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No one dared to claim that they could take on this dragon. But if they didn't kill the dragon, they would never be able to get the Spirit Connecting Fruit. Elgado furrowed his brow and said seriously, "The dragon is too powerful. We have no way of defeating it."

"What do we do? Are we just going to give up?" Emiliano lamented. The coveted spirit fruit was within arm's reach, yet it remained out of their grasp.

"I have a plan, but it will require someone to incur the dragon's wrath and distract it from here. We will then take the opportunity to pick the fruit," Elgado suggested. "That plan might work, but who is going to face the dragon's wrath?" Avery asked.

After all, anyone who took on the task of luring the dragon away and dealing with its wrath would undoubtedly face certain death. No one in their right mind would want to do such a thing.

The trio looked at each other. No one was willing to take on the deadly task. The problem was that if they sent their subordinates, those poor souls would most likely be devoured before they could even distract the dragon..

Suddenly, Emiliano shifted his gaze toward Skyler and Kai. A glimmer of excitement flashed in his eyes. "I have an idea. Let's send these two to lure the dragon away so that we can pick the Spirit Connecting Fruit."

Emiliano had been hoping to end Kai's life. Sending him to incur the dragon's wrath would be a surefire way of killing him.

"Great idea. They're as good as dead already, so we might as well use them." Avery nodded in agreement. Although Elgado was hesitant to sacrifice Kai's body and power, he had no other option but to acquiesce when he considered the spirit fruit.

Emiliano walked up to Kai and said arrogantly, "Kai, we have decided to give you a chance to live. You and Skyler will lure the dragon away from here. As long as you succeed, you can leave this place alive."

"Do you think we're stupid, Emiliano? We know that provoking the dragon is a death sentence," Skyler snarled. Right then, Avery walked over and threatened Skyler and Kai, "Not necessarily so. If the two of you work together, there's a chance both of you could survive. However, if you refuse to try, we'll just kill you both right now."

"Stop fooling yourselves. We may be doomed to die, but we're not going to help you," Skyler snapped. She knew they were fated to die that day. However, she didn't want to meet her end. trying to assist these men.

“Okay, since you have made your choice, I’ll kill you right now!” Emiliano gathered a sudden burst of aura, ready to attack Skyler and Kai. “Hold on...” Kai suddenly spoke.

Emiliano stopped in his tracks and turned to Kai. “Have you thought it over? This is your last chance to survive.” “Okay, I agree to lure the dragon away.” Kai nodded. Emiliano’s face lit up with joy. “That’s more like it. Remember, you have to fight for your chances in life.”

“Mr. Chance...”

Skyler couldn’t understand Kai’s decision. Why would he risk his life to help Emiliano and his gang when we are going to die anyway? Kai waved his hand at Skyler and said, “Even if we’re going to die, I don’t want to die at their hands.”

After hearing this, the woman said nothing more. “You are an honorable man. Now go and lure the dragon away. Remember, no tricks. If you don’t lure the dragon away, you won’t be able to escape,” Emiliano instructed Kai.

However, the latter ignored him and slowly walked toward the Spirit Connecting Tree with the Dragonslayer Sword in his hand. Skyler followed closely behind him.

Although they knew the odds of survival were low and had mentally prepared themselves for it, Skyler still felt nervous when she looked up at the dragon on the tree. “Don’t be afraid. We won’t die,” Kai said to Skyler with a reassuring smile.

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Skyler nodded. At some point onward, she started to trust Kai’s words unconditionally. Emiliano and the others watched from afar. None of them dared to get closer, and the dragon merely circled the Spirit Connecting Tree, not attacking any of them.

However, when Kai and Skyler approached closer, it let out a roar as if to stop them from getting near. Skyler followed closely behind the man, and they finally made their way under the Spirit Connecting Tree. “Let’s go...”

Kai pulled her in and leaped into the air. At the sight of this, the dragon unleashed a scorching breath at them. It was so powerful that it shook the air around them. Even Emiliano, who stood hundreds of meters away, could feel how intense it was.

The dragon directed its breath at Kai and Skyler. Seeing this, the man gritted his teeth, and his body glowed with a golden light. He knew he only had one chance.

Right before the dragon’s breath reached Kai, a ray of light shot out from his chest. The draconic essence within his body exuded the Power of Dragons.

The power from the dragon's breath was instantly neutralized. Kai and Skyler successfully made their way up the Spirit Connecting Tree and were face-to-face with the dragon. "Stay here and don't move, Ms. Loulland. I'll deal with the dragon."

Kai leaped up and ran toward the creature. However, he jumped on the dragon's head instead of attacking it. He reached out for its horns and finally stood on its head.

The dragon had surprisingly become docile. It let out a series of noises that made it look as though it was trying to please Kai. Skyler couldn't bring herself to believe the sight.

Emiliano and the others were just as shocked as they watched Kai stand on top of the dragon. A cold smirk appeared on Kai's face as he said to Skyler, "Ms. Loulland, pick all the Spirit Connecting Fruits from the tree. I'll stop those people over there."

Once he was done speaking, light emitted from his hands and entered the dragon's body through its horns. Then, it let out a deafening shriek and headed straight down the Spirit Connecting Tree.

Skyler didn't dare to delay any longer and immediately started to pick the Spirit Connecting Fruits. Naturally, Emiliano and the others became furious at the sight of this. "Stop! Those belong to us!"

Burning with rage, Emiliano, Avery, and Elgado rushed toward Skyler. Kai charged at them as he rode on the dragon. With the dragon's breath, they were sent flying away instantly..

They watched as Skyler picked the Spirit Connecting Fruits one by one, and their eyes turned bloodshot from anger. Nevertheless, there was no way they could get closer to her at all since Kai was blocking their path with the dragon. The dragon wasn't one of Kai's illusions after all, and it was extremely powerful too.

"Oh, gosh! What should we do? Are we supposed to just watch as they take all the Spirit Connecting Fruits away?" Emiliano yelled anxiously, but no one dared to step forward to stop Kai.

Skyler was about to collect all the Spirit Connecting Fruit soon, yet no one could stop Kai. Elgado glared at Kai with a cold look in his eyes. Waves of black mist seemed to fill the air as he did so. "I know how we can kill the dragon and retrieve the Spirit Connecting Fruits," he said..

"How?" Avery and Emiliano asked at the same time. "You'll know in a while." With that, Elgado turned toward the disciples of Scorching Heaven Sect. "The time for you to offer yourselves for Scorching Heaven Sect has come. Your spirits will live forever."

After saying that, he began performing hand seals. Black tendrils appeared from the ground and entangled themselves on the disciples' bodies.

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Nonetheless, none of the disciples seemed scared of what was happening. Rather, they looked excited for what was to come. The black tendrils suddenly pierced through their bodies, and their martial energy was drained rapidly. At the same time, Elgado's powers grew significantly, and the black mist around him became thicker and thicker.

Soon, the disciples turned into dried corpses. Yet, even after their deaths, they still had delighted looks on their faces. It was as if death was something worth being happy about.

Emiliano and Avery were left dumbfounded by this scene. Even though they knew Demonic Cultivation could allow one to absorb someone else's energy to strengthen oneself, it was still shocking to have witnessed it themselves. "Elgado, are you planning on absorbing others' powers to fight Kai?"

Avery finally figured out Elgado's plan. "Yes. Can any of you come up with something better other than this?" Elgado answered. Avery said nothing in response. After all, there was no better way than this to deal with Kai.

Emiliano, on the other hand, furrowed his brows. "While it's true that you can go against Kai after absorbing their powers to strengthen yourself, you can easily deal with us as well. What if you don't hand us the Spirit Connecting Fruits once you're done fighting?"

He had worries of his own. If Elgado managed to strengthen himself, their only outcome, in the end, was death. Elgado had the final say in whether or not he wanted to give them the Spirit Connecting Fruits after all.

"Do you have any other choice besides trusting me, Mr. Fairchild? Besides, there's no way I'd betray two major clans just for some Spirit Connecting Fruits. I'm no fool!" Elgado said.

"Emiliano, I think it's worth a try. Otherwise, not only will we not get the Spirit Connecting Fruits, but there's also no way Kai will let us off the hook," Avery said. He knew there would definitely be a spike in Kai's powers if he got his hands on the fruits. None of them could ever live another day if that were to happen. After hesitating for a moment, Emiliano nodded and said, "All right, then. Let's do this!"

The disciples of Stormwind Sect were left stunned at his words. They instantly fell to their knees as they begged, "You can't do this, Mr. Fairchild! We've been nothing but loyal to you. You can't abandon us!"

The disciples of Flying Star Sect were also on their knees. They were about to beg for their lives when black tendrils slithered toward them and wrapped themselves around their bodies.

These martial artists knew there was no use begging for their lives. They began darting in every direction, trying to leave the wretched place.

Unfortunately, the tendrils had a death grip around them, and none of them could budge at all. Once again, Elgado's aura increased significantly as the martial artists' powers flowed toward him.

Kai's brows knitted together at the sight of this. Still riding on the dragon, he rushed downward at them. He couldn't let Elgado get any more powerful. Things would become troublesome otherwise.

Kai was still severely injured, so he could only rely on the dragon's powers. If the creature couldn't defeat Elgado, then there was no way Kai could protect the Spirit Connecting Fruits anymore..

The dragon let out a roar and charged at Elgado under Kai's control. Elgado merely snorted and leaped upward, throwing a punch at the dragon as he did so. The dragon opened its mouth and unleashed its breath, which collided with Elgado's punch head-on.

Boom! Martial energy permeated the air following the impact. The dragon's breath dissipated, and a terrifying force knocked against its head. It let out an agonizing cry, almost shaking Kai off its head in the process. Elgado swayed and plunged from mid-air.

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"Not bad. Once I absorb the power of all these people, I'll be able to slay the dragon. Hahaha!" With that one move, Elgado's confidence surged. Emiliano and Avery were stunned for they never imagined black magic could be so powerful.

It was no wonder that so many people succumbed to its temptations and became Demonic Cultivators in the end. As the black mist spread, the other martial artists cried out in agony, their energy drained until they became desiccated corpses.

Although Emiliano and Avery had agreed to the sacrifice, their hearts ached as they watched their subordinates die. These were the elites of their clans, now reduced to lifeless husks.

Emiliano knew he had to retrieve the Spirit Connecting Fruits at all costs. With so many lives sacrificed, failure was not an option. As the last of the martial artists' energy was siphoned away, Elgado's cultivation level surged to the Eight Level Martial Arts God.

Kai and the dragon were no match for Elgado anymore, as his strength had multiplied several times over with each new cultivation level. Kai's face turned pale as he sensed the explosive aura of Elgado's power as an Eight Level Martial Arts God. Even with the dragon's assistance, defending himself against Elgado's attack would be extremely difficult, given the severity of his injuries.

"Ms. Loulland, please hurry!" Kai implored Skyler to pick the Spirit Connecting Fruits as quickly as possible, aware that he wouldn't be able to hold the fort much longer.

"Hmph! You're unrepentant! I'll kill you for taking the Spirit Connecting Fruit!" Elgado sneered, launching himself into the air. Kai remained vigilant as he rode the dragon, clenching his teeth as he felt the immense power emanating from Elgado.

With a thunderous roar, the black mist surrounding Elgado ignited into a blazing inferno, engulfing him in flames. "Blazing Palm!" A huge palm enveloped in flames appeared in midair as Elgado struck his palm out.

An overwhelming pressure accompanied by raging flames descended upon Kai and the dragon. Kai felt cornered as he had to protect Skyler until she was done plucking the fruits, his senses overwhelmed by the aura of Elgado's power.

Summoning the Power of Dragons within him, Kai urged the dragon to soar toward the blazing palm. The dragon roared and cowered in fear as it sensed the overwhelming danger ahead, but it had no choice but to comply with Kai's command.

The duo battled fiercely against Blazing Palm, with the dragon blasting out the scorching fire and Kai pouring all his Power of Dragons into the dragon through its horns.

Kai exerted so much energy that the draconic essence in his body began to dim, but they continued to hold their ground. Despite their efforts, however, they only managed to slow down the speed of the blazing palm as it fell toward them..

With no other option left, Kai had to make a quick decision when he saw that the blazing palm was about to fall on his head. Without hesitation, he jumped onto the Spirit Connecting Tree, leaving the dragon to face the full force of Elgado's attack alone..

As soon as the dragon broke free from Kai's control, it let out a defiant roar and charged toward Blazing Palm with all its might. The resulting collision was so intense that it caused a massive explosion, engulfing the dragon in flames.

Countless martial energy shots exploded in all directions as the dragon was blown into pieces. Amidst the chaos, a bright, glowing draconic essence emerged from the flames.

Emiliano and Avery watched in shock as they witnessed the scene unfold before them. They never thought that Elgado would be able to kill the dragon in a single strike.

As for Elgado, he emanated a terrifying aura as he floated in midair, still engulfed in flames. Without hesitation, he flew toward the draconic essence as soon as he saw it. Seeing this, Kai reached out for the draconic essence, which flew toward him as if drawn by a massive energy force.

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As soon as Kai opened his mouth, the draconic essence entered him and merged with his own. The once-dim essence within him now glowed brightly.

“Brat, I’m going to rip you apart and see how much more treasures you have inside you!” Elgado roared, furious that Kai had swallowed the draconic essence. But Kai had no time to deal with Elgado as he turned to Skyler and asked, “How many Spirit Connecting Fruits are left?”

“Only one,” Skyler shouted. “Hmph. So what if you’ve already plucked all the Spirit Connecting Fruits? They’ll end up in my hands anyway,” Elgado sneered, charging toward Kai.

Although Kai had regained some of his spiritual energy after swallowing the draconic essence, he still stood little chance against Elgado. However, he knew that if he backed down now, Skyler would be in danger, and the Spirit Connecting Fruits would fall into Elgado’s hands.

Elgado fixed a cold glare on Kai, his intent to capture him alive evident as an arm shot out like the fabric of space and time had been ripped apart. Kai raised his head and let out a battle cry. With bloodshot eyes, he aimed a punch at the arm.

But his efforts were in vain, as his punch made no impact on the arm, despite him putting his full force behind it. Instead, he was immobilized by Elgado’s terrifying aura, struggling to even move his arm.

“Done!” Skyler’s triumphant voice rang out just as the arm was about to capture him. She had successfully plucked all of the Spirit Connecting Fruits.

Suddenly, the Spirit Connecting Tree began to shake violently, and a massive energy shattered the arm which had appeared out of nowhere.

Then, the branches started to grow and weave, forming a dense canopy that gradually enclosed Kai and Skyler inside a sphere. From a distance, it appeared as if a green ball made of leaves had formed atop the Spirit Connecting Tree.

Elgado, Emiliano, and Avery were bewildered by the unusual occurrence, wondering why the tree had suddenly taken on this defensive posture.

“Perhaps the Spirit Connecting Tree has entered a defensive mode because all of its Spirit Connecting Fruits have been plucked,” Avery pondered, her brows furrowed.

“Hmph! It’s just made of leaves. One strike should be enough to crush it.” Emiliano sneered and leaped into the air. He then delivered a punch packed full of his formidable martial energy at the green ball.

Boom! With a deafening boom, Emiliano was sent flying backward, while the ball made of leaves remained unscathed. He couldn’t believe his eyes as he stared at the ball in shock, feeling embarrassed.

“I’ll do it,” said Elgado. He waved his hand, summoning a huge black palm that pressed down on the ball. Boom! However, it dissipated into thin air as soon as it came into contact with the sturdy structure. The three outside were left dumbfounded by the event.

Meanwhile, inside the ball, Kai and Skyler listened intently to what was happening. Kai could tell that the trio was attempting to break the ball, judging by the two explosions he heard. Nevertheless, the ball remained completely unscathed. It seemed incredibly sturdy.

“We don’t need to worry about them. Let’s focus on regaining our powers first. I’ll keep two of these Spirit Connecting Fruits, and we can eat the rest. We need to break free as soon as possible. We can’t be trapped here forever,” Kai declared as he tossed two of the fruits into his Storage Ring.