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It went without saying that the leader of Scorching Heaven Sect's powers would grow at a more exponential rate, seeing as they had always channeled black magic to attain higher levels.

Elgado smiled smugly, feeling the power in his body continuously growing. Suddenly, his body trembled, and his smile froze on his face!

His expression turned from stunned to incredulous as he looked at Kai, who was wrapped in tentacles. Fear filled Elgado's eyes. "How... how is this possible?"

Elgado's body shook, and his power quickly dissipated. He frantically tried to control the tentacles, wanting to detach them from Kai's body. To his dismay, the tentacles no longer obeyed his command.

"Ah!" A burst of flames appeared atop Elgado's palm, and he hurled it at the tentacles.

Boom! The flames instantly exploded, and like fireworks, the tentacles were instantly shattered into pieces. As the tentacles exploded, Kai's figure flickered, and he landed a hard punch on Elgado's body.

The guardian's body was sent flying in at projectile before slamming hard on the ground. His body was plunged several meters deep underground. "Kai?"

Emiliano and Avery couldn't believe what they were seeing. Their eyes widened with shock and awe. "Mr. Chance..." Skyler was overjoyed to see that Kai was all right.

Kai was standing tall, his spirit vigorous, nothing like a person who had just had his powers absorbed. Elgado climbed out of the pit, looking at Kai in disbelief.

"H-How did you know to channel powers from Hell's Hand?" he stuttered. He was stumped beyond words, as Hell's Hand was a secret technique only known to Scorching Heaven Sect, and yet Kai had mastered it.

"What's so surprising about that? You haven't even seen half the things that I know!" Kai snickered. "Then again, I really have to thank you for the powers you've channeled into me, as the battle just now depleted most of my energy. This is like an icing on top of a cake."

Kai cast a derisive look at Elgado. The latter grimaced in response. He had wanted to assimilate Kai's powers. However, unexpectedly, Kai absorbed his powers instead. Fortunately, he reacted fast enough. Otherwise, he would have been turned into a corpse by then.

“Kai, don't be so smug. Even if I couldn't destroy you with Hell's Hand, I still have other cards up my sleeves.” Elgado glared at Kai with anger and hatred festering within.

“Oh, do you think I have none?” Kai asked. Then, a cold glint flickered across his eyes. He extended his right hand, and Dragonslayer Sword instantly appeared in it.

Right then, Dragonslayer Sword's sword energy soared into the skies. As Kai ascended to Martial Arts God, his Dragonslayer Sword also increased in powers.

Kai shouted, and Dragonslayer Sword emitted a dazzling light, filling the air with its mighty sword energy. A fierce wave of sword energy rushed toward Elgado, sending the latter retreating multiple steps backward.

Waves and waves of sword energy burst forth and struck down at Elgado, and the guardian disappeared in a cloud of smoke.

When the smoke cleared, Elgado stood up slowly. His whole body was covered in injuries, with one of his arms dangling precariously, connected to his body only by a bit of flesh and skin. Emiliano and Avery turned to look at the guardian in shock and disbelief.

After all, they were pinning all their hopes on Elgado to eradicate Kai. However, now that he had been injured so badly that he almost lost an arm, it was almost guaranteed that they were doomed.

“An Eighth Level Martial Arts God is truly extraordinary. I'm honestly surprised that you haven't been killed,” Kai said impassively, holding his Dragonslayer Sword.

Elgado looked at his dangling arm and gritted his teeth. “You're only a newly promoted Martial Arts God, and yet you dare to hurt me. I will tear you into pieces!”

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Elgado bellowed, his body slowly rising into the air. Soon after, a dark aura enveloped him as countless tentacles sprouted from the ground.

Those tentacles began to attack all surviving organisms on the ground viciously. Even Emiliano and Avery weren't spared. Skyler was also caught off guard and was entangled by a tentacle under her feet. Startled, she hurriedly shouted at Kai, “Mr. Chance!”

Seeing that, Kai immediately unleashed a flash of light from Dragonslayer Sword to cut off the tentacle. Emiliano and Avery were also taken by surprise as they were entangled by the tentacles.

“Elgado, what are you doing? Let go of us!” Emiliano and Avery roared. “None of us can escape as long as this brat doesn’t die. Instead of getting killed by him, isn’t it better if you contribute your strength and help me slaughter him? This is one way to fulfill your wishes too,” Elgado uttered frostily.

“No... Don’t!”

“No!” Emiliano and Avery struggled desperately. They never thought they would escape death at Kai’s hands just to get betrayed by Scorching Heaven Sect.

Kai swung his sword to protect Skyler, not allowing those tentacles to reach her while gazing impassively at Emiliano and Avery as they made violent efforts to free themselves. They should’ve foreseen this outcome when they chose to cooperate with Scorching Heaven Sect previously!

“If you treat us like this, Stormwind Sect will definitely annihilate Scorching Heaven Sect once we get out of here!” “Flying Star Sect will also spare no effort to avenge me and hunt down everyone in Scorching Heaven Sect!”

Emiliano and Avery threatened Elgado. However, Elgado was unfazed. He sneered, “If you die here, who would know I killed you? I can simply say that you were all killed by this Kai brat. Haha!”

Elgado appeared to have planned to double- cross them all along. Even if they obtained the Spirit Connecting Fruit, Emiliano and Avery likely wouldn’t receive anything in the end.

“ Kai... No, Mr. Chance, please save me. If you save my life, I promise I’ll never bother you again!”

“ Kai, considering how I’ve led you to the ancient ruins, please help me! Please rescue me!” Emiliano and Avery began to call out to Kai for help frantically.

However, Kai merely wore a poker face, having no intention of lending them a helping hand. Soon, Emiliano and Avery’s voices gradually died down, while Elgado’s aura rapidly intensified.

His nearly severed arm started to heal quickly. Even his wounds were recovering at high speed as his body exuded a green aura.

Kai knew that was because Elgado absorbed Emiliano’s abilities. Emiliano had altered genes that allowed him to have rapid regeneration. As a result, Elgado also possessed the same power now. “Brat, let’s see if you can still survive this time.”

Elgado’s cultivation level broke through the Eight Level and continued rising all the way to the Top of the Ninth Level before stopping. If he could consume a few more Spirit

Connecting Fruits at that moment, he might even be able to advance to the level of Martial Arts Sovereign.

Elgado suddenly charged toward Kai with lightning-fast speed, making it impossible for Kai to even catch a glimpse of his figure. Kai felt a heavy punch smash into his chest, and he was instantly sent flying backward and slammed forcefully into a massive rock. Before Kai could react, Elgado appeared before Kai again and ruthlessly stomped on him with all his might.

Boom! A loud bang echoed as the earth shook. The next instant, a huge crater was formed on the ground, and Kai's body was booted deep into the depths of the hole.

"Hahaha! Brat, let's see what tricks you have left up your sleeves!" Elgado guffawed while looking down at Kai arrogantly. "Mr. Chance!" Skyler screamed anxiously after witnessing the one-sided battle.

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Kai lay at the bottom of the crater with blood trickling down the corner of his mouth. With his current strength as a newly-advanced Martial Arts God, he was still no match for a Top Level: Martial Arts God.

In terms of power and speed, a Top Level Martial Arts God was way beyond a normal Martial Arts God, as the former required only the right opportunity to break through to the Martial Arts Sovereign level.

Kai struggled to get up. Although he knew it was almost impossible for him to defeat a Top Level Martial Arts God with his existing abilities, he would never give up and wait idly for death.

All he needed was to figure out a way to absorb more power to accomplish another breakthrough. That way, he would have what it takes to face off against Elgado..

However, aside from the two Spirit Connecting Fruits in his Storage Ring, there wasn't anything else around him that could rapidly boost his abilities. But if I consume these two Spirit Connecting Fruits, Flaxseed and Godrick will have no hope of recovery and will remain bedridden for life. I can't do this. I must save both of them!

Another method was to absorb Skyler's power to achieve a breakthrough, but doing that would cause Skyler to die and be turned into a dried corpse. Kai couldn't do that either. I can't hurt my friend for my own benefit!

While Kai was overwhelmed by despair inside the deep crater, he suddenly felt streams of spiritual energy flowing speedily beneath his feet. Kai hastily looked down in surprise and discovered a thick tree root now exposed before him.

Staring at the tree root and sensing the dense spiritual energy circulating within, Kai was overjoyed. I'm guessing this the root of the Spirit Connecting Tree.

An enormous Spirit Connecting Tree like that undoubtedly contained tremendous spiritual energy. If Kai refined the spiritual energy within the Spirit Connecting Tree for his own use, accomplishing a breakthrough would be the least of his worry.

Kai gently touched the Spirit Connecting Tree's root with his hand, and a large influx of power instantly engulfed him. At that moment, the force surged within him, and circulated in his elixir field. He activated his Focus Technique at full speed, continuously refining that energy to augment his cultivation level.

The Spirit Connecting Tree seemed to have sensed something and started to sway on its own. The tree leaves rustled and fell. Every piece of falling leaves turned into sharp blades and attacked everything in the surrounding. Skyler and Elgado swiftly retreated, staying out of the tree leaves' attack range.

Elgado was puzzled, looking at the Spirit Connecting Tree, which was moving side to side. What happened? Why is the initially unmoving Spirit Connecting Tree suddenly shaking so violently?

Amidst Elgado's confusion, he suddenly sensed Kai's exponentially-rising aura from the crater. "What's going on?" Elgado furrowed his brows. He wanted to get closer and look at what was happening to Kai inside the pit.

Unfortunately, the Spirit Connecting Tree's leaves were razor-sharp. Even a Top Level Martial Arts God like Elgado would have his skin cut open by the leaves if he entered the tree's attack range.

Not long after, he noticed brilliant golden light shining inside the deep crater. Moreover, Elgado also sensed Kai's aura evolving from a newly-advanced First Level Martial Arts God to the Top of the First Level and about to break through to Second Level. "What the hell is going on? Why is this happening?"

Elgado was bewildered. What could possibly allow a new Martial Arts God to reach the Top of the First Level in such a short period? Before he could figure out the reason, Kai's aura had broken through the First Level, turning him into a Second Level Martial Arts God.

Moreover, his aura didn't stop getting stronger and continued to soar. No one could tell how much further Kai's abilities would be enhanced.

At the same time, the Spirit Connecting Tree began to wither slowly from its crown.

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Witnessing the Spirit Connecting Tree withering before his very eyes, Elgado came to a realization. Sh*t! I can't believe he's draining power from the Spirit Connecting Tree!

It finally occurred to him that Kai was attempting to claim the strength of the Spirit Connecting Tree as his own. After all, the energy within Spirit Connecting Tree was far more potent than any Spirit Connecting Fruit could ever offer.

No, he'll never attain yet another breakthrough- not on my watch! Elgado let out a holler so deafening that clouds of black mist emerged and engulfed his body. Immediately afterward, he barreled in the crater's direction.

As he charged ahead, leaves fell from above and whirled past him, triggering fiery sparks of light. Still, nothing could halt his advance at that point.

Skyler, in turn, could somewhat tell what Elgado was up to. Putting her own life on the line, she gripped the sword firmly and darted toward him. Petals began riding the air current and cut her skin like a saber. Nonetheless, she showed no signs of backing down.

She had her heart set on buying Kai some time, no matter how fleeting that moment would come to be. The sword in her hand transformed into a spirit snake and pounced on Elgado. The latter, though, could not even be bothered to spare her a glance. "Hmph! What an insolent fool..."

With a flick of his fingers, Skyler was flung away into the distance like a kite with a broken thread. There was not a snowball's chance in hell that she would get to hold Elgado back even for a split second, not with the huge gap in strength between the two of them.

Soon enough, Elgado reached the crater, only to find that Kai was sitting cross-legged inside and that his body was radiating with a golden light. With bloodshot eyes, he pinned his gaze on Kai and bellowed, "I won't let you make a comeback!"

Right after dropping that threat, he thrust a palm strike toward the bottom of the crater. A gigantic palmprint shrouded by black mist materialized in mid-air. It was so massive that it could cover the entire surface of the crater.

The palmprint drew closer and was about to reach Kai at any moment. All of a sudden, Kai opened his eyes and emitted a thunderous roar.

His body turned golden in color as golden scales enveloped him from head to toe. A horrifying wave of energy then burst from within him and zapped toward the air.

In the face of Kai's outburst of wrath, Elgado's enormous palmprint was completely destroyed before it vanished into thin air.

Kai steadily rose from the bottom of the crater and floated in mid-air. Behind him was the already withered Spirit Connecting Tree, bursting into flames.

In a matter of seconds, the Spirit Connecting Tree was reduced to ashes. Gone was the divine, ancient tree, just like that. Elgado gaped at Kai hanging in mid-air, his eyes shining with surprise and astonishment. He was least anticipating Kai to overcome his attack so effortlessly.

At that moment, Kai's visage was as grim as death. A gaze from Kai was more than enough to make Elgado shake like a leaf involuntarily.

Following the eruption of a terrifying aura within Kai, he bawled and glowed with a golden hue.

Elgado froze at Kai's overwhelming aura, one that could only be released by a Third Level Martial Arts God. Never did he expect Kai to have made such a quantum leap all the way from being a First Level Martial Arts God in such a short period of time.

Before he could snap out of it, Kai's aura started to spread across the field in every direction. The frightening aura was unusually intense that it drove Elgado backward time and again. Eventually, it lifted him off the ground and sent him flying.

In light of such circumstances, he knew that he would be done for should Kai continue to have the upper hand. Unleashing his ultimate technique was his only way out.

"Scorching Heaven Palm!" he shouted. Solidifying right before him was a tremendous amount of martial energy, coupled with columns of raging infernos encircling him. All Kai did next was snort and swung his hand at Elgado.

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A blinding golden flash collided with Elgado's Scorching Heaven Palm, resulting in an ear-splitting sound that tore through the vicinity. With the explosion of aura, the earth began to shake, and the ground beneath their feet was all ready to come apart at the seams.

Worse still, bits of shattered rocks from the stone walls whisked through every nook and cranny of the place. The collapse of the ancient ruins of Narcissus Palace seemed imminent.

In an instant, the golden beam sent forth by Kai pierced through Elgado's Scorching Heaven Palm before dealing a blow to Elgado himself. The poor man was sent flying backward in disbelief.

Just when Elgado was lost in his own thoughts, Kai closed the distance between them in a blink of an eye and came face-to-face with him. Kai's speed was way out of Elgado's league. "W-What?"

Before Elgado could react, Kai already landed a forceful kick on him.

Boom! Elgado crashed hard into the stone wall, causing rubble to crumble. At that rate, Narcissus Palace was bound to turn to dust. It was then that Elgado coughed up a mouthful of blood, his aura dissipating rapidly. As he noticed that Kai was still ambling toward him, his face clouded over. "Spare me, Kai. I can offer you a wealth of resources in exchange..." he begged for mercy.

"Hmph! You're only a measly guardian of Scorching Heaven Sect. Without acknowledgment from your leader, your word carries no weight! Come to think of it, the power of a Ninth Top Level Martial Arts God inside you might be one of the best resources I could ever find!"

A wretched smirk was etched on Kai's countenance as he spoke. I bet I could become even more powerful once I absorbed all of Elgado's energy!

Judging by Kai's attitude, Elgado knew that there was no way he would be let off the hook. Narrowing his eyes, he voiced, "You think you got me, Kai? Think again. I wouldn't have had the guts to assume the role of Scorching Heaven Sect's guardian if I had no plan B to fall back on, would I?"

As soon as he said his piece, he fished out a relic and crushed it in his hands. The next moment, the space around Elgado began to warp while his figure faded away.

"Teleportation magecraft, huh? Trying to escape?" Kai dashed forward and reached out to grab the fleeing Elgado. Sadly, he was one step too late. Elgado had disappeared in plain sight before Kai could catch hold of him.

Kai was frustrated to have let Elgado make the getaway right under his nose. Never in his wildest dreams would he have guessed that a guardian of Scorching Heaven Sect could have teleportation magecraft up his sleeve.

Moments after Elgado made his escape, the ancient ruins of Narcissus Palace quaked violently. That time around, even boulders came tumbling down. "Let's get out of here, Ms. Loulland!"

Wasting no time, Kai led Skyler back the way they came from. Once they were out of the sinkhole, they were greeted by a sight filled with countless dead bodies of martial artists everywhere.

The vast majority of the deceased were from the external realm. However, Kai did not see Verner and the group lying among them. One could only wonder if they had met their ends or escaped unharmed.

Looking at those corpses scattered all over the ground, Skyler could not help but raise a question. "Mr. Chance, could it be that there're more hidden sects in Kazillion Mountains?"

Basically, Emiliano's men had already been wiped out by Kai. Considering that martial artists from the external realm had sustained heavy casualties, it went without saying that some hidden sects must have had a hand in it.

"I think so. We need to stay on guard," warned Kai. The two had barely taken a couple of steps before a commotion of an intense battle reached their ears. Quickly, they trod toward the source of the noise.

At a spot not far ahead, Kai caught sight of five elderly individuals attacking Verner and his group. It was as clear as day that the elders had the upper hand in that clash. As mere martial artists from the external realm, Verner and the rest were nothing more than sitting ducks. They did not stand a chance against those elderly fighters.

"Mr. Chance, help!" Verner, Jose, and the gang cried for help the second Kai came into sight. Furrowing his brows slightly, Kai asked Skyler, "Who are these people?"

None of them seemed to be holding anything back. They went at the other party mercilessly as if they were stepping on some ants. "Flying Star Sect! Those five elders are from Flying Star Sect," revealed Skyler.