place .

Not even a month had passed since his breakthrough in the upper tier, Noah hadn't been able to test the limits of his new strength in that short amount of time .

He didn't find the chance to engage in a fierce battle against some powerful creature due to the tuning of his martial arts, the learning of his new spell, and his two new Blood companions .

Also, he knew that a battle was coming, he couldn't risk ruining his form due to his testing .

Yet, he knew the power of peak rank 4 magical beasts quite well, and he knew that he was supposedly stronger than them since he was a hybrid, which gave him a general grasp of his limits .

The group crossed the mountain only to see that the snow didn't stop falling even as they reached the eastern coast, a vast white plain expanded in their view and connected the two coastlines with the layer of ice under the azure ground .

It was at that point though that Elder Hope signaled to the group to stop and performed her investigative methods .

Cold winds blew on the faces of the heroic cultivator of the Hive, Noah could vaguely understand their power from the number of tremors that swept their bodies .

"There are two cultivators at some distance from here, one of them seems to be in the liquid stage . "

Elder Hope spoke as she turned to see the reaction of her companions, she saw how some of them showed signs of uncertainty .

"How strong are you compared to other rank 4 cultivators in the liquid stage?"

Noah asked when he saw that no one wanted to formulate a battle plan .

Elder Hope thought for a while before answering with a simple word .

"Average . "

Noah nodded at her answer and turned to look at Elder Jason .

Noah had observed each one of them as they flew past the cold environment, Jason had been the one who had shivered less during the flight .

"Jason and I will take care of the cultivator in the gaseous stage, you three can focus the other . Whoever wins first will help the others . "

Noah's plan was simple, he was going to team up with the strongest of his group and quickly end the life of the weaker enemy .

Elder Hope was in the liquid stage, so she was needed against the stronger one .

"We attack from the sky then . "

Elder Hope spoke after she agreed with Noah, the group flew higher in the sky as they used the clouds above them to hide their bodies .