

Alchemy 1691

Chapter 1691: The Agreement

Yan Yating, one of the Trinities of the Legion heads, led the war efforts against the Western Continent, attacking all the different individual kingdoms in revenge for what the White Tiger had done to the other Immortal beasts.

The cultivators of the Western Continent were strong, but they were nowhere near as strong as the ones from the Eastern Continent. And with 2 other continents behind them, the war was completely one-sided.

Neither the northern countries nor the southern countries of the Western Continent were left alone.

Meanwhile, the Dragon Emperor, along with the Empress, took the Talon Legion to the mouth of the beast itself. They went to attack the White Tiger's domain.

The Dragon Emperor stood in front of what he had been told by his wife was the entrance to the White Tiger's domain and there he took out the Ivory sword and cut into the wall of the Secret realm, creating an opening large enough for the army he had brought along to attack inside.

Their appearance was sudden and their attack violent. The beasts weren't ready or organized when it came to the battle and the Dragon Emperor went on to fight the stronger opponents.

He let his wife handle what he considered minor as compared to the White Tigers themselves. He arrived at the palace sometime later with an elite group of attackers and went into battle.

He personally killed 3 beasts that were strong enough to be considered his equal. One of them was a large Lynx cat, another a snow leopard. The final one was a violent black jaguar who was the strongest that he had to fight against.

The Dragon Emperor had only one job here and that was to kill any and all descendants of the White Tiger. The battle continued for some more time, before a brown-furred white-

stripped Lynx appeared, large and mighty.

Immediately, the Dragon Emperor knew that he was dealing with an Immortal.

"Little human," the Lynx spoke in a sonorous voice that seemed to carry with it an authority of the ages. "Why do you attack us when we have done no harm to you?"

"No harm?" the Dragon Emperor spoke back, fearless, for he knew no Immortal could attack him without killing themselves in the process. "The White Tiger attacked and wounded all of our rulers. He tried to take over the world. We have come back for revenge and compensation."

"My husband did no such thing," the Lynx spoke. "Go back and we will let you be."

More beasts arrived around her. A Lioness, a Snow Leopard, a black Wildcat, a Puma, and a regular tiger stood behind the Lynx, causing the Dragon Emperor to nearly step back in fear.

Every single one of them was an Immortal. The strength here was enough to take over all the Continents had the White Tiger really chosen to do so. More beasts joined then, none an Immortal. But their strength was still a force to be reckoned with.

The Dragon Emperor looked at them and was inwardly happy that none of them were White Tigers. Had even one been such, he would have been troubled.

"We will not leave until we have been satisfied," the Dragon Emperor's voice roared through the secret realm. "The White Tiger attacked the other Immortal beasts and wounded them. However, he died, so it falls under you to make right what he did wrong."

"He did nothing wrong," the Tiger snarled at him.

"Our lord is one of honor. He did not attack the others," the Snow Leopard said.

"They fought—"

The Lynx rose her limb to stop them all from speaking. "What do you want as compensation?" she asked. "Spirit stones? Artifacts?" she asked.

"We want you all to leave this world," the Dragon Emperor said. "Leave and do not return. We do not want another White Tiger."

"That is not up to you," the Lynx said. "The White Tiger will always be one of the four rulers of this world. This is how the treaty was made. But, if that is what you want, then we will leave. Will you stop your attack on this land if we promise to leave?"

The Dragon Emperor looked at the Lynx, surprised that she was agreeing so easily. "As long as you do so," he said. "I want an oath from you that you will all leave with not a single one of the White Tiger's bloodline remaining in this world."

The Lynx frowned slightly. "The White Tiger's bloodline has been in this realm for tens of thousands of years. Their bloodline is diluted and almost nothing, but it exists in many beasts in this forest, including the weakest ones. What you ask of us is impossible."

The Dragon Emperor frowned. Asking them to take every single beast in a forest that spanned half a continent was not feasible at all. "Then take away anyone you can find here with the White Tiger's bloodline that has a True realm or higher cultivation base. And I want all 6 of you Immortals to leave as well."

The Lynx slowly nodded.

"That shall be done within the year," she answered. "Now make an oath that you will take back your armies if I do what I say."

The two reached a mutual agreement and made oaths on both sides.

The Dragon Emperor left the secret realm after that, taking everyone with him. With the oath in place, he had no reason to worry about the White Tiger's family wiggling out of it somehow.

The war had already mostly ended by then with the Western Continent left to ruin. Most of the kings had died, all thanks to the Dragon Emperor's legionnaires who were told to focus on the kings and queens.

They had also looted the Western Continent for anything and everything valuable, leaving behind barely any Saint Spirit stones in the end. It was a shame that they could not loot the Secret realm just as well too, but that was alright.

For now, the Dragon Emperor had done what he could and had gotten rid of every King or White Tiger that could be a threat to him. Now came the time for peace.

The next few thousand years were pleasant for the Dragon Emperor. He lived his life normally, focusing on what he had come to love, Alchemy. He let his son start to handle more and more of the Empire so he learned it for when it was his time to become the Emperor.

2 thousand years later, when Long Huan was born, the Dragon Emperor handed him the Ivory Sword. At the same time, he made it official that Prince Fangyu was to be the Crown Prince.

More time passed and the 2nd prince grew as well, becoming a man who wasn't very interested in ruling and politics. The Dragon Emperor let him do what he wanted.

As for their third son, the Emperor and Empress decided not to have any more. They were fighting prophecies, so they would fight it properly. There would be no third prince.

More and more years passed, until one day the Azure Dragon finally revealed himself to the Dragon Emperor, now completely healed from his wounds.

Chapter 1692: Strange Phenomenon

The Azure Dragon's arrival took the Dragon Emperor by surprise.

"Your Majesty, you-you-you are okay? Are you healed?" he asked the man who walked into his palace hall. "I was never made aware that you had healed."

"It took some time," the Azure Dragon said. "I was only healed completely about a century ago and decided to live in peace for a time. I only came out because that bloody man was about to kill himself."

"Yes, we didn't know what to do with the situation at all," the Dragon Emperor said. "It is a good thing you came, or there would have been many other fatalities."

The Azure Dragon tossed the small clear vial filled with liquid in his hand. "Still, that man managed to make quite the poison. I would've needed days to heal myself from this," he said and tossed it to the Dragon Emperor.

The Dragon Emperor caught the poison and stayed stiff in fear of what the poison would do. "Don't worry, that glass bottle can hold Immortal poisons without any problem. Even if that might be the most potent Saint Poison, it is still not able to do anything to the bottle."

The Dragon Emperor nodded slowly, losing somewhat of his fear of the poison in his hand. "Why are you giving me this, Your Majesty?" he asked.

"I have no use for it, so you should have it," the Azure Dragon said. "You've done well in my absence the past few millennia. I know it was your duty, but take that as my thanks. Use it against your enemies in the future if there are any."

"Thank you," the Dragon Emperor said.

"Anyway, I'm going back to my realm," the Azure Dragon said. "I have someone to spend my time with now. I'll let you meet her if you are free sometime in the future."

The Azure Dragon left.

"Her?" the Dragon Emperor was left stunned. What did the Azure Dragon mean by her? Had he found someone while he was in his secret realm busy healing?

It seemed that the Azure Dragon would be leaving him alone for a while longer, so the Dragon Emperor let him have his fun. He had no more than 1200 years in this world anyway.

Sooner or later, he would be gone from here.

Around that time, the Dragon Emperor started wondering what he was going to do as well. All 3 of his prophecies had been thwarted by now.

He only had 2 sons and planned on no longer having any more children, so he had beaten the first of the 3 prophecies.

For the second prophecy, there was nothing amounting to 7 that rose in colorful lights. Maybe it was something that had yet to happen, but he was quite certain that it was the Kingdoms of his empire that it talked about. And 5 had risen there, not 7.

Even if he did count the Azure Kingdom, which existed since the birth of the Azure Imperium, it was still only the 6th Kingdom. Since the Beast's Paradise was its own thing that he never fell with his hands, there were no 7 colorful lights that rose.

As for the third prophecy, with both the White Tigers and the Kings gone, the Dragon Emperor had nothing to worry about anymore.

Long Fangyu was growing more and more competent with how he handled the ruling of the nation for the minor things where his father was not required. He had worked himself up to the top of the army and was considered the 3rd most important individual in the Empire after the Azure Dragon and the Emperor.

He was considered even more important than the Empress.

Long Huan didn't follow in his father's or brother's footsteps and instead did his own thing. He learned politics and how to rule a nation too, but he never truly learned fighting or war. He was also only slightly better than most when it came to cultivation, and he didn't have any real talent at all.

He wanted to live a normal life, so sometime later, he left the palace to go live on his own somewhere to the south.

Still, it was peace.

And the peace lasted for no more than 2 centuries.

The Dragon Emperor was busy making some pills when suddenly he felt the aura around the world change. He quickly walked out of the palace along with his wife, looking around at the changes that were happening.

Lights of Gold and Green spread through the sky, causing phenomena that came out of nowhere.

The Dragon Emperor wasn't sure what the gold light was, but the green one he could tell. It was... Wood aura?

Winds picked up around the continent and strange harmonies played in the sky. Sometimes, lightning flashed from the clear blue sky as well.

The phenomenon lasted for no more than 20 minutes, but it was enough to make a very long-lasting impression on the Dragon Emperor.

"What was that?" the Empress asked, confused at it all.

"I... don't know," the Dragon Emperor said. He took out a talisman and quickly messaged the Azure Dragon to ask for his help, but no reply came.

"We'll know soon enough," the Dragon Emperor said and sent every one of his subordinates to find the cause of what they had all seen. Soon enough, reports started coming in on weird instances where people appeared out of nowhere, calling themselves players.

They truly came out of nowhere as they had no background at all. Most of them seemed to really like fighting and were very aggressive in nature.

The Dragon Emperor made his people try and find out more about these players who appeared by the thousands in every place. As more and more appeared and their information was gathered, one thing became clear.

These players were very, very talented, and could break through in realms as if it was nothing. Most of them were destroying their cultivation base for sure, but there were enough that were improving at a good rate while maintaining their foundation that they scared the Dragon Emperor.

Thankfully, there seemed to be no King amongst these newly arrived people.

The Dragon Emperor wanted to learn more about them but he had to pause as he was called by the Azure Dragon. Finally, nearly a month later, he sent a message saying he would explain the cause of the phenomenon.

So, the Dragon Emperor, along with his wife, went to the Azure Dragon's realm.

When they entered, they were taken to the flower field outside of the small pond where the Azure Dragon waved for them in his human form.

The two of them went over and stopped when they saw what was next to him.

"You wanted to learn about the phenomena, didn't you?" the Azure Dragon asked excitedly.

"Yes..." the Dragon Emperor said slowly. Was there more to understand? Was it not heralding the arrival of the players?

"Well, that was a birth omen," the Azure Dragon explained with pride.

"Birth Omen?" the Dragon Emperor asked with a shocked look on his face. "Of?"

His eyes moved from the Azure Dragon to the two that lay on the field, basking in the sun.

There lay a large white cat, snuggled next to whom was a newborn white kitten.

"His name is Qing Shouchuang," the Azure Dragon said with glee. "He's my son."

Chapter 1693: Pure White Tiger

"Greetings, Your Majesty," the White Cat spoke. "I'm Shi Meiyong. It's a pleasure to finally meet you after all this time."

"Yes, it's a pleasure to meet you too," the Dragon Emperor said. "Congratulations on the son. I assume he's healthy."

"Shouchuang is healthy and strong," the White Cat said, slowly petting the little white kitten that was smaller than the size of her palm.

Shi Meiyong... the Dragon Emperor found that name a little familiar for some reason, like he had heard of it somewhere.

The Empress sat beside the flower field and greeted the White Cat as well as the newborn. While she started talking to the two, the Dragon Emperor simply looked at them.

He was very much so surprised to see the son of the Azure Dragon. "When you said you found someone to spend your time with, did you mean her?" the Dragon Emperor asked.

"Yes," the Azure Dragon said excitedly. "And that phenomenon was my son's birth, so you should stop worrying about him."

"I'm not as worried anymore," the Dragon Emperor said. "Weirder things have been happening outside. You might not be aware, but people from some other world have started appearing and are very talented."

"Other world?" the Azure Dragon got curious. "From higher realms?"

"Maybe," the Dragon Emperor said. "But they seem to not be as aware of cultivation, so I'm hesitant to say they are from higher realms." His eyes kept moving toward the White Cat and the small kitten for some reason.

There was something there that bothered him, and he couldn't tell what exactly it was.

"Hmm, I'll check what is happening when I have the time," the Azure Dragon said. "Before that, I must do something else. In a week, I plan on announcing my son's birth. And then, we will have to go back to the Beast Paradise so Meiyong can spend time with her family."

"Ah! Right," the Dragon Emperor finally remembered. "The Golden Lion, Leader Shi, she's his daughter?"

"Yes," the Azure Dragon answered. "She was one of the ones sent here to take care of me when I was weak. We ended up spending time together and got close."

"I see," the Dragon Emperor said. "I did hear something about leader Shi having a child, but I wasn't aware his child was not a Golden Lion as well."

Now that he was saying it out loud, the Dragon Emperor finally realized his cause for confusion as well.

"It's not that surprising," the Azure Dragon said.

"Maybe not," the Dragon Emperor said, his eyes narrowing at the situation. "But this certainly is. How is the son of an Azure Dragon, not an Azure Dragon? In the first place, how did the child even get conceived? Aren't you two quite incompatible to have a child?"

The Dragon Emperor couldn't wrap his head around the event. He whispered the last part. "In the first place, aren't the Azure Dragon's children born from an egg?" he asked.

The Azure Dragon chuckled. "There are trivial facts that everyone knows in the higher realm that you would consider a great piece of information," he said. "We are incompatible as beasts, yes, but a beast's human form lets him achieve a miracle that would otherwise be impossible."

"Your human form?" the Dragon Emperor asked, not understanding.

"You will get what I mean when you go to the higher realm," the Azure Dragon said.

"Okay..." the Dragon Emperor said softly. He had some inkling of understanding as to what the Azure Dragon was talking about. Still, another question kept bothering him.

"How did you end up with a son that isn't an Azure Dragon though?" the Dragon Emperor asked. "I don't mean any offense, but isn't the Azure Dragon's bloodline supposed to be the strongest? How come a cat was born out of you two instead of a dragon?"

"Well, as much as I wanted to have a dragon child, I still only ended up having a cat as my son because his mother's bloodline exceeds mine in the end," the Azure Dragon said.

"That's... not possible," the Dragon Emperor said. "How can an Azure Dragon have a bloodline weaker than a white cat?" He looked back at the mother and child. No matter how good they were, these pure white cats...

Pure white...

"She's not just any cat," the Azure Dragon said. "She holds the bloodline of the White Tiger, one that is significantly stronger than mine. When we return to the Blessed Sun realm in a thousand years, she will go through an evolution ritual that will turn her into a proper White Tiger."

The Dragon Emperor felt as though his entire world had come apart at that word. His eyes slowly moved toward the large white cat and then at the child.

A Pure White Tiger. It was only now he saw his mistake. White Tigers were white, but they also had black stripes on their body. They weren't all white. Which meant... if his prophecy were to somehow come true, it would be because of one of these two beasts in front of him.

The Dragon Emperor felt himself panicking. All this time, he thought he had dealt with his prophecies. He had changed them, he had beat them. And yet, here he was, seeing another one come true right before his eyes.

No, this couldn't be. This couldn't be happening to him again.

"I... I heard somewhere that..." his mind raced. "That is two incompatible beasts end up having a child, the one born usually doesn't have—"

"Oh that, yes," the Azure Dragon said quickly. "It is true that children born from non-compatible beasts mostly don't have the bloodline of either beast, but we won't have to worry about that. You saw the omen, you saw what it said."

The Dragon Emperor couldn't help but nod thoughtlessly.

"My son was born with both Supreme Metal and Wood root," the Azure Dragon said excitedly. "He was born with both the White Tiger and the Azure Dragon's bloodline. He will no doubt create miracles."

The Dragon Emperor looked back at the Azure Dragon in shock. "Supreme Metal and Wood root?" he asked, unable to fathom what was said. "Bloodline of both the White Tiger and the Azure Dragon?"

"Yes," the Azure Dragon said. "All he has to do is grow up and go through both of our family's rituals. I can only imagine the shock on my elder's face."

"I see," the Dragon Emperor said meekly. He looked at the two white cats for the last time and said, "I think we should leave now. There is much chaos in the Empire right now. We will have to be there to handle things. I'll see you later, Your Majesty."

"Oh, you're leaving already? But you just came here," the Azure Dragon said.

"That's alright. We'll meet again soon," the Dragon Emperor said.

"OK then." The Azure Dragon had no reason to stop him. "We'll meet again soon. I'll let you know when I plan to make the announcement."

The Dragon Emperor nodded and left the secret realm. He didn't know how he returned to the palace. All of his thoughts were focused on this very thing. He had worked so many years of his life toward stopping this very thing from happening, and yet... here he was presented with the same problem.

"We can't waste any more time, dear," the Empress said from his side.

"Huh?" the Dragon Emperor looked around. "What?"

"That White Cat," she said. "We have to kill both of them as soon as possible."

Chapter 1694: Oath and Command

"K-Kill?" The Dragon Emperor looked at his wife in surprise. "But... but he's his Majesty's son. That beast is his soon-to-be wife. We can't kill them."

"What other choices do we have, dear?" the Empress asked. "We've already done so much to escape from your prophecy, what's one more death?"

"But... it's the Azure Dragon's son. I don't know if I can—"

"It's kill or be killed, my husband," the Empress said. "What do you choose?"

The Dragon Emperor grabbed his head in his hand and clutched his blue hair in a grip. The answer was simple. He wanted to live, so he would do anything to live.

The prophecy... was it really coming true after all this time?

Above your realm shall they proclaim your end. A King, a son of a King, and a Tiger pure White. If this was to come true, where were the King and the son of a King?

Or was it referring to the little cat whose father was the Azure Dragon? In that case, was King not a literal term and instead a generic term for a monarch?

Had he been looking at it wrong the entire time?

'No, that can't be,' the Dragon Emperor thought. 'A King means a King. Otherwise, I would have an even larger problem in my hand. In the first place, if the prophecy counted the Azure Dragon as a king, then he couldn't kill me anyhow.'

"We must go for the White Tiger first, the bigger one that's the main threat," the Dragon Emperor said. "The smaller one is too weak to do anything, despite its talents. It won't be a problem for a long time."

"We will still have to take care of it," the Empress said.

The Dragon Emperor nodded before letting a sigh release. "Are we really attacking the Azure Dragon? It feels... wrong."

"Anything for our survival, dear," the Empress said. "We will need to make preparations now. Immortals can't attack us, correct?"

"They can, but not the Rulers. They made an oath to never kill us," the Dragon Emperor said. "If they do, they die."

"What else do we know about them?" the Empress asked.

The Dragon Emperor gave a short explanation of what he knew. "Oh right, the Azure Dragons are known to be close to the element of Space. We will have to be careful about it. I don't know if this Azure Dragon has grasped the Dao of Space, but he must certainly have the Dao of Teleportation. Anyone that is an Azure Dragon is said to know how to use it simply by being its bloodline."

"Teleportation... that will be difficult to deal with," the Empress said.

The Dragon Emperor nodded along with her and thought for a moment. "Actually," a thought came to him. "We do have a way to deal with it. At least, we have a way to interfere in it."

"Interfere?" the Empress asked.

"The Ebony sword," the Dragon Emperor said. "It has the power to interfere with teleportation, I believe. If we can use it, we can stop His Majesty from throwing us out."

"I see, that works," the Empress said and continued making plans. In the end, once everything was decided, it was time to act on it. They needed to kill the White cat and the child before the Azure Dragon could take them away from the secret realm.

The Empress made her way to her son's quarters to meet him before they got ready to leave. Long Fangyu was surprised to hear that his mother was going to try and break through to the Immortal realm and happily let go of the Ebony sword that was in his possession.

The Empress would have been more than happy to get the Ivory sword too, but she didn't have the time to go looking for her second son or wait for them to return.

The Emperor gathered the best of the best to get them prepared for what was basically another war.

Yan Yating, the legion head of War stood before the elite group of soldiers, as they all waited for the Dragon Emperor to command them.

The Dragon Emperor arrived and told them to do one simple thing.

They were all to make an oath that for that day and that day only, the group of them would absolutely follow all of his and his wife's orders without any question and never tell anyone what happened that day.

If they were not willing to do so, they could leave right away.

Everyone had been a member of the military for at least the past 2 thousand years, so nobody had any qualms about following that one rule. So, without any hesitation, everyone took the oath.

"Since you've all made the oaths," the Dragon Emperor said. "Let us move. There's a war to fight."

Everyone enthusiastically went along with the Dragon Emperor. The Empress came along with them and the group of fighters started getting confused. Some asked the Empress to stay behind, but she wanted to fight too. She was, after all, the 2nd strongest right after the Dragon Emperor.

The group of soldiers was still confused about where they were going. Yan Yating started having a really bad feeling.

Then, the Emperor took them to a teleportation formation and used a token only he held to teleport them all into the Azure Dragon's realm.

"Where... where are we, Your Majesty?" one of the soldiers asked.

"We are in the Azure Dragon's realm," the Dragon Emperor told them. "Here, you will find a White Cat and its kitten. Find them, and kill them."

The soldiers behind the Dragon Emperor looked around with a confused look. "Umm, Your Majesty..." Yan Yating started speaking. "What do you mean—"

"You all made the oath to follow my orders for today," the Dragon Emperor said. "Now go do it. Kill anyone that gets in your way."

The soldiers paled in fear, but the oath made them act. Immediately, they flew away from where they were in search of the White cat. They found her lying in the sun and attacked.

In a panic, Shi Meiyong attacked back as well to protect herself and her son, getting into a fight despite only being in the Saint Transformation 5th realm.

The Azure Dragon appeared in a flash, teleporting from somewhere else, confused and surprised at what was going on. "Stop it!" he shouted. "What are you doing?"

He created a small gust of wind to stop everyone from attacking, making a buffer between the group.

"Your Majesty, please step aside," the Dragon Emperor said. "We will be quick about it."

"About what?" the Azure Dragon asked, appearing in front of one of the attackers who managed to move past the wall of air using a treasure of his. The Azure Dragon simply defended the person's attack, doing nothing at all in retaliation.

"Your Majesty, my apologies, but your wife and son are going to kill me in the future," the Dragon Emperor said with an emotionless voice. "I must get rid of them before they can be a problem."

"You... you want to kill my wife and son?" the Azure Dragon asked in disbelief.

"As I said, please step aside," the Dragon Emperor said. "We'll be quick about it."

Chapter 1695: Azure Dragon's Defense

Qing Tianchui absolutely could not believe that he was hearing something so absurd coming from the mouth of the man before him.

"You... want to kill my wife and son... because they might be a danger to you?" he asked, unsure if he was even hearing it correctly.

"Yes, that is what my prophecy says," the Dragon Emperor told the Azure Dragon. "Your wife and son will be responsible for my death."

"PROPHECY?" the Azure Dragon roared in anger. "You're doing this because of a stupid prophecy?"

"I can understand your feelings, Your Majesty," the Dragon Emperor said. "But I'll have to ask you to put those aside for now and let us do what we came to do."

"You..."

"Besides," the Dragon Emperor continued. "You can't fight back. You'll bring the wrath of the Heavens if you continue." He then turned toward his men and gestured for them to continue.

The Azure Dragon immediately reacted, using the least amount of Qi he could to defend his wife and child. "Stop it!" the Dragon shouted at the soldiers. "I am your ruler and you will listen to my command."

The soldiers hesitated for a brief moment, a look of genuine anguish appearing on their faces. Someone even cried, screaming apologies as they continued attacking again.

2 soldiers fell to the ground, writhing in pain for some reason, dead.

The Azure Dragon's eyes widened in shock as he failed to understand what was happening. "What did you do?" he asked the Dragon Emperor. "What did you—"

His words stopped halfway as he turned and teleported, appearing right in front of his wife as a spear was about to go for her heart.

The Azure Dragon grabbed the spear, clutching it tightly as he stared at Jie Tianyue whose eyes betrayed her look of fearlessness. "Stop this!" he shouted at her. "Is this how you two repay me for all I've done?"

"I'm sorry, your Majesty, but this must be done for my husband's survival," the Empress said. "You fight for your partner's life. I fight for mine. Please understand."

Then she employed her Immortal Qi and struck out an attack.

The Azure Dragon quickly attacked her only to redirect the attack. As it was an Immortal attack, he couldn't stop it as easily as he had the others.

The attack flew off somewhere, leaving a resounding boom in the air. The Azure Dragon used the momentary slip in concentration from the Empress to slam his arm into her stomach, pushing her back, but at the same time employing the Dao of Teleportation to send her outside of the secret realm.

Confusion filled the Azure Dragon's face as what he wanted, didn't happen.

The Empress was pushed back by the force of the palm slam. She grunted in pain, but she wasn't teleported away at all.

"What?" he couldn't understand. Why had she not teleported? Why had his Dao failed?

A possibility came to him and he grunted in anger. "That damned sword," he thought before waving away another attack that came toward them.

He looked at the people that attacked him and frowned. Something was going on there too. They weren't listening to his command despite looking as though they wanted to.

"What did you do to them?" he asked the Dragon Emperor who stood in the air, doing nothing. "Why are they like this?"

"I made them follow my command for today," the Dragon Emperor said. "They gave me their oath."

"You... you are a scum!" the Azure Dragon said. "To think I celebrated the day you were born. To think I let your father name you after me."

"Let us not waste our time cursing each other, Your Majesty," the Dragon Emperor said. "We will have plenty of time to do so later."

The Dragon Emperor brought out his spear and joined the fight. He attacked the Azure Dragon— not to kill, not that he could— but to stop him from teleporting to his wife.

He had the Dao of Space Expansion and he used it each time he could to stop him from getting close to his wife.

Meanwhile, the Empress handled the task of killing the White cat and the child, teleporting them each time to attack.

The Azure Dragon tried to fight the Dragon Emperor while protecting his wife from the other attackers at the same time. Each time he focused his attention on one person, another one joined the attack, distracting him.

He used his Intent and spiritual energy to attack some of them, but even attacking with that caused Heaven to get angry at him. He really couldn't do much except defend.

If only he had someone strong to fight against, like the monster from the Central Continent that he had to face all those years ago. He could go all out if that was the case and then worry about his safety later.

The Azure Dragon did what it could, and during some of the times, teleported next to some of the soldiers, sending them out of the secret realm. The Dragon Emperor and the Empress could come in anytime they wanted thanks to the formation of the secret realm and the sword.

The Azure Dragon teleported and stopped the Empress again, but the Dragon Emperor attacked him and pushed him away.

The fight was getting more and more violent, and some attacks were making it past the Azure Dragon's defenses. He was stopping the stronger ones as they were the ones he prioritized, but the weaker ones he could not get to attack Meiyong.

There was a legion's worth of fighters here, each stronger than the next one. Kingdoms would fall within hours if they were to go to war, and here they were attacking a new mother.

Meiyong stopped what she could too, but as someone who had only recently given birth, she wasn't fit enough to fight such a battle of life and death. On top of that, she had her child to protect, who she kept under her at all times.

There was blood on Meiyong's white fur now, with wounds showing in some places. She was surrounded from all sides, attacked all the same.

The Azure Dragon tried to teleport out with her multiple times, but either the Dragon Emperor or the Empress would interfere with his plan by attacking them as he tried to do so.

The Empress's sword especially was a problem as the teleportation aura was disrupted by the sword.

"Damn you!" the Azure Dragon shouted, fighting even more, teleporting out those he could to bless the fighters.

The attacks dropped for a while as the soldiers were distracted. The Azure Dragon sensed the arrival of beasts that worked in his secret realm. They were here to aid.

He was happy, but the happiness lasted for only so long. These beasts were no fighters. They were weak and were only here to take care of the realm while he was wounded.

Against a legion of the strongest humans in this continent, they fell like birds to a volley of arrows. Soon, the beasts were dead, with the only ones remaining being him, his wife, and his son.

As the Azure Dragon stood before the army, he started to understand that he could not only defend. If he wanted to save his wife and son, he would have to risk fighting back.

He would have to risk getting hunted by the Heavens again.

He would have to risk his life.

Chapter 1696: The Judgment Comes

Everyone in the secret realm immediately stopped and gaped as a raging torrent of aura gathered around the Azure Dragon. The sky churned as the wind whipped in every which direction, the aura that should exist causing phenomena rarely ever seen before.

Slowly, his features changed. His limbs grew scaly, his finger turning to talon. He grew a tail that elongated and so did his head.

Two horns grew out of his head, like antlers but striking blue. His body grew thick scales as well, the brilliant azure metallic objects overlapping each other from head to toe. His head grew a snout, with two sets of long whiskers falling from either side of the face.

The Azure Dragon finally revealed his full body in the battle, and it was one of majesty. The resplendent body seemed to glow blue in the sunlight, and the size made him look as though he was ready to swallow a mountain.

Qing Tianchui looked at the ones that were attacking them and then at his wife and son. He would protect them at all costs.

The large aura he had gathered suddenly burned bright and turned into the bright light that left his body, turning into lightning bolts.

Forks of lightning bolts streaked through the air, forking into even more, tinier strikes that struck each and every single one of the people that was there.

The Empress disappeared before any attacks landed on her, flying far outside of the secret realm. She was the only one that escaped the true Immortal attack.

The Azure Dragon's attack was strong enough that the heavens didn't accept it. Immediately, dark clouds rolled into the sky and the Azure Dragon looked up, frowning at what was up there.

Heavenly Judgment had come for him and this time he couldn't hide in his secret realm.

He still focused on the attack, making sure he was continuously using the lightning bolt to tear through their defenses. Whenever he tore through one, he hurt that person enough to incapacitate them and then stopped attacking.

One thing he couldn't do here was kill a human.

If he only attacked, maybe he could get away with two strikes of the Heavenly Judgment.

The first one was strong, but always the weakest. It struck the Azure Dragon, and he used his techniques to defend against it. Still, he came out wounded.

The Azure Dragon roared out in pain. He had no defensive artifacts anymore so he had to take the attack with his own body.

The ones that he did have had been used up for the last Heavenly Judgement he had to go through. This time around, he would have to fight against heaven as naked as a newborn baby.

The soldiers finally got time to breathe as the relentless attacks were stopped on them. They all looked tired and unwilling to fight, but the Dragon Emperor shouted again.

"Go! Kill the cat!" he shouted.

The oath grabbed onto the soldiers and they moved even when they feared death. Perhaps, they moved because they feared death.

The Azure Dragon held onto his pain and gritted his teeth, snarling at the incoming men and women. He then took a deep breath and roared.

Everyone close to him lost their minds at once as the spiritual attack sought to knock them out unconscious. Most of them were indeed knocked out, with only a few surviving the assault.

Those ones still came out of it on their knees, clutching their head as if it were going to explode at any second now.

Even Yan Yating, who was perhaps the 3rd strongest among the humans temporarily lost consciousness before coming back to consciousness with a raging headache.

Perhaps only the Dragon Emperor didn't fall unconscious even for a second amongst the entire group, but he did indeed feel the pain of the attack.

The Azure Dragon huffed loudly, breathing in and out. He looked down at his wife and asked, "Are you okay?"

Meiyoung's body was weak. She had taken too many hits. But with a bit of rest and maybe a healing pill, she would be fine.

She slowly nodded and showed her son underneath her who had red on his fur as well.

The Azure Dragon panicked for a moment but then realized that his newborn son had not been hurt. It was only his mother's blood.

Still, seeing his son in danger enraged him once again, and quickly turned his head toward the few that remained that were still starting to stand up.

The Azure Dragon gathered more aura around him and shot them with lightning once again.

Many fell in an instant as they weren't ready to defend themselves against any attacks. Those that did did not last for a long time. They were weak and without much resources.

Only those like Yan Yating and the Dragon Emperor who had a large pool of Immortal Qi could last long enough.

More and more fell, and the Azure Dragon lessened the attacks he made. The lightning in the sky surged as well, and he knew the 2nd Heavenly Judgement would fall at any time now.

Was that going to be the final one? Or would there be another one after that?

Only the Dragon Emperor and Yan Yating remained in the end, and Yan Yating quickly fell too. The Dragon Emperor lost with no possible defense left and was tossed back like a ragdoll in the wind.

The Azure Dragon stopped his attack and looked at the situation. Only the Dragon Emperor continued to stir. But not for long.

The Azure Dragon took one last aim and shot a lightning bolt at the Dragon Emperor.

The Dragon Emperor could not stop this attack which landed on his body, sending torrents of pain through him. The fact that the Dragon Emperor had a very strong physical body didn't even matter at all.

He was treated like a training puppet all the same in front of the might of the Azure Dragon.

The Dragon Emperor felt the lightning coarse through his body, ripping apart in places. There were holes in his body now, his arms completely destroyed. He leaned against a rock, all thoughts lost to him.

He had momentarily forgotten what he was even doing here.

His instinct told him that something else was going to happen next and that he should be ready to stop it, but watching the Azure Dragon slowly look up to the sky, he had a feeling that he was worrying needlessly.

The Azure Dragon sighed, feeling the remnant pain in his body. The next lightning strike was incoming and it was going to be a strong one. He wasn't sure if he was going to be able to survive this one, but he hoped he did.

'Let's just hope this is the last one,' he thought and readied himself. He flew toward the sky to take on the lightning bolt.

As he was about to do so, his eyes widened and he immediately looked down.

The Empress had teleported next to Meiyong while they thought everything was over and were distracted by the Heavenly Lightning.

Before either of them could stop her, the Empress dug the sword she had in her hand deep into the White Cat, stabbing directly where the Beast's core was.

Chapter 1697: Survive and Live

Shi Meiyong screamed in pain as the sword dug into her while she was distracted. She was already wounded, and this one was particularly bad too, but on top of that, it also dug right into where her Beast Core was.

Qing Tianchui moved at once, slamming his tail into the Empress, tossing her away to who knows where. He came closer to his wife and saw the sword that was stabbed into her.

The Azure Dragon looked at the stab in shock and horror. He could tell, even without using his senses that the sword had stabbed directly where his wife's beast core was situated at.

"Meiyong, your—"

The Heavenly Judgment fell for the second time and the Azure Dragon immediately put up the best defense his distracted self could.

The lightning strike still landed on him, leaving behind a brilliant light and a shockwave that tore through the ground and trees on either side of him.

Humans that were close by, unconscious, were thrown away by the wide, and sent elsewhere.

Meiyoung barely managed to stay with her son because the Azure Dragon protected them with his Qi at the last moment, leaving himself vulnerable.

When the thunderous sound faded, it left behind a wounded Azure Dragon, part of whose body was now bare with no scales. He fell to the ground, slumping in a coil around his wife and son, looking at them.

His breathing had long since grown haggard and he looked up. The dark clouds still roiled in the sky. There was more coming.

He could not handle more.

The Azure Dragon looked at his wife, feeling pain for her.

Meiyoung's core was separating from her body as the meridians that connected the two were no longer. Maybe a miracle could save her, but the Azure Dragon didn't know what that would be.

Even Meiyoung's soul was slowly dying, her Saint Transformation realm body feeling the damage of the soul on the body. She could no longer move most of her body, and barely even speak.

He looked at the sword that was stabbing his wife and felt his heart grow cold. Then he looked at his son and knew he had to do something.

"We're both dying," the Azure Dragon said. "But... our son won't have to."

"What can you do?" she asked. She used her weak spiritual sense to talk with her husband

"I can send you two away, but we must give up a lot for it," he said softly. "Our son must give up a lot."

Meiyoung's eyes teared up as she looked down on her innocent son whom she had managed to successfully protect all this time.

"Do what you must," she said. "Save our child, at any cost."

At any cost. The Azure Dragon felt tears flowing down his eyes. Tears of anger. Tears of sadness.

He closed his eyes once, letting the tears stream down

"You must survive Shouchuang," the Azure Dragon said with a hoarse voice, but his voice still roared with the authority of a thousand lightning bolts.

The Sword of Teleportation did not just interfere with someone's teleportation. It absorbed the teleportation aura, storing it for later use.

The Azure Dragon latched onto that aura that had been gathering in the sword for the past however many years and finally used it. The black sword burned white and created a sphere of silver energy around the mother and son.

But unfortunately, that wasn't enough. The aura was strong, but it couldn't get them away from the Eastern Continent. He needed more teleportation aura, and the only place to get that from right now was the Azure Dragon's bloodline and essence.

Unfortunately, the Azure Dragon was completely out of it, destroyed by the Heavenly Judgment.

'I'm sorry, son,' he thought. He felt pain in what he must do.

He reached for his son's body and burned the Azure Dragon's bloodline and essence inside of him, destroying both the bloodline and his Supreme Wood Spiritual root.

Immediately, an immense amount of aura appeared from inside the child, the aura of the potential he would lose.

The Azure Dragon didn't let it go to waste. He grabbed onto it and used the Dao of Teleportation to turn it into Teleportation aura of a magnitude larger than what the Intercontinental Teleportation formation produced.

The Teleportation aura instantly grabbed onto the mother and son. The Azure Dragon wished to leave with them as well, but as the thunder in the sky rang even harder, he knew he couldn't do so.

He would only endanger them instead.

"Survive!" he said with what he could muster. "And Live!"

The light flashed and vanished as the two white cats disappeared from where they were, and teleported away. Teleported to a place where she and their son would be taken care of.

He had sent the two to the White Tiger's domain, for that was the only place he considered safe for the two. No other place could protect them any longer.

A last strand of spiritual sense reached his mind, and his wife's final words spoke out to him.

"Thank you," she had said. "And I love you."

The Azure Dragon could not stop his tears any longer. "Live!" he roared. "My son, you must live."

He looked toward the wounded Dragon Emperor who stared back at the Azure Dragon in shock as though it was him that was going to be his death. In those moments, the Dragon Emperor wondered if he had misread the entire prophecy.

"I shall fulfill this prophecy of yours, Tiankong," the Azure Dragon roared as he had nothing else to lose.

"Because of my wife and son, you shall die today."

The Azure Dragon used what bit of energy he still had and channeled them into a single target technique, ready to obliterate the Dragon Emperor.

The wounded Dragon Emperor could only stare. He had no more power to stop whatever was going to happen next. "No..." he slowly said. "Not like this. I've lost so much for this. I've done so much. I cannot... I cannot die like this."

The Azure Dragon let out the technique known as the Dragon's Breath and threw it at the Dragon Emperor.

The Dragon Emperor watched as the attack that would kill him was used and—

The Empress appeared in front of the Dragon Emperor, bloodied and beaten, and used what power she had left to move him out of the way.

"NO! Tianyue!" the Dragon Emperor shouted back.

The Empress said something but the deafening blast that followed drowned her words. The Dragon Emperor landed far away from the attack and quickly looked back, but when he did, his wife was no longer there.

The Azure Dragon immediately grimaced and his massive serpentine body started writhing in pain. He had done the one thing he had made an oath not to do 14 Millennia ago.

When he came to this world, he had made an oath to only harm humans when necessary, and never kill. Today he had broken that very oath and the broken oath killed him from the inside.

He felt his soul twist and turn on the inside as it was lacerated apart by the broken oath, quickly torn to shred. Within seconds, the Azure Dragon started dying.

So when the third and final Heavenly Judgment fell from the sky, there was nothing the Azure Dragon could do to protect himself.

And with a loud resounding thunderous strike, Qing Tianchui, the Ruler of the Eastern Continent, the Azure Dragon, passed away.

Chapter 1698: Descent

The Empress's death haunted the Dragon Emperor. The words she last spoke, the unknown message left him wondering what it was that she wanted to tell him as she died.

Did she want to tell him that she loved him? Did she want to curse him? What was it that she said? He didn't know, and it haunted him.

His wife, the one who had been together with him for more than half of his life, had died without a last word. And she had died saving him.

He cried in the secret chamber in his palace, where he spent his days, claiming that he needed time to heal his body.

The healing had happened long ago. Now, he just stayed there because the silence made him hopeful that his wife's final words would come through.

The Azure Dragon's son, the little white cat, had most likely survived. Even if it hadn't, he needed to find the corpse at least. He would have to soon give command for some of his people to go look for them.

'The White Tiger...' the words still taunted him. Even after all this time, how was that one single prophecy coming after him time and time again? Had he not had enough of it by now?

He remembered what the White Cat had told him the last time he had seen her. She was the daughter of the Lion Leader of the Beast Paradise. Which meant her mother had the White Tiger's bloodline.

He had to do something about that.

That very night, the Azure Dragon left for the Beast Paradise and met up with the leader of the Lion Colony, Shi Guyong. His wife was indeed a White Cat.

After a few questions about where she had come from, the Dragon Emperor found out that she had been married off here 5 thousand years ago, and she was the daughter of the White Tiger who had died back then.

Shock filled him for a while, overtaken by rage and anger. There had been someone with White Tiger's bloodline living right here and he hadn't known about it.

Without waiting, he attacked the two.

The Dragon Emperor had no reason to fight the leader, but since the leader wanted to protect his wife, he was forced to kill him first and then go kill the White Cat.

The fight was a difficult one, but thankfully the Dragon Emperor had the foresight to set up a formation to hide the auras. Once he killed the two beasts, he made his way to the other beasts to gather them.

Once they were gathered, he threatened them and gave simple instructions.

The Beast Paradise was to close off for a thousand years and no human was to go in and out of the place in any way. Only those with the authority of the Dragon Emperor could be allowed to enter, and even then they had to be placed in scrutiny.

The reason why the beasts closed off their land was never made public and instead a rumor was spread that it was because the players had killed too many of the beasts, prompting them to take desperate measures.

Once the Dragon Emperor returned to his palace, he felt less like he needed to dwell on his wife's death and that it was time to give her a proper funeral.

However, before he could prepare for the funeral, he had been notified of a rather bad news.

Yan Yating and many of the soldiers he had taken to the Azure Dragon's realm recently had defected from the army and had gone into hiding. The news of it was spreading through the legion quite quickly.

The Dragon Emperor forced the rumors dead and then went to search for those runaway soldiers. He spent weeks searching for them but did not find them.

The Dragon Emperor didn't bother that most of them were gone, but Yan Yating was the war leader. Without him, the army would lose one of its 3 heads, perhaps the most important one.

Unfortunately, the Dragon Emperor had to return home empty-

handed and made preparations for his wife's funeral.

His two sons were back in the palace when the funeral procedures were done. The both of them believed that their mother had died while trying to ascend to the Immortal realm. What would they say if they knew the truth?

The Dragon Emperor felt alone after the funeral procedures were completed. As if there was nothing more to live any longer. He felt as though what kept him tied to this world was now gone.

The only thing he felt he had left now was to prepare to leave for the Immortal realm himself.

But before that, he needed to be as strong as he could. He could think of one thing.

The Azure Dragon's half-charred corpse was still inside the secret realm that was now blocked off by both humans and beasts. The dragon's body would still hold the Soul Space, which the Dragon Emperor could cut through to gain the treasures he held.

Any little thing could be a big help to the Dragon Emperor.

And for that, he needed the Ivory sword.

He called over his son to have a little talk, to tell him that he needed his sword, but Long Huan seemed to have seen something in him. His second son had recognized that he had changed.

Instead of returning with the sword, he had run off.

The Dragon Emperor hastily sent some of the legionnaires to go after him and bring him back. He didn't even care if his son was back at all. The prophecy always said one of them would leave him anyway. He only wanted the sword back.

But the news came back instead that there was a woman with him who had defeated everyone.

The Dragon Emperor was surprised by the news. Instead of letting the legionnaires send reinforcement, he went along himself.

The woman he saw there was too young to even be called a woman. She was still just a girl, and yet somehow was so very powerful. Her cultivation base had already reached the peak of the Saint realm, although the Dragon Emperor could sense some instability in her aura.

She protected his son, so he fought her to get through to him, but he couldn't get through her at all. For some reason, on just Qi alone, the Dragon Emperor lost.

This young girl had Qi that surpassed him.

The Dragon Emperor feared for his life as he knew if he continued this any longer, he would die. The young girl was way too strong and he could not beat her at all.

He had to fight along with 3 other people to keep her occupied in the first place.

So, in a last act of desperation, he took out the poison the Azure Dragon had given him and splashed it on her when he found the chance.

The poison immediately killed two of his men, but somehow it didn't kill the young girl. She was hurt, but not killed.

He moved to kill her with one last strike, but before he could do so, someone else stopped him.

The Dragon Emperor couldn't believe it at all when he saw the old man that stopped him.

Even his cook was going against him now.

Chapter 1699: Choose

Long Huan was gone from the continent somehow, and the woman he was with was gone with him. It was only later that the Dragon Emperor remembered that his son had said something about wanting to make a marriage official.

Had he married the girl then? He hadn't been in the right mind to care about that stuff back then. He still didn't.

The cook was gone too, running away. That bastard had lived right under his nose all this time, always hiding how strong he was.

The Dragon Emperor immediately put a stop to searching for the White Cat in the Eastern Continent and instead sent the people to search for them in the other continent.

On top of that, he made a small group of them search for his son and bring him back. If not, they were to at least the Ivory Sword and the Ebony Sword.

Another group of his soldiers, a larger but weaker portion, had left the army once again after he had forced them to an oath of secrecy after what had happened with the fight.

They had gone and were most likely going to go into hiding. He wondered if they would let him be in peace.

Time passed and the Dragon Emperor hid himself from the Empire. He had no desire to rule the empire, but this status of his was what gave him power over it, so he kept it.

However, with it came more problems.

With the lack of Empress, the court officials started pestering him to get another wife. An Emperor without an Empress was not a good thing for the Empire.

The Emperor fought back against those who pestered him for it, ignoring every advice. But the pestering continued whenever he came out of his secluded cultivation.

The Dragon Emperor did not care for this. All he wanted to do now was get as strong as he could in Alchemy, get the Azure Dragon's treasures, and then leave this world.

Years later, while busy practicing Alchemy, the Dragon Emperor gained a very strange piece of news.

In the Northern Continent, Xue Kuangren had died.

The man who was supposed to have been alive all those years ago had turned out to become a false immortal who terrorized the Northern Continent in secret for all of these years.

When the Dragon Emperor learned that it was an Alchemist named Yu Ming who had killed him in the end, he felt as if everything he knew to be true around him changed once again.

The entire reason he had believed that prophecies could be broken in the first place had been because this man had done it. However, that information had turned out to be false all along.

Prophecies could not be defeated at all. If something was fated to be, it would be.

The Dragon Emperor felt a strange sense of peace learning that. If everything was meant to be, then why bother? He would try to avoid dying however he could, but that was all that he would do.

He came out of his closed cultivation and this time didn't bother to ignore the pestering voices that called for him to have an Empress.

He chose one at random from his guard and married her in a small ceremony. The marriage was made public through the Newsboards that were now all over the continent.

That night was the only night he ever spent with the woman he had now made the empress. The only reason he even spent the night with her was because he had to consummate the marriage.

And somehow that one night had given him another child.

Long Hanjue, a son.

He now had three sons and the prophecy was fulfilled. He really couldn't stop it, could he?

The Emperor did not want to take care of this new son and left it for the new empress to handle that task. What even was the point now? The prophecy did tell him that one of his sons would be left behind.

This one was most certainly going to be it.

The other prophecy had come true as well.

By his hands kingdoms and continents fell. And from that had risen other kingdoms and empires.

5 new kingdoms came from what he had done in the Eastern Continent. And it was only as of late that he had found out what he had done in the Western Continent.

Two Empires had formed there, out of the chaos he had left behind. The Crimson Empire and the Luminance Empire.

Two more Colorful lights.

7 in total. Just as the prophecy had said it would.

All prophecies had been completed, all but the final one. The one regarding his death. Was he really just going to let it end that way?

Was he really going to let himself die after all that he had done?

He had destroyed kingdoms and led a continent to ruin. He had killed the one ruler he had always respected and looked up to. His wife had given up her life because of this.

No, he couldn't give up now. Not after all that had happened. Stopping the fight now would mean everything he had done, everything he had lost until now would be for naught.

He couldn't stop now. He shouldn't stop now.

The Dragon Emperor was determined to not let the prophecy come true anymore, even if it meant he had to fight it every single time.

And then he heard that the Phoenix in the Southern Continent had returned, and she had anointed a human to her throne, a young man by the name of Alex.

And he, to his surprise, was an Alchemist who could create pill clouds. And he the phoenix had named a king.

Fate was messing with the Dragon Emperor again.

'Whatever,' he thought. 'I'll just have to deal with it.'

It was time to call this new king and see what he could get out of him. And if by the end he couldn't get him to leave the title 'king', he would just kill him.

* * * * *

Long Fangyu's mouth gaped open the entire time his father told him his life's story. What surprised him more was that his father did not try in any way to make his side of the story sound good.

If he had, it was because he believed it to be so.

The truth had left the Crown Prince's mind reeling. All those new information, all the facts re-contextualized was too much for him to take in all at once.

All those kings that had been executed, the beast leader that had to die, his own mother. This was just too much for him.

"Choose whose side you are on now," the Dragon Emperor said.

"What?" the Crown Prince looked up, confused. "What do you mean?"

"Choose, whether you will help me from here on forward, or stand in my way. You will do one or the other and I would rather you tell me right now," the Dragon Emperor said. "This is why I told you everything without hiding. I want you to make the decision right now."

"I... I can't do that. I... I need time," the Crown Prince said. This was truly too much for him. He didn't even know how to feel about the man sitting in front of him. Was this really his loving father?

"Your instinct tells you to do something already, so choose based on that. Instinct can get you to do something that your logic usually tells you is a bad idea. I want to know what your instinct is," the Dragon Emperor said. "Now, answer me."

The Crown Prince gulped. His instinct was simple. His brother was right, and his father was a madman who had not just killed the Azure Dragon and his family but also brought the death of his mother.

How could he ever forgive him for such a thing?

But then... this was the man that his mother had given up her life for. This was who she loved, and this was who she could give her life for again.

No matter how much he despised him right now, he could not find a way to let his mother's sacrifice be in vain right now.

"I'll help you," he said in what felt quick to him. "I'll help you with whatever you need."

The Dragon Emperor nodded. "Good," he said and brought out something. It was a small talisman of some sort with he looked into.

"He is hiding the Dragon Medallion somehow. I can't seem to track it at all," the Dragon Emperor said. "Have them find him as quickly as they can. Search the continent and then move out into the ocean."

The Dragon Emperor stood and left the room after giving the order.

The Crown Prince remained in the room for a long time afterward. What had he just done? How could he have agreed?

This was a horrible mistake, just like all the other ones he had made today. Could he not make a good decision today at all?

His father no longer cared about him, he knew that. But every time he thought about his mother, tears filled his eyes. Her loss still lay heavy on his chest, and she had given up her life for this monster.

He clutched his head in shame.

'I'm not strong enough, mother,' he said softly. 'What should I do?'

Yet no answer would come for him. No help would come. In this place that should have been his home, he was all alone.

And alone he left the room to go see to what his father had ordered him to do. For his mother's sake, he would help the monster today.

Chapter 1700: In a Cave

Alex saw shimmering light above him, rippling through the water he was submerged in. It all moved so very slowly.

He reached out for the light, hoping to grab it, but he continued sinking deeper. Deeper and deeper he went as the light faded and darkness overtook him.

Alex gasped awake. He opened his eyes wide and breathed in deeply to leave the terrifying feeling of death behind. It had only been a dream, nothing else.

He breathed in and out a few more times before calming down. He wasn't dying. He was safe.

He was... safe?

Memories poured in of everything that had happened. From his sister and the others leaving, to Yao Ning's death, to finally his...

The last memory haunted Alex the most. The memory of the spear stabbing through his Dantian. The memory of his crippling.

He couldn't believe it at all. He was crippled.

He stared at the rocky ceiling above him, trying to process his feelings and thoughts. What was he to even think? Everything he had worked toward for the past half a century had been for naught in just one moment.

Alex sighed with dejection.

"Are you awake?" a voice asked.

Alex's eyes went alert all of a sudden. He tried to turn to look, but a sharp pain in his stomach made him stop.

He grimaced. So he was still wounded it seemed.

'Is the wound from my stomach not healed?' he thought. It was a surprising prospect to think about. He had gotten so used to healing within seconds that feeling a lingering pain from a wound made it feel weird.

Alex laid back down so that he didn't agitate his wounds any further. "Where am I?" he asked, in a rather hoarse voice.

"Where you are, I cannot tell you," the man said. "But I can tell you that you are safe, for now."

Alex tilted his head up to see the upside-down image of a man standing in front of something. Alex couldn't see much from this viewpoint, but he saw a lot of white. He also saw fire and smoke beyond the man, but nothing else.

"Did you save me?" Alex asked in a solemn tone.

"Yes and no," the man said. "I found you wounded and gave you shelter, so in a way I did save you. But, the one that truly saved you was that beast of yours. He fought dozens of ocean beasts to protect you."

"Had it not been for him, you would've most likely been fish food a long time ago," the man said.

'Fish food...!' Alex thought. Was the dream he had seen just now not been a dream then?

"So Pearl saved me, huh?" Alex asked the man.

"Pearl? Is that the name of that tiger-like cat beast with the white fur?" the man asked. "I suppose the name makes sense. Yes, it was him that saved you. By how bloodied and wounded he was, I assume he fought for a long time too. He looked more hurt than you, but then you seem to have been crippled too."

"I have no Qi, do I?" Alex asked.

"No," the man said. "Do you need some time to process this?"

Alex shook his head. "Maybe later. I have more questions than thoughts right now."

"I do too," the man replied. "Your beast disappeared into his beast space before I could ask how you got into this situation. Can you sit up?"

Alex tried. Pain flared from his stomach once again, but he overcame it this time around and sat up, leaning against the wall of what seemed to be a cave.

He was right by the mouth of the cave, the bright light from outside pouring in, letting him see just where he was.

Alex saw the ocean in the distance, past some treetops that were below his eye level. He seemed to be on a mountain of sort with a cave on it.

He turned around as the man in the white robe walked toward him, carrying a small pot in his hands. The man's robes weren't as good-looking as Alex had expected them to be, torn in multiple places.

Alex lifted his gaze from the clothes to the man's face and his eyes went wide in shock.

The man's face was covered in a long white mustache and scraggly white beard, and his unkempt hair made him look more like a beggar than anything. He was also considerably older-

looking than what his voice suggested.

However, that wasn't the main reason why he was shocked.

It was because he recognized the man before him. "It's you!" Alex said.

The old man's face scrunched in what Alex thought was a frown. "Do I know you?" he asked.

"You do," Alex said, "We've met before, um... 18 years ago? You stopped the ship I was in, coming from the Southern Continent to check for something."

"Hmm?" the man narrowed his eyes a little before it went wide again. "Oh, is it you, King of the Southern Continent?"

Alex nodded.

"Ah, I didn't expect to see you again," the man said. "Especially not like this."

Alex wanted to retort about the man's dress but kept quiet on that topic. "Thank you for saving me," he said. "How many days have I been out?"

"3 days, Your Majesty," the man said. "You've been out for 3 days. Most likely because of your blood loss. You were pale as an oyster meat when I first saw you."

Alex could imagine. He had been wounded and had been losing blood profusely. The fact that he had even lived was something else.

The man gave Alex some time to think and brought out a wooden bowl from his storage bag. Then, he poured some soup from the hot pot he had been carrying.

"Here, I'm been making this for the past 3 days," he said.

Alex looked at the bowl skeptically.

"It's good for your body," the old man said. "It's made with Amber seaweed, Dawn Oyster, and many other nutritious ingredients that have been cooked in a broth for a long time. It will give you the strength you are lacking."

"Besides, you're a mortal now," the old man reminded him. "If you don't eat, you'll die."

Alex gave a disgruntled look, angry at those words, but he did feel weak. So, he nodded in the end and slowly drank the soup.

As the soup entered Alex's mouth, he tasted the incredible flavor of the soup, the thick texture of the broth, and the absolute harmony of saltiness and savoriness.

He couldn't put the soup down at all and only did when he finished it all.

Alex breathed out loud and huffed a little before wiping his face. He could feel an incredible warmth flowing through his body, making him feel so much more alert and alive.

It was incredible.

Did it taste so good because he was mortal? Because his body craved for food?

Alex didn't think it was just that.

He looked toward the old man, curious about something.

"Your name," he said slowly. "May I know what it is?"

The old man grumbled a little. "I cannot tell you—"

"It's Zhou Linfan, isn't it?" Alex asked the man and saw his eyes narrow in surprise.

That was all the confirmation Alex needed.