

Training and Advancing

They trained for a few days, trying to get Ryun accustomed to his new body.

Tali punched him, her increased strength enough that he felt his vitality scale up even as she punched through the surface layer of his skin. The Void immediately attacked her hand, and the Stillness slowed her strike. Despite that, he felt the power of the attack ripple through his body and explode out of his back. His stamina regeneration dropped and he felt a small chunk of it surge into the wound along with a bit of his Qi, some Void some Stillness.

Tali pulled her hand out of him before his body damaged it and frowned.

“That is so weird,” Tali said. “It’s like your body is made out of dense liquid.”

Ryun nodded, it was almost like his insides were made out of thick gel. His shape was only held together because of the Stillness, but he had no bones, no organs, nothing inside of him but Void and Stillness. His conduits were warped around his body, far more intricate than they had ever been, and his sustenance core sat inside his chest just above his Cultivation one. Though, those cores and conduits seemingly existed both inside his body and his soul, somehow. As if they existed in both phases of reality at once. Strange.

His skills were helping him a lot actually. His **|Greater Restoration|** improved his regeneration, even his **|Celerity|** helped that, his **|Enduring Trained Body|** skill made him able to use it better and ignore most of the tiny pain spikes that happened constantly. But the one that was helping him the most was his **|Enhanced Adaptation|**. It allowed him to almost seamlessly adapt to this new body and use it without issues.

Still, they had realized a big problem with his body. He was very hard to damage, his regeneration restored him nearly immediately from almost any type of damage. As long as he had the stamina and Qi, he just couldn’t die. The issue was everything else. He had no endurance, that meant that he was always damaging himself when he tried to utilize his strength and

dexterity. When he threw punches, his arms ripped apart, they bent unnaturally as if they were made out of rubber. The two of them assumed that his body remained in a human shape only because that was what his soul wanted him to look like. They believed that his soul was why he still had sensations, pain, touch, smell, even hearing and sight. His body was more complicated than he thought, the Essence when in touch with his soul had properties that could detect all these foreign influences, and his body translated them into what he understood.

Throwing a direct strike at Tali did damage, but it was as if he was... well, punching with a hand that was made out of liquid. It had force and power, but it... splashed. Oh, he could shatter nearly anything that he touched still. He punched a stone once and broke it to pieces, but the damage was a lot different. It wasn't just pure bludgeoning damage, it hit with the power of liquid Void. He translated a lot less kinetic energy to his targets.

"You want to try again?" Tali asked.

Ryun grimaced but nodded. They had been working on a solution to his lack of... *solidity*. Ryun felt like he was close, perhaps even this would be the moment.

He closed his eyes and focused, then started his technique—**{Mantle of Gathering Twilight}**.

His technique allowed him to target certain points inside of his conduit network, basically gates inside of his body that correspond to a certain stat. He used to have six of them, but now he had only five. The technique twisted and compressed his Qi while it traveled through the conduits, then it fed the Qi into these points, circulating through his entire body when he increased all of his stats. This time, he didn't do that. Instead, he focused his mind, feeling the effects of his perk—**Tinker's Mind** and his skill **|Divided Mind|**—trigger. It was hard what he was attempting, but instead of targeting those gates, he targeted his entire body, splitting Qi streams in ways that he hadn't even known was possible. Tali's instruction had allowed him to do it, and he was still not perfect with it. It was actually a devolution of his technique, something far more akin to his **{Empower}**, the most basic form of his technique. That was what he was doing in essence, empowering his

body. And doing it with **Stillness Qi**. He felt the technique settle, stilling the Essence of his body, giving him... rigidity.

Keeping the technique running was hard, but he managed. He could feel his regeneration slow immediately, the damaging effects of everything around him no longer applying, because while he didn't have endurance anymore, he had a layer of Essence that acted like it was endurance. **Stillness Qi** affecting his skin, somewhere more somewhere less, allowing him to move with ease without his body bending like it was made out of rubber.

He opened his eyes and looked at his body.

"Ready?" Tali asked and he nodded, offering his hand.

She pulled out a weapon, a simple epic sword, then she pressed the blade against his bare forearm. The blade didn't cut through immediately, which was good, if that layer of his body wasn't stilled it would've cut him no matter the amount of strength that Tali used. He felt her increase the pressure and then the blade started cutting through. She stopped immediately and pulled back.

"How much?" Ryun asked.

"Around four thousand I think," Tali answered.

That meant that she had used around three thousand strength to get through his layer. It was... better than it had been before, but he was still losing effectiveness. The Void of his body was actively resisting the Qi's attempts to keep it still, devouring it in a way, spending was maybe the better word. Still, he got barely thirty percent of his wisdom to apply on his body through his Qi. He didn't think that he could do any better right now, he just didn't understand Stillness well enough yet. Plus, keeping this **{Empowering Mantle}** active drained too much of his Qi, the Qi that he needed to regenerate. They had already come to the conclusion that he should only use it when he really needed it. In bursts when he needed to block or attack, or jump with his body, or pick up something that was too heavy for his regeneration to compensate for. His body might make him nearly unkillable, but it also came with a lot of other headaches.

"I think that this is it," Ryun added. "I don't think that I'll get it to something better than this anytime soon."

“So, you are doing it now?”

Ryun nodded at her question and pulled out a vial, the **Eternal Drought of Path Perk Upgrade**. He had debated using it for his body, but he had expected that the sum of the different perks would give it a higher rarity and tier, which it had. He would place his new body firmly in the Eternal tier and perhaps even rarity, though he couldn't tell since it was a unique perk now. Tali said that there were people who could evaluate it, but he didn't really care that much to know. It was a shame that such potions couldn't be used more than once, but he felt like he had gotten a lot of benefits out of it. No, he had kept the drought for something else. It seemed far smarter to improve one of his other perks, a lower tiered one. And there was only one option really. His **Qi Controller** perk, one of his most important ones.

He hadn't used it before training with his technique, mostly because he wanted to see how far he could get it without an improvement in his perk.

He opened the vial and downed its contents, felt it hit the center of his body and then spread out through his body, his conduits and core. It burned. The change happened gradually, as if the heat moved through each part of his cultivation system and improved it meticulously. And then it was over and he brought up his new perk.

Eternal Qi Control Master—Endless Threads	Your Qi control is perfect, your ability without peer. You are able to finely manipulate your Qi and use as many techniques as you want at the same time. Each technique after the third one has its Qi cost increased by 25%, and the cost increases by 5% with every additional technique. Your Qi speed is increased by 200% and control is dependent on wisdom. Every technique beyond the third one slows down your Qi speed by 5%. Your Qi is so finely manipulated and your conduits and core perfectly aligned that nothing leaks out, making it
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	<p>difficult for other Cultivators to detect your Qi manipulation without an aid. Gain +40% to wisdom. You weave endlessly, holding all until the end.</p>
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He immediately tried his empowering technique, feeling it settle a lot faster. Nearly instantly, which would come in handy if he had to switch it on and off constantly. And with the fact that he could now use more than just three techniques, he didn't even have to worry about taking up one slot for it. Still, there was a price for it.

He showed Tali and she just shook her head at him, obviously done with being surprised.

Then Ryun pulled out the last potion he planned on using. With it, he could remove his Class, easily. His Class wasn't high tiered, it wasn't integrated that much into his being, especially now when he had taken out several of the perks. His body had turned into a unique perk, which meant that it was no longer a Cultivation or Class perk, but something separate. Focus removing aids could only be used once per focus, but Ryun didn't really have any reason to put it off.

He opened the vial and drank it. This time when the effect spread through his body, he could feel it touching the places inside that he had always associated with his Class. It had gotten him far, had fueled his advancement on Earth and saved him countless times. But it was holding him back now.

The effect wasn't nearly as unpleasant as the perk upgrade potion, probably because his Class wasn't even level 90. Once it was done, he checked his screens and found his Class gone. He glanced at his full screens, seeing all of his advancement.

Titles		
First Kill	Kill the first monster in the Framework-run World	+5000 Essence

Adventurer	Hunted more than 100 monsters	+5 to all stats, 5000 Essence
Hero of Promise	Save more than 10 people with a single action	+5 to all stats, 5000 Essence
Transcended	First Cultivator in the world to reach the Foundation Stage	+10% to all stats, 100,000 Essence
First Body of Iron	First Cultivator in the world to forge their body	+20 endurance, 10,000 Essence
Beaten but not Broken	Survive torture for more than thirty days	+10 to all stats, 50 Greater Essence
First Quickened Mind	First Cultivator in the world to forge their mind	+20 intelligence, 10,000 Essence
Cannibal	Kill more than 5000 people of your own race for their Essence	+10 to all stats, 50,000 Essence
One Against Many	Fight against more than 10 opponents and win	+5 to all stats, 5000 Essence
First Lake of Qi	First Cultivator in the world to forge their Qi	+20 wisdom, 10,000 Essence
First Lord	First Cultivator in the world to Reach the Lord Stage	+10% to all stats, 100,000 Essence
First Qi Manipulator	First Cultivator in the world to gain Qi manipulation	+5 to all stats, 10,000 Essence
Class Evolution I	Evolved your class for the first time.	+5 to all stats, 5 000 Essence

One Against Horde	Fight against more than 100 opponents and win	+10 to all stats, 10,000 Essence
First True Body	First Cultivator in the world to obtain True Body	+5 to all stats, 100,000 Essence
Hated Foe	Be hated and hunted by more than half of a world's population	+50 to all stats, 100,000 Essence
One Man Army	Fight against more than 1000 opponents and win	+40 to all stats, Indomitable, 500,000 Essence
Butcher of Humanity	Kill more than 500,000 people of a race by yourself	+200 to all stats, Reaper's Aura, 5,000,000 Essence
True Understanding II	Evolve a skill to tier 6	+20 to all stats, 20,000 Greater Essence (per tier 6 skill)
Limitbreak - Reign of the Three Territories	Defeat the three Rulers in the Reign of Three Territories scenario, while on a lower Realm and lower level.	+40 to strength, endurance, vitality +5% to all stats, 10,000 Greater Essence
Monarch	Reach the Monarch Realm	+10 to all stats, 1 000 Greater Essence
Ruler	Become the sole ruler of a territory.	+5 to all stats, 5000 Greater Essence, Small Mansion unlocked (Town Upgrade)
Alchemical Tester	Use more than 10 alchemical concoctions to improve yourself	+2 to intelligence, 500 Essence
Heartstone Core	First to clear the Heartstone Core Dungeon	+2% to all stats, 50,000 Greater Essence
Heavenly	Reach Heavenly Realm	+30 to all stats, 50 000 Greater Essence

Monster Hunter	Kill 5000 different monster types	+50 to all stats, 50 000 Greater Essence
Crucible of the Body	Go through a harrowing experience to improve your body by forging it in the harshest conditions possible based on your body type.	+500 to endurance and vitality, +2% to all stats, Unyielding (Body Perk), 50 000 Greater Essence
Immortal	Reach the Immortal Realm	+50 to all stats, Aging process halted, 100 000 Greater Essence
Beyond Understanding II	Focus and specialize your understanding of a tier 6 skill.	+250 to all stats, 100 000 Greater Essence (per focused skill)
Glaxon Town	First to Clear the Glaxon Town Wild Dungeon	+2% to all stats, 50 000 Greater Essence
The Witness of Journey's End (Unique)	Reach at least a combined power level of nine tiers. And embody an ideal.	+400 to all stats, +5% to all stats, Conclusion Dominance, 100 000 Greater Essence
Evolved	Reach the Evolved Realm	+100 to all stats, 200 000 Greater Essence
Aspect Mastery	Master your Aspect and improve it to tier 9	+150 to all stats, 500 000 Greater Essence
11th Dome	Defeat the Leader of the 11th Dome.	+500 to base intelligence and wisdom, +10% to all stats, Key to Chamber of Treasures (R'lyeh), 10 000 Immortal Essence
Dome Supremacy	First to defeat a Dome Leader.	+1000 to all stats, +15% to all base stats, 20 000 Immortal Essence

Oasis of Insight	First to clear the Oasis of Insight Dungeon.	+2% to all stats, 50 000 Greater Essence
Fruit of Jikharuud's Insight	Faced your inner selfl.	+100 to base Intelligence and Wisdom, +500 to Intelligence and Wisdom, 20 000 Greater Essence
Lesser Crucible of the Mind	Go through a mental experience to improve your mind by forging it under unusual conditions based on your mind state.	+200 to Intelligence and Wisdom, +10% to all stats, Lesser Enlightened (Mind Perk), 20 000 Greater Essence
Ascended	Reach the Ascended Realm.	+200 to all stats, 400 000 Greater Essence

Perks	
Tinker's Mind (Path Perk)	Your mind is quickened, able to think faster than ordinary humans. Able to alter perception of time for the user. +15% to intelligence. Strength of effect equal to 2x your intelligence.
Eternal Qi Control Master—Endless Threads (Path Perk)	Your Qi control is perfect, your ability without peer. You are able to finely manipulate your Qi and use as many techniques as you want at the same time. Each technique after the third one has its Qi cost increased by 25%, and the cost increases by 5% with every additional technique. Your Qi speed is increased by 200% and control is dependent on wisdom. Every technique beyond the third one slows down your Qi speed by 5%. Your Qi is so finely manipulated and your conduits and core perfectly aligned that nothing leaks out, making it difficult for other Cultivators to detect your Qi manipulation without an aid.

	Gain +40% to wisdom. You weave endlessly, holding all until the end.
Indomitable (Title Perk)	You are immune to all mind-altering effects from opponents that are on a lower tier of power than you.
Reaper's Aura (Title Perk)	You can no longer be scanned by any abilities, techniques, or skills from people who are on the same or lower tier of power than you. You may manifest the Reaper's Aura, filling all within your presence with dread.
Great Hunter (Contract Perk)	Any person whose blood you have drawn is marked by your power. The mark allows you to track them no matter the distance between you.
Void(9) Qi (Aspect Perk)	Your Qi passively enhances your body with the Essence of the Void. Making any foreign essence in your body disintegrate, the speed of the effect depends on the power of the foreign essence. While Void Qi is moving through your body, you are less susceptible to movement restricting effects. Tracking and scrying powers are less effective on you. The power of effect depends on the strength of attack. Gain +25% to strength and wisdom.

<p>Void Aura— Oblivion’s Persistence (Path Perk)</p>	<p>Manifest your Qi in the form of an aura around you. Dealing Void damage equal to 1.7x (0.2x) your wisdom per second. Anything marked by the Void Qi takes additional half of total damage dealt over the next four seconds. Gain 15% to wisdom. Oblivion endures.</p>
<p>Eternal Hunter: Reaper (Unique Perk)</p>	<p>You hold the essence of Twin Aspects of True Death. You are one part of two, and are inescapably linked with your other half. Your mind is linked with that of your other half, allowing you to speak to one another regardless of the distance. You may sense your other half regardless of distance. You gain Death Mark: Anything with a soul killed by you has its soul completely destroyed and returned to oblivion. You gain the ability to sense death. You gain the Presence of the Eternal Hunter Aura, when active, nearby beings based on your intentions suffer -25% to all regenerative effects and -25% to total stats, half of the drained stats are granted to you, the other half to the Scythe.</p>
<p>Astral Eyes— Sights Unseen (Path Perk)</p>	<p>You have achieved a great power, your eyes reflect your achievement. Their appearance reflects your inner spirit, you are no longer able to see the real world, instead you see a world in between the Ethereal and the Real. Allows you to see Class, Cultivation, and Skill, power currents. Increases the clarity of your sight. You gain +15% to vitality, +15% to intelligence, +15% to wisdom. You thrive in the darkness. And now, your blind eyes see what others cannot.</p>
<p>Send Thought (Contract Perk)</p>	<p>You and your contracted partner are able to send thoughts to one another regardless of distance.</p>

<p>Unyielding (Unique Perk)</p>	<p>Your body is highly resistant to physical damage and can function at peak condition in all states, even after it was damaged beyond the point where most would falter.</p>
<p>From Nothing—To the End of All (Path Perk)</p>	<p>Your soul transforms into a pure piece of oblivion. Your physical body is transformed into a void-energy based matter. It will retain human-like appearance and sensations, retaining all the gifts of Mu, but it will no longer function as one. You will no longer need to breathe or eat food, but will need to consume Void Qi or Essence. Reproduction will only be possible through use of powers. Upon destruction of your vessel or upon suffering critical soul damage, your soul will be transported to the closest Void or related type Essence Plane for recovery. Time to full recovery depends on vitality and wisdom stats. Current: 8 years. Upon recovery you will be able to reconstruct your body and leave the Essence Plane. Your soul can survive without access to the Void or related Essence for only a short time, if your soul is deprived of that type of Essence or prevented from entering an Essence Plane, you will die a True Death and return to nothingness. Gain +15% to wisdom and +15% to endurance. Without a beginning and without an end. You are an agent of oblivion.</p>
<p>Field of a Thousand Cuts (Skill Perk)</p>	<p>Your My Foes, Torn Asunder allows for great devastation. Once per day you may create a field of a thousand cuts all around you, creating spatial tears in a twenty meter radius around you that will cut any foe that gets near them and deal damage equal to 20% your current strength. One spatial tear can only deal damage once before disappearing. Undetectable except by special perceptions. Gain +10% to strength.</p>

<p>Adept's Conduits (Path Perk)</p>	<p>Your Qi conduits are made for greater control. Allows for extreme command of Qi through conduits. +10% to wisdom.</p>
<p>Total Knowledge (Skill Perk)</p>	<p>Your My Sphere, Total Clarity allows you to sense even the smallest changes in a sphere around you. Once per week, you may activate Total Knowledge and gain complete understanding of the position of everything in regards to you, the effect will last for 10 seconds. Size of the sphere depends on will. Gain +10% to intelligence.</p>
<p>Conclusion Dominance (Title Perk)</p>	<p>Once per three months, for three minutes you may see the strings of future probability of all reality in the three hundred meter radius around yourself. By expending your will you can bring/cause a False End to any and all things by cutting the string, no matter the plane of reality. The amount of will necessary and the difficulty of cutting the string increases with: length of the probable future, power disparity, opposing will, size of target.</p> <p>Upon the duration's end, if possible, the cut strings will be reconnected and returned to the previous path and state. The changes may be irreversible, as everything including reality itself, ends someplace and sometime.</p>
<p>Wolf Claws (Contract Perk)</p>	<p>You can draw upon your contracted partner's power. Once per day you may summon crystallized blood-claws on your hands. The claws durability depends on your contracted partner's power.</p>

<p>Mark of the Endless Core—Oblivion Well (Unique Perk)</p>	<p>Your core is endless. It can encompass the whole of oblivion. Its physical size is set and will never change. The inside of your core can be deepened endlessly. Current core size equal to 150% of the original core size, your Qi regeneration is equal to 80% of the original core's regeneration. Drawing in Essence past the point of it being full will deepen the core size. Cycling has greater benefits, each cycle increases the core size by an extra 5%. You can convert drawn-in Essence to Qi and replenish your core, as long as the Essence is of the same Aspect as your Qi and it is tier 6 or higher. Gain +50% to wisdom.</p>
<p>Forged In Stars (Bond Perk)</p>	<p>Any item worn by the user gains +50% to their durability.</p>
<p>Greater Swift Mind (Path Perk)</p>	<p>Your mind is swift. Your thoughts travel at increased speeds, gain +500% to thought speed. Increases the ability to alter the perception of time by 200%. Gain +15% to intelligence.</p>
<p>Evolved Form: Wolf of the End—True Death of All (Path Perk)</p>	<p>Assume your Evolved form, that of the Wolf of the End. Your body turns into a giant wolf made out of your Qi aspects, your form gaining the properties of the Qi used (Current-Void—Stillness: everything you touch will start to disintegrate, the Essence in your surrounding slowly has its state brought to Stillness Gain +40% to wisdom). Gain +100% to all stats and your ability to sense death increases by 200%. All techniques cost 60% less and you gain +50% to technique speed. +20% to endurance and +20% to strength. You will see the end of all.</p>

<p>Territory (Path Perk)</p>	<p>You may craft a Territory separated from real realm that you can physically enter.</p>
<p>Master of Void (Path Perk)</p>	<p>You may exert influence on Void Essence around you. +15% to endurance and +15% to wisdom.</p>
<p>Key to Chamber of Treasures (Title Perk)</p>	<p>Your Soul is marked with a key that will open a certain door.</p>
<p>Lesser Enlightened (Title Perk)</p>	<p>Your mind is resistant to mind effects and can function at moderate condition in all states, even after it was damaged beyond the point where most would falter.</p>
<p>Stillness(9) Qi (Aspect Perk)</p>	<p>Your Qi passively enhances your body with the Essence of the Stillness. Any forces or objects approaching you lose their momentum depending on their power. While Stillness Qi is moving through your body all Essence seeking to influence you is 20% less effective. Any techniques you use that utilize Stillness Qi will seek to bring any Essence they touch to stillness. Gain +25% to endurance and +25% to wisdom.</p>
<p>Adaptive Infinitum Chassis— Twilight of the End (Unique Perk)</p>	<p>Your body is forged for adaptive regeneration. It is made out of Void and Stillness. You no longer suffer from stat impairment and sickness.</p> <p>You no longer have endurance. Your current endurance stats and bonuses are added to your</p>

vitality, you can never gain any more endurance. Endurance based effects don't work for you. As you have no endurance, any force impacting you will damage you.

The effects of your vitality on your base regeneration are increased by 5x. Your body constantly regenerates, your passive regeneration drains your stamina, the more damage it needs to regenerate in order to keep your body whole the more it drains. Anything that pierces your body will immediately start the adaptive regeneration process. Stillness of your body will still the attack and still the expansion of the wound, and Void will start destroying any foreign Essence and start regenerating your body, draining your stamina and Qi. Any time you are damaged, your vitality scales and increases based on the amount of damage suffered. The higher the damage you suffer the higher the boost to your vitality, starting at 2x to 150x.

Disadvantageous effects of Stillness and Void no longer apply on you. Your Void and Stillness effects are 30% more effective outside your body.

Adaptive Regeneration allows your body to adapt to any harm after regenerating. Suffering the same manner of attack again will have your body adapt and compensate, decreasing the effectiveness of the attack. Experiencing the same manner of damage a second type will have it only deal 80% of its damage to you. Third only 60%, fourth 40%, fifth 20%, on the sixth you are immune to that manner of attack. The effect lasts for three minutes and the timer is reapplied with each instance of attempted damage.

	You gain +50% to wisdom and +130% to vitality. That which does not kill me, makes me stronger.
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Cultivation	Path of the Final End (Ma)
Stage	Early Ascended
Aspect	Void(9); Stillness(9)
Base Technique	Mantle of Gathering Twilight
Branch Technique	Twilight Cutting Void Flicker
Fruit Technique	Final End

Cultivation	Path of the Unbreakable Wall (Re)
Stage	Peak Heavenly
Base Technique	Twilight Shaping Cast
Branch Technique	Field of Twilight's Calm
Fruit Technique	Avatar of the Twilight Reaper

Passive Skills	Active Skills
Celerity	Perfect Cut: My Foes, Torn Asunder
Perfect Resonance Sense: My Sphere, Total Clarity	Pouncing Rush
Enhanced Adaptation	Target Mark
Enduring Trained Body	Divided Mind
Greater Restoration	Mind Shield >> Greater Mind Shield >> Mental Fortitude

Strength	6425
Dexterity	5450
Vitality	16870
Intelligence	8515
Wisdom	13312

He smiled at seeing that he could finally take on more skills. He already had plans for that. After he was done, he glanced in Tali's direction.

"Now, we should pay a visit to the Midnight Reign Sect."

* * *

"This is the stupidest idea that I have ever entertained," Tali grumbled, not for the first time. They had passed into the Midnight Reign territories yesterday and into a deep forest thrown into darkness, not even the moonlight penetrated here. And they were keeping their presence... hidden. Ryun was practicing his Void manipulation. His Peak Evolved perk had granted him the ability to influence the Void Essence around him with a lot more finesse than what he was able to do before. Since he had lost his **Silent Hunter** perk he was trying out new ways of being stealthy. The Void already protected him somewhat, but he was going a step further. He was releasing a constant stream of Void Qi from his entire body, just letting it go, then he influenced it after it moved away, creating a shroud around himself. It was so faint that the Void could barely even be seen, at least according to Tali, his Eyes saw the Void intermingling with all of the other Essence around him. He was using the Void to target only specific Essences, which was far harder than he had thought it would be. But he had weeks of practice on their way here. They had taken the land route, extending their journey and taking the time to train Ryun's new body, and help Tali shake off her rust as she prepared herself to attempt to grasp the inspiration for the Eternal Realm.

He was targeting only the Essence of Sound, Light, and Scents. Erasing them as soon as their bodies made them, basically erasing most of their presence. True, Tali was using Sky to catch anything that got past him, but

he was proud of what he was accomplishing. He was even trying to exert his will on the Essences around him himself and hold pull them toward his core, allowing his Void to catch them before they went too far away.

“It will be fine,” Ryun responded to Tali. “Anrosh said that we had a standing invitation. Besides, their Sect Head wanted to speak with us, and here we are, coming to him.”

They had left Anrosh to deal with the sect. Ryun knew about things in the background, but he wanted her to deal with them. She could handle it now, she just needed to get her confidence. No need to drag her out of the sect again.

“How do you think that they will react when we just appear in front of their doorstep? When they realized that we passed through three of their territories without them noticing us.”

“Relax Tali,” Ryun added. “The two of us are probably the most powerful people for thousands of territories around. There isn’t much that they can do.”

Tali closed her eyes and groaned. “What did I tell you about ambushes? Anyone can fall,” she told him sternly.

Ryun nodded his head, remembering what she had told him of her battle with Awirren. “Not everyone can feel everything around us for kilometers, which both of us can.”

“I could do that when I was ambushed,” Tali turned and glared at him.

Ryun conceded the point. “Well, it is too late now.”

Tali grumbled.

“Any idea what kind of power this Sect Head has?” Ryun asked after a few minutes of silence.

“Based on what Anrosh and Lesamitrius said, I can say a few things with certainty. He has an undead body that focuses on high endurance and strength. Being undead would mean that his regeneration is low, but he would be unbothered by most wounds. Now, from what Anrosh described about their fight...” Tali paused for a moment. “It could be formations, or arrays. Though I doubt it. The far more likely thing is that he has a preparation-heavy Class.”

“A preparation-heavy Class?” Ryun asked.

Tali nodded. “Yes, something that allows him to put protections on himself, maybe with conditions. The way he reacted when Anrosh got two of those threads... It has to be something like that, a weaver of some kind. Weaving boundaries or condition-based traps. Judging by the power that Anrosh described, most of them are probably on a pretty long cooldown, so it makes sense that he didn’t want to waste more with their duel.”

“It makes sense?”

“From what I gather about this man he is... a planner, someone who rarely fights. He prepares for fights. And that makes him very dangerous. He could’ve spent centuries layering his threads, centuries of layering power over his body. If we had to fight him, we would first need to get through all of those defenses before we even had the opportunity to go after the real him. I wouldn’t want to fight him, if I am being honest.”

That surprised Ryun, despite her talk about being ambushed and crippled, she had been very vocal about her power compared to everyone else in the sect.

“Hm...” Ryun just said. He could see how it made sense. For all they knew the man had thousands of such layers of protection on his body. And who knew what all they could do.

“He was upset after Anrosh managed to get only two of them, and judging by their power I would say that those were just the outermost layers, probably the weakest ones too,” Tali said.

“Well,” Ryun added. “Good thing we are not planning on fighting him.” Tali just grumbled again. Ryun turned his attention back to his Void control, he was slipping, and he could see Tali’s Sky Essence doing more of the work. They still had a couple of weeks of walking to do, just enough for him to get better.