

Chapter 71 - 71. Abuse

Thomas Balvan had three sons: Adrian, Evan, and Rhys.

His wife was a noblewoman of a small-size noble family who died giving birth to Rhys.

Adrian Balvan was his first son and the second in command of the family.

He was in charge of the military power of the family and was married to Gillian Lansay, from which derived the friendly relationship with her family.

He had only one son, named Keith, who he trained to be his successor as the head of the Balvan army.

Evan Balvan was in charge of the economic aspect of the family.

He managed to marry the daughter of one of the nobles in the Shosti family, her name was Sibyl Shosti, and from her came most of the financial support of the Balvan family.

He had two sons and two daughters named respectively Maxwell, Neil, Valerie, and Lena.

Neil and Lena were about the same age as Noah while the other two had more than twenty years.

Rhys was in charge of the management of the mansion but he rarely bothered to do that, leaving all his duties to his trusted guard Wayne.

He had a son and a daughter, Fabian and Rose, with Rose being the oldest.

Each of Thomas' sons had a group of personal guards always attending them.

Noah had been assigned to Evan Balvan as a guard and he ordered him to attend his younger children.

His days were spent escorting Neil and Lena around and satisfying every request they had.

His position as a guard of the inner circle granted him access to many manuals and body-refinement methods of rank 3, but he already had those.

For rank 4 ones, he needed to accumulate more merits and obtain a more prestigious position.

As for better cultivation techniques, the family would always refuse his request which made Noah understand their intentions.

'They want to slow my growth.'

Even if he was granted access to the inner circle, the family still hadn't recognized him as a true descendant, so they had to suppress him.

They could not allow for an outsider to be stronger than the actual family members.

In their view, Noah was still young, losing a few years of training to ascertain his personality was totally worth it.

However, from Noah's perspective, it was just a way to prolong his torture.

The Patriarch had declared to let him outside of schemes but he could not control the behavior of every family member, especially of the youngest ones.

Every true descendant would feel a sense of superiority toward a bastard, especially since they were used to their noble title since birth.

Neil and Lena were no exception and would always try to get a reaction in their new young guard.

A few months after his enrollment, Noah was already used to their daily abuse.

"Hey cousin, I knew that your mother was good at taking hits, you surely inherited that from her."

Neil said that looking at the bleeding youth in front of him.

"No, she wasn't that good at that. She decided to kill herself because of that remember?"

Lena answered her brother with a bit of sweat running down her forehead.

Noah was shirtless in front of them with a small cut on his chest.

Since he had a rank 3 body, he could be used by the members of the family as a test dummy for their weaker spells.

Almost all the guards in the inner circle had a body that strong but the brother and sister always chose him for practice.

"Then it's just because of his body, right? I can't wait to reach rank 3 too so I might spar with him a little."

A mischievous smile was on the face of the young man when he said those words.

"That is because you always waste time playing around. You have the same age as him but you never train. Do you want shame on our family by letting a bastard be stronger than you?"

The sister answered while she focused again and a small water bullet shot out to hit Noah.

Noah took the hit without moving, the bullet penetrated his skin to be stopped by the muscles below it.

Only a cold expression could be seen on his face.

Lena nodded seeing the blood coming out of his chest and smile happily.

"Mh that will do, my control of the spell is really growing. You can go now cousin, I'm already sick of your face."

They didn't even look at him while he put back his red armor, bowed, and moved toward his lodging.

When he was back in his room, he took away his armor and threw it on the floor.

'All the fucking day doing the punching dummy for those fucking spoiled kids. What control is growing? I could kill that bitch with one thought!'

Neil and Lena would spend every day with him so he could not train or fight.

Adding the constant mocking, Noah irritation grew day after day.

He sat on the floor and took out a folded sheet from the space-ring that pinned on the wall in front of him.

He began to meditate in the rank 1 cultivation technique with his eyes closed.

The "Breath" began to enter his dantian and slowly enlarge it.

Then, strands of "Breath" from his body moved toward his low waist and joined the one gathered from the technique.

Most of it was unable to mix with the one of the technique and dispersed but a small part still blended and entered the dantian.

Since the quality of the "Breath" in his body was the same as the dantian, Noah discovered that he could use it during the absorption process.

However, only the one belonging to the darkness element could enter the dantian, while the other part was dispersed.

Nevertheless, it was still an increase in cultivation speed and Noah didn't hesitate to constantly use this method since the "Breath" in his body was refilled autonomously.

Then, he opened his eyes to look at the sheet on the wall, an intricate rune was written on it.

#### Chapter 72 - 72. Inheritance ground

William had secretly given him the second Kesier rune right before the guard from the inner circle took him away.

The piece of paper he slipped inside his clothes was precisely that.

Noah continued to cultivate while he stared at the rune on the wall.

Immense pressure was applied from inside his sea of consciousness, making the waves continuously crash on the mental sphere, enlarging it.

Since he was cultivating and looking at the rune at the same time, his mental energy was expended at a higher speed and he had to stop staring at the rune after just one hour.

Then, he spent the rest of the night focusing on enlarging the dantian and only when the first light of the day showed up he stopped and laid on the bed.

'Even by sleeping only every two days my training is slower compared to when I was in the outer circle.'

He thought of Lena and her water bullets.

'She has no special talent and yet she managed to become a rank 1 mage at the age of seventeen. The advantage given by all the potions and pills can overcome any gifted individual.'

He thought of his situation.

'I can train harder in the second rune, but that will give me no immediate increase in strength. On the other side, reaching the liquid stage can boost both my martial art and my body.'

That was the solution he found during his months there.

He would focus more on the cultivation technique since he could not obtain anything else.

'However, the more time I spend here the more I will lose my initial advantage. I must find a way to escape soon.'

His escape was something set in stone in his mind.

Now that his mother was dead he really had no more reasons to hesitate.

'I must be ready at any time. The academy surely isn't waiting for me to knock at its doors.'

Time passed but there were no changes to his daily routine.

Every dawn he would wake up and attend the siblings and after a full day enduring their treatment, he would go back to his room to train all night.

His complexion became paler as he began to sleep only every three days to increase the time spent in training.

Cultivating was refreshing but it couldn't replace sleep, he was relying on the vitality of his rank 3 body to keep up with his schedule.

Sometimes Rhys would show up and look at him from the distance.

He had a smug smile every time he looked at his bastard son being used as a training dummy for Lena's spells but the bandage on his left eye made his figure less lofty.

Noah continued to endure and only showed a cold face to anyone while his mental sphere became sturdier and sturdier with the passage of time.

The external experiences could reinforce one's state of mind and in that environment, Noah's mind was becoming extremely tough.

He could not accumulate merits since his duties were merely inside the mansion, so he waited patiently for the right moment to come.

A few weeks after he became fifteen, that moment came.

It was dawn and Noah was about to leave his room when someone knocked at his door.

Noah opened it and found the head of Evan's personal guards standing in front of him.

Since he was his direct superior, Noah bowed and made a respectful greeting.

"Good morning, captain Logan."

Logan nodded at his etiquette and handed him a few papers.

Noah took them and gave a short look at the title on the first page.

'Shosti's inheritance ground.'

Logan explained.

"A month from now, the Shosti family will open the inheritance ground to all the families in its domain. Since you have the required age and strength, you have been selected to be one of the guards accompanying the descendants in this event. All the relevant knowledge about the event is in those sheets and you'll be free of your duties in the period time till its opening to prepare for the task. Remember to bring honor to the Balvan family."

Noah felt that Logan's speech was over so he bowed again to his departure and then closed the door of his room.

His eyes became dark as he sat on the floor to read the contents of the sheets.

'Finally an opportunity!'

'The Shosti's inheritance ground is a separate dimension supposedly left behind by a powerful cultivator. It is said that what made the Shosti family a large-size noble one was the discovery of this place. However, it is required

an age below twenty years to explore it so the Shosti's had no other options but to involve the other noble families in its exploration. They will then offer huge rewards to any family whose descendant manages to obtain something from it in exchange for what they had gained. The dimension will open every twenty years, so each descendant has only one attempt in retrieving something from it.'

Noah had to stop reading to sort the first line of text in his mind.

'Separate dimension? How does it work? Even in my previous world humans didn't achieve in such a task!'

Then his focus moved to the age requirements.

'This powerful cultivator, was he looking for an heir? Also, the Shosti family's move to open it to every other noble is smart, they can accumulate prizes while improving their image to those they govern.'

The sheet then listed the known rewards that had been retrieved since the first opening.

'Mostly cultivation resources of high quality, but there are also magical weapons, high-rank techniques, and powerful spells.'

Noah was astonished.

'How powerful the cultivator that set it up has been to accumulate all this wealth?'

As he kept reading, a smile appeared on his face and his eyes became colder.

'I can do it, this is the perfect chance to escape even if I obtain nothing from it. It is time to use the Earth pill in my space-ring.'



The Earth pill had the ability to help a cultivator breaking through the stages of the dantian.

However, that would still require the user to have reached the peak of that stage.

'Even though I could only train at night, with the help of the "Breath" inside my body I'm already close to the limits of the gaseous stage. Now that I'm finally free to train at will I can definitely reach it one week!'

Noah focused only on the cultivation technique for eight days straight, he didn't sleep at all during this period and only stopped his meditation to eat.

On the night of the eighth day, he finally could not enlarge his dantian anymore.

'Peak of the gaseous stage!'

He then fell asleep on the floor as he had no strength left due to his intensive training.

It took him one year and a half to reach this stage and he had to focus only on the cultivation technique to achieve that feat.

The "Breath" inside his body also helped a lot in the process as it assisted in overcoming the weaknesses of his rank 1 technique.

If he could not have a technique that fitted his element, he would just use more "Breath"!

Sadly, this method only gave him some relevant advantages in the gaseous stage since the "Breath" in his body was in that same form.

He woke up after a whole day of sleep, in the night of the ninth day.

He ate to make sure that he was in top condition and then took a small box from his space-ring.

Inside the box, there was the Earth pill that he took from the Gray Shadows. He held the pill in his hand and put back the box in the ring.

'Time to start.'

He ate the pill and directly gulped it, then he closed his eyes to concentrate on his dantian.

The pill was absorbed by his body and created a sphere around his dantian that began to compress on its own!

Noah aided the process controlling the "Breath" inside it to not oppose the condensation.

The "Breath" though seemed unwilling to contract and tried to resist the pushing force.

However, at that point the sphere pushed with more strength, forcing the "Breath" to amass in the restricting space.

Noah gave up on forcing the "Breath" to stay still and just controlled the dantian to help the sphere advance.

The dantian became smaller and smaller and the "Breath" inside it seemed to grow unstable.

Then another push from the sphere forced the dantian to the size of a small circular nail.

The gaseous "Breath" agitated more but the sphere was unmoving so the walls of the dantian stood still and resisted the internal pressure.

After a few minutes in that state, the "Breath" began to change form and from all that compressed gas, only a drop of black "Breath" came out.

The sphere dissipated and Noah opened his eyes and pointed with his arms on the floor to prevent himself from falling.

His breathing was rough and his face was pale, sweat continued to pour from his orifices.

'That was incredibly tiring!'

The process seemed smooth but a quarter of his mental energy was expended to assist the effects of the Earth pill.

'Am I supposed to force the compression simply with my mental energy if I don't find another pill?'

He calmed himself and resumed a normal pace of breathing while in his mind he was analyzing the process he just went through.

'This is so strange, it's like the "Breath" didn't want to be compressed. Does that mean that Heaven and Earth don't want cultivators to become strong? I've read that cultivation is innately an act of defiance against the will of the world but to think that it could affect even the "Breath" in my dantian.'

He inspected his now small dantian and the new "Breath" inside it.

The black drop seemed to contain a tremendous energy, way more than all the gaseous "Breath" in his body.

'It makes sense. After all, this drop is the result of the condensation of all the "Breath" that was in my dantian which was already three times the one in my body.'

It was still deep in the night and he had no need to sleep so he chose to cultivate.

He used the same absorption method with the help of the "Breath" in his body but the results were disappointing.

He stopped meditating at midday but his dantian had enlarged only by a little bit.

'This is incredibly slow! It would take me three to five years to reach the same size as yesterday and that's only if I can train freely. I really need a better cultivation technique.'

He was eager to escape but suppressed that feeling and unsheathed his sabers.

He practiced his forms like he used to do back in his room in the guests' building and he could not help but spread a cold pressure around him when the memories of his life there emerged.

'Soon dear nobles, I will come for you soon.'

When he felt that his attacks had regained its previous apex, it was already deep in the night.

'I have around twenty days of closed training to get used to my new stage and enlarge my dantian as much as possible. Since going out of the mansion is impossible I only have one method.'

He took out his upper clothes and thought of a name that he didn't use for a long time.

'Assea.'

A big head of a snake came out of his body.

Noah wore his space-ring and put all the items in his room inside it, the empty room was about ten square meters.

'Spar with me, don't touch the walls.'

His blood companion didn't hesitate and charged at him but was met with a black wind slash that almost cut it in half from head to tail.

A sharp pain hit Noah due to the damage to Assea but he didn't care and dodged the assault of the snake that had already healed.

He spent the days before the opening of the inheritance ground fighting with his own companion and cultivating, giving a look at the second rune in the spare time.

Sometimes metal sounds would reverberate from his room but since he was appointed for such an important mission, no one dared to interrupt him.

In the end, his month of isolation ended and the inheritance ground opened.

#### Chapter 74 - 74. Gathering

Three luxurious carriages moved in the direction of Mossgrove city surrounded by thirty or so guards in red armor.

The red emblem of the Balvan family was drawn on the sides of the carriages giving them some traces of solemnity.

Noah was on foot among the guards, his eyes were focused as he studied carefully the composition of the caravan.

'Twenty guards are below twenty years of age, so they will enter the inheritance ground, the other ten are all elites that will stand on the entrance. I feel the same sense of danger I felt with Kevin when I inspect them, they must be on his same level or a bit lower than that. In conclusion, I must avoid those ten.'

His focus shifted to the twenty young guards.

'They should all be rank 1 cultivators around my level, with Assea on my side I'm sure to win against each one of them but together they are a problem. There is also the issue of the appointed captain.'

The appointed captain for the mission in the inheritance ground was a nineteen years old man with short black hair and a big figure.

His name was Trevor and he was the son of one of the elite guards in the inner circle.

His position was quite privileged between the guards due to his father's position and his loyalty to the family was unquestioned so he received a better treatment than Noah.

'I'm sure that I can beat him if he doesn't have a spell, but if he does...'

Then Noah's attention went to the three carriages.

'Neil, Lena, and Fabian occupy each one carriage and will enter the inheritance ground. Neil and Fabian are not strong but I have to be careful about some special items that the family could have given them. As for Lena...'

Lena was nearing the age of nineteen and with all the nurturing from the family and her constant training on Noah, her strength had become something that Noah had to be careful of.

'Summarizing: the ten elite guards are to avoid at all cost; Trevor and Lena are to fight only if necessary; the others are to fight two at the time at most and I have to be careful of the precautions the family gave on their descendants.'

Noah sorted everything in his mind while continuing his march with the other soldiers.

'It would be easier to plan things if the inheritance ground wasn't so unpredictable though.'

The inheritance ground was divided into two stages.

The first one was fixed and it was a barren land full of magical beasts.

Each group had to defeat a pack of beasts and kill their leader to obtain the coordinates of the entrance for the second stage.

Each ingress led to a trial different from the others.

During the many attempts to explore the separate dimension, the types of trials that were recorded were countless.

'Retrieving of an item in a dangerous zone, escaping from a threat under a time limit, solo fights against puppets, tournament against a different family. How can a human set something so massive?'

Noah reviewed the information on the separate dimension and felt amazed.

'My knowledge of the cultivation world is only about fighting styles, for things like formations and similar I'm really ignorant.'

His resolve to escape increased even more.

'That's why I have to reach the academy, my foundation will only stagnate in the Balvan family.'

The caravan continued on its road until they reached the external walls of Mossgrove city.

There a banner with the emblem of the Shosti family was planted on the ground and was fluttering in the air.

As per their tradition, the Shosti family would gather all the medium and small size noble families and then lead them to the entrance.

The Balvan family was one of the first to reach the gathering point with only a couple of other small caravans waiting there.

When they arrived, one of the elite guards gestured to the group to rest in order to wait for everyone to gather.

Noah saw many caravans arrive with colorful emblems on their carriages and had a better understanding of the effective power of a large-size noble family.

He saw the familiar emblems of the Merger and Lansay families, but on the latter, there were no signs of Kevin or Basil.

'I guess they really died back then.'

He slightly shook his head.

He didn't care about Basil, but he remembered the transformation that Kevin went through when he used his full strength.

'He was so strong and yet he died against a couple of mages. If I really want to kill Rhys, how powerful do I have to be?'

He didn't know the precise answer to that question but he knew that it would take a long time to reach that level.

When fifteen or so caravans gathered under the banner, a figure jumped down from the walls of the city and lightly landed on the top of the banner's staff.

Many young guards opened their mouth in surprise seeing how gracefully she managed to alight from a fall of over twenty meters.

"I am Virginia Shosti and it's my duty to accompany you all on the inheritance ground of my family.

As you all are aware, my family's descendants have already attempted in the task in the previous days so they won't greet you. I hope that my presence is enough to represent my family in front of you all."

Virginia Shosti was one of the most beautiful women that Noah had ever seen.

She was around 20 years old, with golden hair and shining green eyes.

Her figure was graceful with small curves tightened by a luxurious white dress.

She lightly bowed in sign of respect to the group below her while all the soldiers and descendants bowed almost to ninety degrees to symbolize submission.



Virginia nodded at that sight and showed a brilliant smile that mesmerized everyone that saw it.

"Since everyone is here, we can move. Follow me, we will arrive at the ingress in half a day."

#### Chapter 75 - 75. Door of light

The group of caravans moved following Virginia's lead.

Initially, the soldiers on foot gave each other some hateful look, but then they were mesmerized by Virginia's figure walking ahead of them.

Noah had his eyes fixed on her too but for a different reason than the others.

'I really can't understand how strong she is.'

No matter how hard he inspected her, he couldn't get a clear perception of her level.

She seemed to be submerged in some invisible membrane that negated the mental energy coming at her.

'Is she too powerful for me to investigate her? Or it is just a method of the Shosti family to protect themselves?'

Of course, he wasn't going all out with his mental energy for fear of being discovered from the other party.

After half a day of travel, they arrived at a desolate yard surrounded by guards in white armors.

The white guards bowed seeing Virginia coming and opened a passage for the caravans to enter the yard.

The caravans arranged themselves in a casual manner and all the descendants jumped off of them joining their respective groups of guards.

Virginia neared the end of the yard and took out a shiny gem from seemingly nowhere.

The youngest guards were surprised but Noah knew what had happened.

'Space-ring!'

However, what came after that shocked even him.

The report had described briefly the event of the opening of the separate dimension but many times words could not express the true beauty of something.

Virginia placed the gem on the ground and immediately a vast amount of runes lighted up on the terrain.

The yard that was more than two hundred meters square became completely covered in dazzling orange runes.

The runes then gathered their brilliance on the gem in the ground that shot out a vertical ray of orange light in the air that stopped at five meters of height.

The ray stood still for a moment before it began to enlarge forming a rectangular orange figure.

A door made of light was created!

Everyone was so stunned by the scene that they almost didn't hear Virginia's next words.

"The gate is open. I will call the name of a family and their group will enter. The order is decided based on the contributions given to the Shosti family in the past twenty years."

Being called as first not only gave the family an advantage in choosing an easier beasts pack to attack, it was also a sign of honor in the social environment of the noble families.

According to the tests made in the previous years, most of the second stages gave additional rewards if the time spent in the separate dimension was lower than a certain average.

"Sawler family, come forth."

Virginia announced and a group of men and women dressed in blue neared the door made of light.

Then their appointed captain moved and touched the light disappearing in an instant.

The guards and descendants behind him followed and they too disappeared leaving no trace of their presence.

'This is basically teleportation!'

Noah had his mouth opened since the rune appeared.

'To think that by using the "Breath" the humans of this world achieved something only theoretic in my previous one.'

"Next, Noorge family."

This time it was a group donning black armors that went forth and entered the inheritance ground.

"Balvan family."

Noah came back to reality after hearing the name of his family.

Trevor took the lead of the group in red and moved toward the door followed by the other guards and descendants.

When they were in front of the door Noah could feel the pressure of all the "Breath" that was used to keep the entrance opened.

'The report said that the consumption of "Breath" was immense but to think that it was actually so much. No wonder in the week the inheritance ground is open we get only one chance to enter, the cost is way too high.'

The gem that Virginia used was a concentrate of "Breath" of great value.

Since the trials inside the separate dimension were hard and dangerous, a group had generally to rest for more than one week after one attempt, but by then the gate would be closed for another twenty years.

That's why the Shosti family chose to use two of those gems every twenty years, one for their family and one for those under their command, in order to increase the chance of obtaining something more valuable than simple wealth.

Spells, magical weapons, and techniques had immense value and helped to increase the foundation of a family, what was money compared to a solid foundation?

Trevor couldn't waste much energy from the gem and trespassed the edge made of light.

The others followed.

When Noah touched the door, he felt his vision spinning and a huge pressure was applied to his sea of consciousness.

With the toughness of his sphere though, he only had to close his eyes for a moment to resist the force before opening them again.

What he saw then was an immense grassland.

His eyes were filled with the green color and the horizon seemed to have no end.

He looked above him and saw that the sky had become orange, with no sun or stars in it.

The concentration of "Breath" was a little higher than on the outside but it was barely noticeable.

'So this is a separate dimension, if not for the sky and the fact that I can't see anything but plains in every direction I would swear that I was still in the outside world.'

He was still looking around him when he felt a gaze fixed on him.

Noah turned to look in that direction and saw Trevor staring at him with wide eyes.

Noah was confused but then he noticed that all the members in his group had still his eyes closed to resist the pressure of the teleportation.

The next to open her eyes was Lena and when she saw the look on Trevor's eyes she understood that Noah was the first to recover and joined the appointed captain in his surprised stare to Noah.

'As if I didn't have enough problems already.'

Noah thought, answering to their gazes with his usual cold one.

#### Chapter 76 - 76. Rabid moles

Noah's mind had reached unimaginable levels of toughness for a fifteen years old man.

His transmigration, his mother's suffering, the bullying, the treatment of the Seven Hells, the pressure of a sleeping rank 5 beast, all these experiences piled up gave him a firm and sturdy mental sphere.

It wasn't surprising that he surpassed everyone there in that field.

The exchange of stares continued for a few seconds before the rest of their group recovered and opened their eyes.

Noah moved his gaze away and went toward the edge of the troop unsheathing his sabers.

He still felt the two different pairs of eyes on his back while he acted like he was inspecting the surrounding area.

Trevor then gave up on analyzing him and spoke with a loud voice.

"We better begin to search for a beast pack. My lords and lady, I advise you to stay in the middle of our formation."

Lena snorted giving another look in Noah's direction and then positioned right behind Trevor, while Fabian and Neil went obediently at the center of the composition.

The formation was set so Trevor chose a random direction and gestured to the others to follow.

Their pace was not fast but neither slow like the one they used while marching, Trevor was directing their speed so that they did not waste too much energy in the exploration.

However, even after a few hours of research, the only thing they saw was the endless grassland.

Trevor gestured to stop and gathered the descendants to speak.

Noah could vaguely guess the topic they were discussing.

'He is asking if there is some hidden information about this place.'

The report said clearly that this dimension was full of magical beasts so it was strange that they hadn't met any pack in all this time.

The only option was that there was some secret intelligence that the family didn't disclose with the guards.

However, even the descendants seemed clueless about that situation.

While they waited, small black figures became visible in the distance.

The group from the Balvan family became a bit excited at their sight but were disappointed when they discovered that the black figures were just the soldiers of the Noorge family running in their direction.

The man in their lead separated from his group and yelled toward Trevor.

"Nothing on your side?"

Trevor just shook his head in response which made the appointed captain from the Noorge family curse a little.

Noah continued to look at his surroundings when he felt a slight tremor in the terrain.

He tried to inspect the area below him but the dimension was made of "Breath" so there was a strong interference when he used his mental energy to investigate.

Noah decided to kneel on the ground to place his ear on it.

The two appointed captains noticed his behavior and their eyes lit up as they began to stare carefully at the terrain.

Noah heard some crawling sounds coming from the ground.

The noise was moving and it was nearing their position.

There was a moment of silence underground when the sound arrived right below him only to start again nearing at a speed much higher than before.

Noah was almost caught by surprise and pressed with his four limbs on the terrain to jump at more than two meters of height.

Meanwhile, a sharp nail had pierced the ground and moved in his direction.

Noah crossed his sabers in front of him and clashed mid-air with the gray fang.

**CLANG!**

The blow pushed Noah more in the air and he made a backflip to land inside his group.

His eyes were still fixed on the blade that came from the ground while in his mind he judged calmly the strength of the attack.

'Rank 3.'

The young guards were about to panic when Tremor's roar made them come back in formation.

"Rabid moles! Set the formation, protect the nobles!"

The Rabid moles were a type of magical beasts that lived underground.

They used their extensible fangs to create underground lairs and to take their enemies by surprise.

As soon as Trevor yelled, more fangs sprouted from the terrain, injuring the soldiers in the Balvan's group.

The soldiers of the Noorge family stared with greedy eyes at the magical beasts that were crawling out of the terrain and moved to join the other group.

The first to kill the pack and their leader would enter the second stage before the other!

Trevor yelled orders relentlessly.

"Fight back, don't let them get you unprepared! Find the leader! We must secure the coordinates!"

The soldiers chosen for this mission were young, but they were still the strongest among those below twenty years.

After the first moment of surprise, they began to attack the beasts in brown fur that came out of the ground.



Noah had already jumped toward the rank 3 that attacked him and numerous clashes happened between him and the beast.

Noah maintained his cold face but internally he was ecstatic.

'Finally a battle! I've had enough of that confinement!'

His battle prowess had increased since the last time he fought.

The effects of the liquid stage were showed clearly in the might of his blows.

Noah attacked relentlessly, having solved the disadvantage of having a small amount of "Breath" available he was fighting at full strength with no reserves.

After more than twenty clashes, Noah sent a black wind slash toward the mole.

The magical beast tried to block the attack with its fangs but they were broken by the blow.

In just a few impacts, the weapons of a rank 3 magical beast could not endure any more the black sabers of the young man.

The slash hit the beast's body and cut deeply into it, yet no blood came out of the wound.

The Rabid mole screamed in pain and was about to charge ahead when Noah appeared at its side and severed its defenseless head.

The body of the beast fell on the ground and then turned into smoke that dissipated in the separate dimension.

'I see, so they are just a creation of this world. The more I learn about this place the more it surprises me.'

Chapter 77 - 77. Venting

The soldiers from the Noorge family arrived and joined the battle.

The soldiers from the Balvan group separated into two troops, one attacking the moles and one defending Fabian and Neil.

Lena was right beside Trevor sending water bullets on the beast in front of her.

The two families didn't fight each other but chose to kill as many magical beasts they could before the leader of the pack was found.

It was momentarily useless to start a battle between themselves and there was some hesitation on both sides in attacking the soldiers of another family.

After all, the people here were the most prominent figures in the younger generation of the families, killing some of them might lead to future frictions between their noble houses.

Therefore, unless it was absolutely necessary like in the case of the appearance of the leader of the beasts, they would rather focus on increasing the kill count to have better chances to obtain the coordinates of the second stage than fight each other.

Noah didn't know the specifics of the method to receive the coordinates but the report said that it depended on the number of beasts killed in the case a pack was divided between two different groups, so he decided to storm the area.

'I believe they already know that I have plenty of battle experience so going all out should not be a problem. The important thing is to keep Assea hidden.'

He surely could have held back but the truth was that he didn't care enough to do so.

In the last year and a half, he had to endure the constant mocking of the siblings while mourning his mother's death, all he wanted to do was to vent and these fake beasts were the perfect targets for his anger.

Noah ran freely in the pack of moles that kept on coming out from the ground, their number had already surpassed the fifty specimens!

However, most of them were simple rank 2 beasts with few of them being rank 3.

Noah ran from rank 3 to rank 3 killing every other weaker beast on his road with a single attack.

The guards protecting the descendants stared with their mouths open at the kid running carelessly among the pack.

Every rank 2 beast that he passed would find its body divided into two pieces and when he finally reached a rank 3, he would unleash a torrent of black wind slashes until its defenses were destroyed.

Even Fabian and Neil stared astonishedly as he killed the third rank 3 magical beast without even sweating.

Lena and Trevor were definitely doing their part having taken down six rank 3 beasts, but they were working together and had the backup of the other soldiers around them.

Lena gave a look to Noah and had to admit that his battle experience far surpassed hers.

'Why does he seems so unsatisfied though?'

Noah was relentless, he never stopped for a second in his search for better opponents.

'I've seen a man fight a dragon! I survived the snores of a rank 5 beast! You are too weak!'

He was venting all his accumulated irritation to the pack looking for a battle that could satisfy him.

It had to be said that his martial art was perfect for dealing with large groups of enemies of low level, his attacks were fast and precise, and the rank 3 beasts had only the strength of the initial stage so they weren't that much of a threat.

The soldiers from the Noorge family were losing their morale.

They could keep up with Trevor and Lena killing speed but with Noah's presence, they were falling behind in the number of beasts vanquished.

At that point though, a crater opened in the terrain and four big moles came out of it.

Their brown fur seemed more shining compared to the others and they were bigger.

The size of the other moles was lower than one and a half meter but the height of the newcomers surpassed two meters.

Everyone on the battlefield understood that the leader was among those four beasts.

The Noorge group didn't hesitate and rushed toward them, followed by Lena and Trevor that signaled to the guards around them to follow.

Noah too saw the new beasts but he was still in the middle of the enemy pack.

He attempted to create a path toward the stronger beasts but was stopped by two rank 3 moles that blocked his path.

No matter how hard he tried to avoid or pass through them, they stood still and hindered his movements.

Meanwhile, the other rank 2 were surrounding him from all the sides.

The strange thing was that their actions seemed intentional and aimed to prevent him to join the fight against their leader.

'Aren't these just creations of this world? How could they keep their instinct to protect their boss and even try to set a formation?'

He deflected the incoming strikes and thought of a plan to escape the encirclement.

The blows were stronger than before and for the first time, he became wary of the rank 2 beasts.

'Did their power increase? How is it possible? Wait, don't tell me...'

He deflected again and pierced two rank 2 moles with his sabers while retreating.

'This is a test, right? So the appearance of the leader must have triggered something in their patterns. It should be a signal that the first stage reached its climax, at least for us.'

He pondered for a long time still immersed in the pack.

'A test should have points to evaluate its participants, so let's say that each beast killed gives to a group some points since it's the only variable here. I can't reach the leader any time soon anyway so I should focus on dealing with the pack, maybe we can get the coordinates through quantity rather than quality.'

There were around forty empowered moles around him of both rank 2 and rank 3.

'Anyhow, losing the early ingress on the second stage doesn't concern me. My objective is to find a way to escape, not to fight for some random inheritance.'

Dealing with the pack gave him also more chances to hide Assea as he was sure that he would not need it if he was careful.

As he decided in his mind his next course of action he didn't waste time anymore.

He took a deep breath and slashed with his sabers at an unimaginable speed.

More than twenty black slashes appeared in the air from his position.

#### Chapter 78 - 78. Leader

The wind slashes slammed in the beasts around him, some rank 2 beasts were killed on the spot or heavily injured while the rank 3 ones were pushed back due to the might of the blows.

A small circular area was emptied around Noah as he jumped toward a rank 2 beast stabbing his saber in its head.

'Let's see the limits of the liquid stage!'

Meanwhile, in the area where the four strong Rabid moles appeared.

The soldiers of both families were facing each other to leave the battle against the powerful foes to the best in their groups.

Five people were engaged in a fierce battle against the beasts, with Trevor and Lena from the Balvan family and the appointed captain and two descendants from the Noorge family.

Trevor was swinging his sword with dexterity, deflecting all the attacks that came at him while Lena was shooting water bullets, injuring the beast she was focused on.

Since there were four moles, the five of them were momentarily focused on two each.

Trevor deflected another blow but was sent back by the fangs of the second mole that they were fighting.

"Dammit!"

He cursed loudly.

"My lady their strength equals a peak rank 3 magical beast, I'm afraid that if we remain this passive we will lose ground to the Noorge family."

Lena retreated with him and nodded.

"The biggest problem is that they all look identical so we don't know who the leader is. I think we should get serious."

As soon as she said that, she clasped her hands together and then separated them while concentrating.

A water whip was created between her hands!

Lena's complexion paled a bit but then a bottle appeared in front of her and she directly drank it.

Her sweating stopped and she immediately struck with the whip.

The mole that she focused on with her previous spell was surprised by the speed of the new one and was struck in the head without having the chance to block the blow.

Trevor didn't let this chance be wasted and thrust his sword in the terrain.

Then, he strongly held on it while stretching his right arm toward the mole with his fingers pointing at it.

The wind blew around his arm and amassed on the fingers before releasing a piercing attack made of compressed air.

The lance of wind struck the already injured mole and pierced through it, leaving a hole as big as two fists on its body.

The mole fell on the ground and turned into smoke, she had successfully killed it!

Tremor smiled while supporting himself on his sword, the attack from before had consumed most of his mental energy but the effects were amazing.

'A pity that it takes so much to prepare, in a one versus one battle it's almost impossible to use.'

He analyzed the spell in his mind but then he heard another thud.

The three from the Noorge family had defeated a mole too.

The two remaining magical beasts were identical in every aspect, it was impossible to understand which one of them was the leader.

"We can only pray that our luck is good."

Lena spoke, sensing the doubts in Trevor's mind.

He nodded in acknowledgment and raised his sword toward the mole in front of them.

He charged ahead, now that the numbers were in their favor the battle became onesided.

Trevor blocked every attack of the fangs while Lena swung her whip with high dexterity relentlessly hitting its body.

The fight continued for a while until the mole could not keep up anymore and lowered its arms devoid of any strength.

Trevor stabbed his sword into its body and Lena wrapped her whip on its head as she pulled with great force.

The mole died on the spot and turned into smoke while it was still standing.

Before they could cheer though, the remaining beast roared with vigor forcing the five people to plug their ears to resist the shock wave.

A golden crown appeared on its head and the injuries that were inflicted on it began to heal.



All the soldiers understood that the leader had appeared.

When the shockwave was over, Trevor and Lena hurriedly jumped toward the beast but they were quite a distance away from it compared to the group from the Noorge family.

The three from the Noorge family didn't waste their advantage and assaulted the pack leader with their most powerful attacks.

Two big fireballs shot out from the two descendants while the appointed captain had his hands on the ground controlling four snakes made of terrain to restrict and wound the beast.

The leader could not evade the fireballs as its lower body was bitten by the captain's snakes.

The spells collided with its body and a loud explosion occurred.

When the dust settled, what remained of the mole was just its lower body still blocked in the snake's embrace.

Then, the remains of the body turned into smoke which signaled that the leader was dead.

The three from the Noorge family cheered loudly and turned toward Trevor and Lena.

The two descendants were two sisters both of the fire element and looked at Lena with a bit of pity.

"This time we were lucky, your brother and cousin are simply too young to affect this fight. It was a nice competition though."

They bowed as a form of respect to Lena.

Lena sighed and bowed silently to accept their courteous greeting.

At that point, the battlefield illuminated and many brilliant runes shot out from the terrain.

The runes exploded mid-air and released a bright powder that entered the bodies of the men and women in the area.

However, only the people from the Balvan family underwent this process!

The two sisters were surprised and complained loudly.

"How is this possible, we killed the leader! How many more beasts could they have killed to make up for that!"

As if remembering something, they turned their heads to look in the direction where the pack was.

They saw a young man in red armor sweating profusely and breathing roughly.

There were no beasts around him and only a few strands of smoke were recognizable among the bright powder that surrounded him.

#### Chapter 79 - 79. Test

Noah's liquid "Breath" in his dantian was below half of its maximum capacity.

Even though most of the beasts around him were rank 2, he still had to fight at full strength due to the encirclement.

From the start of the battle till that moment, he had released more than two hundred attacks fueled with his dantian and yet he still had some spare energy.

His body was recovering at fast speed and his condition was stabilizing while the powder entered his body.

'My limit right now is around three hundred and fifty full power attacks and I also have more than one hundred weaker ones due to the gaseous "Breath" in my body. Good, really good.'

He could have spent less liquid "Breath" if he used Assea but he was firm in hiding it.

'The higher the density of the "Breath" the stronger my attacks will be, but they will also consume more of it. However, these are just beasts. Against another cultivator, my only real advantage is Assea since it's a spell useful in any situation.'

Like he was in the liquid stage, so were many others.

Like he had a rank 3 martial art and a rank 3 body, so had many others.

His battle experience was something remarkable, as was his strong mind, but the first could be acquired easily and the other was useless without spells.

'I need abilities specific to my aptitude and talents and not anything that is simply one rank higher than the other.'

For example, Lena had the water bullet that was a versatile spell with a low cost of "Breath" added to her water whip that paired perfectly with her dexterity with that weapon.

Her foundation was stable and she might even have some other spells that Noah was unaware of.

Of course, that knowledge came from his days spent as a training dummy, during the previous battle he was too focused on the pack and didn't see the fight against the four peak rank 3 moles.

'I guess that if I had a darkness-type beast as a blood companion things would be different.'

He knew that the spell he had was very powerful, yet he still couldn't use its full potential.

'Dammit, everything always points to the academy.'

The light faded and the powder was completely absorbed by the Balvan group.

Noah felt a series of new information in his mind that described a precise route toward a certain spot in the grassland.

He looked at the others in his group and from their whispers and gestures he understood that they had received the same type of knowledge.

'Even transmitting pieces of information directly in someone's mind is possible. Why do I even bother being surprised anymore?'

He shook his head while he sat on the ground to meditate to recover from the battle.

Trevor nodded to his behavior and gestured to everyone to do the same.

As the appointed captain, failing to obtain the entrance to the second stage against the Noorge family would have had a negative impact on his position so he began to view Noah under a different light.

He and Lena had done their parts going even with the Noorge family but it was still Noah who tilted the scales of the battle.

Lena looked at him for a bit while she sat and took out some medicines from her space-ring.

There was some wariness in her eyes and she decided in her mind to ask for advice to her parents on how to handle the situation when she went back to the mansion.

After all, she had already made sure that Noah hated her but only now she realized that he could actually become someone important in the family.

The group from the Noorge family looked dejected at the resting soldiers and decided to resume their march at a slow pace searching for another pack of beasts.

Lena was the first to recover thanks to all the potions that the family gave her and went to check the condition of the other guards.

Apart from a few injured ones, everyone could still fight at full strength.

Fabian and Neil had done almost nothing during the battle.

They both had a rank 2 body and since a big part of the pack was handled by Noah they had barely made any effort.

After half a day of rest, Trevor stood up and commanded everyone to move.

Noah lazily stood up, his dantian had refilled by a quarter of his full capacity so he was more than ready to march.

There was no need for directions or gestures as everyone knew the route they had to move to.

Hours passed and all they could see was the endless green plain which made them feel like they hadn't moved at all.

It had to pass another half a day before they reached the spot signaled in their mind.

It was still in the grassland but anytime they looked at the terrain forming the entrance, the ground would light up and color itself orange.

Trevor looked at the ground for a bit before facing the soldiers behind him and speaking.

"Here is the entrance for the second stage, we will all jump inside at the same time. Remember that this stage has no fixed pattern so you have to be ready for anything. Bring honor to the Balvan family!"

"For the Balvan family"

The soldier echoed Trevor's battle cry and positioned themselves around the perimeter of the ingress area.

Trevor had the descendants on both sides while Noah was in his opposite position.

He raised his hand to make everyone concentrate and then he lowered it with a fast gesture.

The soldiers jumped, while Trevor made sure that everyone went inside.

Noah had no choice but to jump because Lena's gaze was fixed on him.

He felt again the pressure of the teleportation and when he opened his eyes he found himself alone in a dark spacious area.

After a few seconds, a metallic male voice sounded in the place.

"Inheritance ground second stage: solo battle prowess test."

Chapter 80 - 80. Endless waves

'Solo battle?'

Noah carefully inspected his surroundings with his mental energy.

Every time it hit the walls of the room, his perception would flutter, disturbed by the "Breath" which they were made of.

He seemed to be in some sort of underground closed area fifty square meters large and he sensed no living forms around him.

'It seems that I'm really alone here.'

He coldly watched in front of him as some runes in the terrain began to shine and rose in the air.

A rank 2 Rabid mole appeared between the halo of light and the voice sounded again.

"If you want to give up, please break the rune that formed in your sea of consciousness."

Noah's eyes widened and he hastily checked his mental sphere.

His cross-legged figure inside it opened his eyes and was astonished to find an orange rune between his hands.

Noah came back to reality and could not help but feel some reverence toward the cultivator that set up the separate dimension.

'This world can directly interfere with the insides of my mental sphere! This is incredible!'

The beast stood still as if waiting for Noah to make the first move.

'This inheritance ground was made for cultivators under the age of twenty so this stage should be calibrated on a reasonable difficulty. I might really get something valuable here.'

His reasoning had no flaws so Noah decided to make a serious attempt in obtaining a good reward.

His eyes focused as he took out his upper armor and put it in the space-ring.

Then he wore the ring on his finger and made a step in the direction of the beast.

His sabers were unsheathed since he jumped in the second stage.

The rank 2 mole charged as soon as he moved but was instantly killed by a casual strike from Noah.

The beast turned into smoke that accumulated back where the runes were and two rank 2 moles came out of the halo.

'Ohh so that's how it will work. Well, I always wanted to know my true limit too.'

A slight smile appeared on his face as he ran toward the two beasts killing them in an instant.

The same process repeated and four moles appeared.

Noah charged at them without hesitation.

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Time passed and the number of beasts appearing together kept on increasing.

Noah had just killed the last specimen of the latest wave of enemies.

'Forty this time. I wonder how many there will be now.'

He didn't use the liquid "Breath" in his dantian at all and was only relying on the one in his body to fight.

Since it recovered even as he fought, using it was the best method to maintain himself at peak form.

After the forty strands of smoke rejoined the halo, the runes shined with more intensity as if they were charging themselves.

Then, a rank 3 mole came out of it and stood still looking at Noah.

'So it's time for the advancement in rank, luckily I'm alone now.'

He charged toward the beast and pointed his sabers to deliver a blow.

The mole prepared to block the blade raising its fangs but was met by the black teeth of a reptilian head.

Its paws were locked in the snake's mouth so he had no way of protecting itself from Noah's strike in its blind side.

Its head was severed and it turned into smoke.

A rank 3 beast was killed with only two attacks!

'It's way easier when I use Assea. Magic spells are awesome!'



The smoke went back to the halo and two rank 3 Rabid moles appeared.

'The real challenge starts now.'

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About an hour later, still in the area of the second stage.

Noah was surrounded by six rank 3 Rabid moles with their strength being in the middle-tier of the rank.

He had begun to use his liquid "Breath" long ago and he swung his sabers madly in every direction.

Assea would randomly appear every time he needed to block an attack or to deliver a sneaky bite to a beast.

Wounds kept on accumulating on the six moles and their movement began to slow down.

At some point, one of them appeared in Noah's blind spot and was about to raise its fangs to strike but it was soon enveloped by Assea's mouth.

Noah turned and hastily pierced its head, its body transformed into smoke.

Now that their number was lowered, the fight became easier.

It took Noah another fifteen minutes to vanquish the beasts and when the fight was over he sat on the ground to meditate.

He discovered that the test gave him a ten minutes break after every battle.

Initially, he didn't need to rest but as the numbers of rank 3 moles increased, he found himself depleting more and more liquid "Breath".

The new beasts would be created immediately but they would stay still until the ten minutes passed.

Noah wouldn't even look at his opponents and he opened his eyes only when an attack came to him.

Doing that allowed him to maximize the time spent recovering.

Ten minutes passed and Noah felt a threat in front of him.

He suddenly opened his eyes and dodged the incoming attack.

'Peak rank 3!'

There was only one enemy in front of him but it was at the peak of the stage.

'The difficulty increased again by one tier.'

Against a single enemy, he actually had it quite easy as he could exploit the numerical advantage given by his blood companion.

The battle was fierce.

Noah had fought magical beasts in its same rank twice already but they were injured both times.

However, he now had a rank 3 body and Assea wasn't hindered by any other enemies.

Little by little, the rank 3 mole lost terrain as it was being assaulted on two sides.

Then, Noah forced it to block a powerful frontal blow and Assea bit off a big piece of its defenseless back.

The beast turned into smoke and Noah sat to meditate.

When he reopened his eyes, two peak rank 3 moles were punching at him.