

# Reincarnated as an Energy with a System

## Chapter 461: White Flame

"You never told me you were a Duke's daughter," Ning told Camie.

"Oh, you never asked, master," the girl said. Now that she didn't have the same frowning face as back when she had visited the City of Beginnings, she looked a little more beautiful.

"Okay, if anyone asks who I am, just tell them I am with you," Ning said.

"Okay master, but why are you here?" the girl asked.

"Oh right, I'm here to find someone. Help me get there," Ning said as he gave her the information he knew.

"Oh, that room? Thats... not a area of the house I usually visit," Camie said.

"Oh, what is this place?" Ning asked.

"It's a spare room of sorts for the servants. Usually if they have people over, or we take in a few too many servants, they are given those rooms," Camie said.

"Hmm, take me there."

Camie nodded and walked in front while Ning followed her. After a minute or so, they came across the room.

"This is it," Camie said, resisting her urge to call him master in the presence of the maids that walked by.

Ning knocked on the door and waited. "You can go now," he told Camie, and watched her leave.

The door opened to an unfamiliar face. This wasn't the person he was looking for. 'There are more than one terrorists? Why is the duke letting them stay here? Or is it one of the servants?' Ning thought.

"Can I help you?" the person asked. They had been told that the servants wouldn't bother them, but somehow there was a guy on the door.

"Can I come in?" Ning asked with a smile. Before he even got an answer, however, he pushed the door to walk in on 5 people playing cards in the room.

They were all between the age of 20 and 40, and wore the same drab looking clothes, possibly to hide their presence from places.

"Who are you?" the people asked. However, one of them didn't speak. Instead, he held an incredulous look of shock and surprise on his face.

Ning looked at all of them. "Are you all from the Great Raiders group?" he asked.

The group were a little surprised that he realized their affiliation. When they were about ask how he knew, the one that was shocked immediately pulled out a gun and pointed at Ning.

"Wake up you idiots! That's him, the person I shot today," the man cried out.

When the group realized who he was, they all brought out guns as well as started using Aether to control his body.

Ning simply shook his head. "Who sent you to kill the princess?" he asked.

"The princess? HAH! We came here to kill you," the group said.

"Huh?" the moment Ning showed the slightest sense of hesitation, the group all shot at him.

Numerous sound of gunshot rang across the servant's quarters. The nearby servants immediately ran away in terror when they heard the noise.

Camie looked back in worry towards the room, but she didn't know if she should go help her master. After all, she wasn't the strongest at using Aether.

Dozens upon dozens of holes appeared on Ning's clothes. However, not a single drop of blood dripped from his body. In fact, there was not a single wound, not even a scratch on his body.

Just when he noticed the guns, Ning had already started strengthening his body with Aether. By the time he was shot at, the bullets couldn't even penetrate his skin.

Ning was himself surprised a bit when he didn't even feel the bullets hit him. It sort of let him understand for one how strong his body could get, and for another just how strong that dagger attack of Sam was that cut his arm to the bone.

'That vibrating dagger skill was really amazing,' he thought.

The terrorists watched in awe as they saw the numerous bullets on the floor. "How are you—"

Ning shot the bullets that were on the ground back towards the terrorists. He shot them so fast that the bullets ended up entering the bodies of the terrorists that weren't ready to protect themselves.

The only one that was still alive was the one that shot him in the slums today.

Ning walked up to the trembling man and grabbed him by the shirt. He pulled him up and asked him, "You were here to kill me?"

The man was too scared to answer, so Ning created a ball of flame next to the man's face and kept it floating there to threaten him.

"Who ordered you to kill me?" he asked with a serious tone.

The trembling terrorist was so scared that he practically started singing the answer.

"It was our boss. It was the boss. We have nothing to do with this. Our boss ordered us to come here and attack you. I swear," the terrorist shouted.

"Are you sure?" Ning asked.

"Yes! Yes!" the man cried.

"Very well," Ning moved the flame away from the terrorist's face. The terrorist sighed in relief when he saw the flame dim... just a second before it came back blazing in a pure white color.

The temperature in the room immediately skyrocketed as the terrorist started fearing once more what was coming.

Ning dropped the flame on him, burning him at such a high temperature, that in just a few seconds of touching the man, he had 3rd degree burns all over his body.

The man cried a terrible scream. In the next 2 seconds, his body charred, and in the next 5 seconds, it fully turned to ashes.

Ning then spread the fire to the rest of the dead bodies, making sure to isolate the fire only there and nowhere else. In less than a minute, the men that were originally in the room were there no more.

Ning looked at the room solemnly before decided to go look for this boss of theirs.

Once he got the information about his location, Ning vanished.

## Chapter 462: Great Raiders Boss

To the northwest of the empire of Xandria laid a small village close to the desert.

The village was far away from any other civilization and could only be seen through the railway tracks up in the mountain to the south.

Ning appeared in the air, above the same village.

"This is it?" he wondered as he looked down at the village with only a few people outside.

While the village looked like a normal, poor village, it was actually a base for the notorious Great Raiders group that was known to steal cargo from trains and merchants.

They were basically the bandits of this day and age.

"I wonder how they didn't get caught until now," Ning wondered.

Ning let go of his flight and simply strengthened his body as he dropped on the village like a bomb.

The raiders heard a loud sound and quickly came running to see who it was.

Ning walked out of a small crater as he dusted off the dirt on his body. He shook his hair to get rid of the dirt as he thought, 'I shouldn't have done that.'

He looked at the men that had walked out and asked, "where's your boss?"

The men looked at each other in confusion and didn't know what to do.

Ning snapped his finger, immediately creating a loud noise that hurt the people's ears. They dropped to the floor while covering their ears as the ringing noise got a little too loud for them.

"Don't make me ask again," Ning said to the men. "Where is your boss?"

A man walked out of the biggest house in the village, followed by a few other people that seemed to have just woken up from an afternoon nap.

"What's going on, boss?" they lazily asked the man that walked upfront.

The man was about 170 cm tall, had rough facial hair and a bald head. His body was near twice the width of Ning and looked to be around 50 years old.

He looked at Ning with a look of surprise and slight fear.

Ning looked at him and smiled. 'He recognizes me,' he thought.

"I will make this easy for you," Ning said from far away. "Tell me who made the order and I will leave."

The boss looked at the floor with his subordinates barely trying to get up.

He shook his head and turned back to Ning. "How are you still alive?" he asked.

"Why wouldn't I be?" Ning asked. "It can't be that you expected your little group to kill me, right? They barely even had an Aether Magister with them."

The old man got a little angry. Of course, they didn't have any Aether Magister to send away. The ones they did have were already sent to the capital to kidnap the first prince.

He had wondered what had happened to that group since they never even contacted him back. There were moments when the boss assumed that they had just run away.

However, it had turned out that they had died after being defeated during their task, and were then killed.

Ever since then, he had been waiting to get revenge, but he himself couldn't go, so he had sent his best assassins.

However, it didn't seem like they were alive either.

"How did you find us?" the boss asked, ignoring Ning's questions for the moment.

"It was easy. Your cronies gave me the location after I found them," Ning said.

"What did you do to them?" the boss asked.

"The same thing you wished to do to me," Ning said, not cowering in front of the boss.

"Good! Good! At least you came to die here. Men, attack him!" the boss shouted.

Both the sleepy and the hurting men started attacking Ning in any way possible.

Some shot bullets at him. Some burned him in the fire. Some dropped multiple giant rocks on him the size of his head.

Some also tried to tear him apart by using their telekinesis on him.

Ning waited for the charade to be over as he watched them in contempt while they did any damage to him at all.

The boss looked at him, knowing there was no way he would be hurt at all.

So, he took out a crossbow from his storage and created a very sharp-tipped arrow before loading it in.

He targeted Ning with the crossbow and shot it.

For the first time since coming here, Ning saw something hurt him. The especially sharp arrow had managed to give him a bit of scratch. That was it.

The boss looked in horror when he realized that the person they were messing with was no ordinary man.

"You all, retreat!" he immediately shouted, but the sound of the barrage made it impossible for the boss's voice to reach anyone.

The boss grabbed someone and shook him really hard to get his attention. "RUN AWAAAY!" he shouted.

The man was a little surprised, but he did what the boss told him to. Seeing one of their members run, the others stopped attacking and looked towards the boss.

"Runaway!" the boss shouted now that the sound was down. "Runaway before he g—"

The boss stopped mid-order as he couldn't speak. The air around him and inside of his stopped moving, suffocating him.

The other men were the same. They slowly started dropping to the ground. However, the boss remained standing.

In fact, despite being suffocated, he didn't look as suffocated as the rest of the people.

When Ning tried to check why that was, he realized that the man was actually using Aether to create air directly in his lungs. That way, despite not getting any air in, he was still breathing.

However, that wouldn't last very long. As the air outside was unmoving, if the boss kept creating air, he would either burst his own lungs or go unconscious from the amount of carbon dioxide his body was creating in his lungs.

"You and your men will die soon if you don't answer my question," Ning said. "Who gave you the order to kill me?"

## **Chapter 463: Dragging The Culprit**

The boss tried to speak so Ning loosened his control over the air.

"It... It was..."

Ning listened to the name of the person who gave him the order and was surprised. Ning confirmed it once more and the boss gave the same name.

"I had expected it to be the duke since your men were staying there. But... to think it was him," Ning was truly surprised.

"Please let us go. I answered your question," the boss cried out.

"That doesn't mean you didn't try to kill me," Ning said. In a flick of a finger, he gathered all of the men and grabbed them.

In the next moment, they were gone.

Ning appeared outside of the city walls, dragging the men with his Aether arts. When the guards saw him, they immediately drew their weapons in response.

"Wait right there," they shouted.

"Go call someone with higher authority. You have some terrorists here," Ning said.

The guards looked at each other and then at the numerous men that were somehow being dragged by a single person.

A police officer walked out, who instantly recognized Ning as someone from the palace.

"Brother, who are these people?" the man asked.

"Inspector Reen, these are the members of the Great Raiders group. I know you have a lot of problems with them, so I brought them here," Ning said.

The inspector was shocked when he heard that. "These are the people from the zoo incident?" he asked.

"Yes, can you please capture them?" Ning asked.

"Yes," the police officer said and got his men to capture them one by one. Most of them were already unconscious for some reason and the rest that was on the verge of being unconscious were given some drugs before being taken away.

"Should I call the palace to let them know about this?" the inspector asked.

"Sure," Ning said. "Actually, don't call them for another hour. There is something important in the palace happening soon."

Ning walked into the city under the watch of the various guards. Once a little further away, he disappeared.

He appeared back in his room in the palace. He walked out of the room and went toward's the prince's quarters.

Ning reached the room with 2 guards waiting outside and asked, "is the prince inside?"

The guards nodded, thinking nothing else of the situation.

"I see. Thanks," Ning said and pushed the door. However, it was locked.

"Hey, what are you—"

Ning burst open the door and walked in. The prince had been sleeping inside and was immediately woken up.

He sat up in his bed looking at Ning who walked in.

"Hey, stop right there," the guards immediately pointed their guns at Ning, but with the flick of a finger, Ning got rid of their guns and sent them flying back against the wall.

"Wh-why are you attacking me?" the prince asked in fear.

"You know why," Ning said and grabbed the prince by the hair. "You tried to kill me. Did you really think it would go as you wanted?"

Ning dragged the prince down from the bed, his black hair firmly grasped in his hands.

"And here I even thought I was saving you from the terrorists. That was your plan too, wasn't it?" Ning asked.

The first prince of the empire, Prince Felix screamed in agony as he felt his hair being ripped from the scalp.

The servants watched in horror as the prince tried to fight back against Ning's pulling.



People started gathering around Ning, trying to stop him, but Ning wouldn't budge.

Old man Tim arrived at the scene, watching furiously at Ning. "What are you doing, Mr. Ning. Let the prince go," he shouted.

"Move away, I'm taking him to the emperor. This little prince of yours has been acting terribly, and needs a little dose of punishment," Ning said.

Tim looked around in shock watching the guards do nothing. They had already tried everything from shooting to using Aether, but Ning was too strong for them.

"Miss Fiona, do something," he shouted.

Fiona looked away from the old man. "I'm sorry, senior Tim. He's too strong for any of us. For now, it looks like he doesn't plan to hurt the prince even more, so we should be relieved about that."

Lisa appeared on the scene, as well as every other member of the royal family.

Ning recognized most of them.

"Let go of my son!" a woman appeared out of nowhere. Ning hadn't interacted with her yet but had seen her from afar.

She was the Empress of the nation, first wife of the emperor.

'What was her name again? Felicia something?' Ning thought. He didn't care much about her at the moment, but since he was dragging her son, it was obvious she was angry at him at the moment.

"You people! Do something. He's hurting your prince and you are just watching," she shouted.

People tried to persuade Ning to let the prince go once again, and even attacked him, but not a single of their attacks phased him.

The Empress moved to block Ning's way and stood there. "Let go of my son. You will be hanged for this," she shouted.

Ning looked at her and asked, "Woman, MOVE!"

His loud voice brought terror in the mother's heart, but she stood firm.

"Sigh, if you don't move, I will kill your son," Ning had to resort to threatening her. He didn't want to harm a mother who was just trying to protect her son, so he decided to use a different approach instead.

And this approach worked. The Empress got scared and started shivering when she thought of her son dying.

"Your highness, you should move," Fiona walked up to her and slowly dragged her away.

Ning kept on walking after that.

"I know you have arrived, but don't do anything silly. I don't plan on harming the prince more than I already have," Ning said and carried on.

Finally, reached a giant door that lead to the Palace hall where the Emperor would spend most of his days.

He pushed open the door and walked in.

## **Chapter 464: Emperor Kain**

Emperor Kain was now 100 years old. After his father's death nearly 40 years ago, he had become the Emperor of the Xandria empire.

He was about 180 cm tall, had stark blonde hair, and a very young-looking face. If anyone saw him, they would think he was only 50 years old.

He looked way too young to be an emperor. He wore dark yellow pants with a white shirt that had golden embroidery on it. On his head, he wore the crown that made him the emperor.

He sat on a crimson throne, elevated by a few staircases, all decorated with a similar crimson carpet.

Around the hall were many different chairs on either side, none of which looked as fantastic as the throne.

Ning opened the door and walked in with the prince's hair still clutched in his hands.

As soon as the Emperor saw it, he stopped speaking and immediately got furious.

"What's the meaning of this? Let go of my son," he shouted. Anger flared in his face very quickly when he saw his son in trouble.

'So he does love his children. That should have been expected,' he thought. With Lisa telling him how he was never there for her, Ning always wondered if he was a callous man, but that didn't seem like it.

The two guards next to the emperor immediately shot out from behind the emperor like bullets and arrived next to Ning, ready to stab him.

"Your mere weapons won't hurt me," Ning said. "I suggest you tell your ministers to leave before we proceed."

The Emperor looked at Ning furiously and nodded towards the nobles and ministers.

The men stood up and left, their curiosity never diminishing in the slightest.

Once they all left and the doors were shut, Ning let go of the prince's hair and turned around to grab the prince by his shirt collar.

Seeing him move, the guards stabbed Ning. Their spears pierced through Ning, coming out at the other side. However, there wasn't a single drop of blood on their spears.

Ning ignored them and tossed the prince forward.

"Ask your son what he did. I'm sure he will confess willingly," Ning said. He ignored the spears for the moment even though they were starting to burn.

"Wait!" the Emperor shouted at the guards, but the guards were not sure if that order even meant anything anymore.

They had already stabbed him. What 'waiting' could they even do? Still, they pulled back the spear and waited with a confused look on their faces.

Maybe we shouldn't have gotten too hasty, they thought.

"Don't worry. Your spears could never kill me," Ning said with a smile towards them.

"What's your name, young man?" the Emperor asked. He was genuinely shocked that a person was able to survive while getting stabbed.

'How did he do it? Is he an illusion? But he just tossed my son. It didn't look like he used Aether. Besides, my guards should have felt the resistance and in fact, knew it really was him,' The emperor started thinking.

"My name is Ning Ruogong," Ning replied. "I am a temporary guard in the palace."

The Emperor looked at him with a curious face. "You don't seem to hold much respect for me. You don't even bow before me, or show me call me majesty," he said.

"I'll be honest, I don't really care about your status enough to change my way of speaking. I will respect you when I think you've earned it, but before that, I will just think of you as an ordinary human being," Ning said.

"I see," the Emperor said. "Then, maybe I ask, as an ordinary human father, why you've dragged my son to me?"

"Yes," Ning said. "Did you know about your daughter's feast in the slums today? Where she gave away food and blankets to the poor?"

"Yes, I did," the Emperor said. "I had approved it after all."

"Then did you know someone was shot during the event?" Ning asked.

"Someone was shot?" the Emperor looked at him with a serious face. "I'm sorry. I've been in multiple meetings today and I usually don't get unimportant news until the end of the day."

"But... this shooting sounds important, and yet I didn't hear it," the Emperor said.

"Well, that's understandable because the person that got shot... is me," Ning said. "And as you may see, I'm perfectly fine. So maybe it got pushed back to being unimportant news, but that's not the point I'm getting at."

"The thing I'm trying to get to is the fact that the person that ordered the shooting was your son," Ning said.

"What?" the Emperor turned to his son who had tears and snots running down his face, with a scalp that was very red.

"How do you know it's my son?" the Emperor asked.

"Because I asked the boss of the raiders he gave the job to," Ning said. "Did you know that about 4 or so weeks ago, I saved your son from a hostage situation in the zoo? You must've, right? I would consider that an important bit of information."

The Emperor looked shocked. "That was you?" he asked.

"Yes, that was me," Ning said.

"This boss you speak of, how did you confirm he was telling the truth," the Emperor asked.

"I have my ways," Ning said. "I've captured him and sent him to the police, so you can confirm it later as well. For now, I think you'll be interested in something else rather than your son's attempt to kill me."

The Emperor looked a little stunned. "What exactly did my son do?" the Emperor asked.

"The zoo incident, the hostage situation. All fake," Ning said. "There was never any threat. It was all set up by your own son, which I presume was to get something out of you."

"Right, what were the negotiations for with the terrorists? You would give them Gem in exchange for your son? Yeah, I think he was doing in for the gem."

The Emperor's eyes immediately turned cold and callous.. It seemed, he knew what it was all about.

## **Chapter 465: Questioning**

The Emperor stood tall and walked down the throne towards his son. He lifted his son using his Aether and looked at his crying face.

"Is it true?" he asked with a serious face. The prince, still with his snot-ridden face and teary eyes, only kept crying.

"Felix, Answer my question," the Emperor shouted, but the prince only kept on crying.

"Let me help a bit," Ning said and walked towards the Emperor. The guards immediately put their spears in front of Ning to block him, but with a casual push, he pushed them away.

The Emperor himself got cautious as he was still not sure what Ning's plans were.

Ning reached the prince and placed his hands on the prince.

"What are you doing?" the Emperor got ready to attack in case Ning did something to his son, but Ning stepped back from him before the Emperor reacted.

The Emperor looked back on his son and wondered what was happening.

"Go ahead, ask him anything you want. He will answer everything," Ning said.

The Emperor looked at Ning curiously. "What did you do to my son?" he asked.

"Don't worry. It's easily reversible. Besides, if I wanted to hurt your son, I wouldn't have dragged him all the way here in front of you. So you can safely assume that I have no intention of harming your son... yet," Ning said.

The Emperor didn't know what to say, but it was indeed true that despite all the pain his son seemed to have suffered, he wasn't truly hurt at all.

So, he turned around and started asking his questions.

"Were you the one behind the plan to get yourself kidnapped?" The Emperor asked.

"Y-yes," the prince answered.

The Emperor took a deep breath to control his anger, but he still showed it a little on his face.

"Why did you do that? Why did you put yourself and the civilians in such danger? Was it for the gems?" he asked.

"Yes," the Prince answered.

The Emperor stopped when he got the answer. He seemed hesitant to ask the next question that was running in his mind. He didn't want it to be true.

"Why... do you want the gems?" the Emperor asked as his heart started beating faster and faster, very anxious for the answer.

"To become stronger. I want to grow as an Aether user and be strong enough to take the throne for myself," the prince said.

There it was, the answer he had been so anxious not to hear, and yet his son spoke of it so easily.

Ning looked at the Emperor's surprised face and nodded to himself. 'He should have seen it coming. Not giving your first son the throne would certainly cause some problems,' Ning thought.

However, that was not the reason the Emperor was so surprised.

"How... how did you know that eating the Aether Beast's gem would give increase your Aether rank?" the Emperor asked.

"From a book," the prince said.

"You... got that knowledge from a book?" the Emperor asked suspiciously. "Where did you get the book?"

"Grandfather handed it to me in private during my 15th birthday. It was his diary he wrote since he was little. He told me to keep the book a secret," the Prince said.

The Emperor lost his footing as he stumbled to the ground. His son who he was holding up also fell to the ground.

"Your highness," the guards screamed and ran up to him to help him up.

The emperor was breathing heavily, his pupils dilated a bit more than normal. His arms twitched, especially his right hand which basically started shaking.

The emperor used his left arm to grab his other arm to hold it down. The guards picked up the emperor and placed him on the seat closest to them.

They brought out water from their storage and had the emperor drink it.

"Are you okay?" Ning asked, looking a little concerned.

"No," the Emperor said, a little bit of shakiness in his voice. "I'm not okay."

Ning looked at the prince and back at the Emperor before asking, "what's this about the diary?"

"That... that diary... it must hold the truth behind my father's legacy," the Emperor said.

"The truth about Emperor Kron?" Ning's eyes narrowed in suspicion. "Is there something in there that you do not want the rest of the public to know?"

"I... I..." The Emperor tried to calm himself for a bit. "I can't let the world know the truth. It's my burden to keep."

"Tell me what you've been hiding about your father," Ning asked. When he saw that the Emperor didn't want to speak about it, he said, "You can say it, or I will make your son say."

"No!" the Emperor cried out suddenly. "I... I will say it." The emperor sent out his two guards, despite their urges not to.

And then, the Emperor started telling a story of a time long past.

\* \* \* \*

Kain Xanders was born about 10 years after his father had won the war against the Aether Beast and brought peace to the land of Xandria.

They called him a Hero more times than they did an Emperor. Kron was happy to know how much his people loved him, and Kain loved to see his father being praised like that.

"I want to become strong like father someday," he thought to himself since childhood.

Kain was a single child of the emperor, but fortunately, he had come to acquire the blonde hair of his father, making him the sole rightful heir to the throne.

He remembered his father's feats throughout his life. Master in sword art at the age of 20. A master in politics at the age of 30, and perhaps the youngest person in the history of Xandria to become an Emperor, only at the young age of 37.

And he had done it despite being really mediocre as an Aether user. This was one of the reasons why his father sympathized with the non-aether users and made it illegal for them to be discriminated against.

As Kain grew older, his views of his father stayed the same, but... he could sense, and sometimes even see changes in his father.

## **Chapter 466: Addicted**

At the age of 40, Kain married his wife, the empress. After that, in the course of the next 10 years, he married 6 more of his wives, of which only 2 became his official wives and the rest became his concubine.

He was the sole bloodline holder of the Xanders bloodline, so he tried his best to improve the situation by having a lot of kids.

During this period, his father had grown more and more violent, while at the same time becoming sicker and sicker.

Kain didn't understand what was going on and none of the doctors gave a straight answer.

Until one day, he was called to his father's bed chambers when he was 60 years old.

Kain walked in to see his father, weak in his death bed. Next to him was the general commander of the defense army.

"What's going on?" Kain asked.

"The emperor wants to speak to you, your highness," the commander said and walked to the corner of the room to let the father-son have some time alone.

"Father," Kain said holding onto his hands. "I am here."

"Kain," the Emperor said in a slow and hoarse voice. "I need... I need you to do something for me."

"Yes, father. Of course," he said. "What do you want?"



"Go... go to the Undying Fort, and get the soldiers there to attack the beasts. I... I need their gems to survive," the Emperor said.

"Gems? You can survive with gems?" Kain asked, a little happy even. "We have gems at home father. The zoo had been sending us the cores for quite a while now."

"You IDIOT!" the Emperor cried out. "You think I don't know that? I have used it already."

"What?" Kain asked in shock.

"I need... I need you to kill more beasts to bring me the gems. This useless commander refuses to listen to my orders," The Emperor said.

Kain turned to look towards the commander. This man had been with his father for nearly 80 years now. He was one of the best Aether users in the empire, and yet... he was refusing his own emperor.

"Why are you refusing the orders of your emperor?" Kain asked the commander.

"I will not follow that order, your highness," the commander said. "I will not help him begin a war that will kill more innocent civilians."

"Huh? He's just asking you to kill some beasts. Not start a war," Kain said.

The commander still shook his head. "That will start a war with the Aether beasts for sure," he said.

Kain got a little annoyed. "How can you be so sure?" he asked.

The commander looked at him, dead in the eyes, and said, "because that's how the previous war started."

"What? What do you mean?" Kain asked.

"It's better if you ask the emperor," the commander said.

"What does he mean, father?" Kain turned around to ask.

"So what if it starts a war? What does it matter if a few thousand more people die if I get to live," the Emperor shouted. "With the gems, I will continue growing. With the gems, I will continue living on."

"You don't know how great these Aether beast's gems are. They were exactly what helped me defeat my brothers and take the throne," the Emperor shouted.

"What? I thought you used your swordsmanship and wit to defeat your brothers," Kain asked.

"Swordsmanship? Wit? PUI!! What use are those against pure power? Ever since I was young, I was born weak, however, the gems helped me grow stronger. Now that I'm dying, I need more," the Emperor continued shouting.

"It's like a drug," the commander spoke from behind him. "The gems, they are like drugs to the Emperor. Ever since he found out they increase his strength, he's been taking them."

"He went as far as to start an entire war using a fake premise that the beasts were attacking us. When in fact, the war had started much earlier, and they were just retaliating back."

"You have read the reports, your highness. You know what the war did. So many villages and cities were destroyed. So many soldiers died in the front line. So many of my own men died," the commander said.

"By the time I noticed what was happening, the war was already over. This is why I won't help you in anything you want to do," the commander said.

"Father... that's not true, right?" he asked, fearfully.

"Are you not listening to my orders too? Have your mind gone to the chamberpots as well?" the Emperor cried out.

"Father, we can't do this. The war... destroyed so many people. If we start another such war, Xandria itself will suffer a great catastrophe," Kain said.

"You think I care? Just get me the Gems. Go!" the Emperor shouted.

Kain finally understood that his father had far gone. The gems... the drug, its addiction had not only made him weak, but it had also affected his mind.

Perhaps, it had affected him from the very start.

He decided to take a stance. "No, father. If what you want brings destruction to the empire, then I will not let you do it," he said.

"Useless," the Emperor said after hearing his son. "I let you have too much freedom, and now this is what I suffer because of it."

"I don't need such a son," the Emperor shouted and brought out a sword from his storage and cut towards Kain.

Kain dodged backward. The Emperor was now standing up straight, his body and face's vein bulging from the enormous stress he was suffering.

"Your highness," the commander moved forward to protect the prince. However, the Emperor didn't stop.

He attacked the commander too like a madman. The commander couldn't fight back against his own emperor, so he was forced to stay on the defensive.

Kain was in shock, looking at the craziness in his father's eyes. The same eyes that loved him, they were now looking at him with hatred and intention to kill.

The Emperor was just too strong. Slowly, without any offensive threat, the Emperor started beating the commander.

Just then, from behind the commander, the prince ran forth... and drove a sword through his father's heart.

## **Chapter 467: Trauma**

After killing his own father, Kain never remained the same.

Soon after Kron died, Kain did his best to clear up any confusion and fabricated a story that said his father died from an old wound he got when he fought the beasts.

The civilians ate that story up like a freshly baked cake. After that, Kain took the throne as the emperor of Xandria.

The empire felt saddened over their old emperor's death, but Kain's succession brought joy to all of them.

While the empire rejoiced, Kain couldn't feel the same himself. The death... no, murder of his father had left a deep scar in him.

He would randomly wake up at night, the nightmares of his father's death still haunting him even when he woke up.

Every night, the nightmare came, followed by a screaming shout of his father's voice that called him a bastard as he had died.

Kain would wake up, full of sweat in the middle of the night, scaring the empress who would also wake up.

His hands shook with fear, the same hands that killed his father. Even when the empress tried to console him it was alright, he couldn't accept it. After all, she had no idea what he had done to protect himself and the empire.

As the nightmares continued, he didn't feel safe for him to stay around his family. So, he made a separate bed-chamber for himself and slept there alone.

He had already harmed one of his family, what if he harmed more? Thinking so, he stopped visiting his wives and children.

He separated himself from his family so that he never lost himself like how he did against his father. It was a defensive instinct that had kicked into him from all the sword training he had gone through.

Still, he couldn't guarantee that he would never repeat it again, especially since even to this day, the thought of his father's death kept on haunting him.

And now, his father was somehow back to haunt him through his own sun.

Ning listened to the tale of the broken man who kept it all bottled up, never revealing what he knew and felt to anyone. Letting the weight of what he knew to sink him deeper and deeper onto his own void.

This was not what he had expected of the Emperor to be like. He expected a valiant man like in the stories, but he was instead a lonely man, being trampled by his own memories.

"You don't have to say anything else," Ning said, not wanting to let the man suffer the thoughts anymore.

"Was that why you wanted the gem? To increase your Aether rank?" Ning asked.

"Yes," the first prince said. "Grandfather wrote that he got strong enough to defeat his brothers using the Aether gems, so I believed I could do the same as well."

The Emperor took deep breaths to calm himself. Ning wasn't sure if he heard what his son said or not, but he decided to continue with his questioning.

"Did you not care about the Empire's tradition? As far as I know, your grandfather had blonde hair, which you do not," Ning asked. While he himself didn't care much for the tradition, he also didn't want to speak against it since it was something that had been going on in this Empire since before he came here.

"I did," the first prince said. "However, I had plans for that situation as well."

The Emperor looked at him too this time. He wanted to know what his son's plan was to become an Emperor despite not holding the blonde hair.

"You're not going to say you will dye your hair, are you?" Ning jokingly asked.

"No," the prince said. "I was going to kill all 3 of the successors. When they died, I would be the only one remaining that would become the Emperor for sure."

Things just got a lot serious. Ning could visibly see how fast the Emperor's facial expression was changing.

"You were going to kill your own brothers and sister?" the Emperor got angry at his son. He didn't waste a second and slapped his son in the face.

This was perhaps the first time in a long time since he had even touched his own children, and the first thing he did was hit him.

However, Ning was surprised to see the Emperor was fine, at least for now, and not floored on the ground like the broken man he was.

"You dared to even think of killing our brothers and sisters?" the Emperor asked angrily.

When he did, a certain thought entered Ning's mind. His eyes narrowed and a serious look appeared on his face.

"Were you only planning on doing this... or did you already put it into motion?" Ning asked.

"I have already tried multiple times and failed," the Prince said.

"What?" the Emperor cried out. "Yo-You! You were the one behind the attack?"

"Yes," the prince said.

"Attack? What attack?" Ning asked. It didn't seem like the two of them were speaking about the same thing he was thinking of, which was the incident on the train.

"The attack on the palace 10 years ago, where my 7th wife died, where Elizabeth ran away from, where... my other wives and children were in some ways harmed," the Emperor said with anger rising from within him. "That was you?"

"Yes," the prince answered.

"You... how did you get in contact with the Shadow Pavillion? What payment did you give them to dare attack the Royal family of Xandria?" the Emperor asked.

"I learned that one of the guards was a member and contacted the organization through them. It didn't take very long to get a reply back saying they will help me with the task," the prince spoke.

"As for payment, I made them a promise."

The Emperor's eyes narrowed, his fury still visible in those eyes. "What promise?" he asked.

"If I became the Emperor, I would give them 200 Kilos of Aether ores."

## **Chapter 468: Punishment And Help**

The Royal family of Xandria only held about a ton of Aether Ores in their inventory, which was the largest portion of their wealth.

Giving away 20% of it to a criminal organization, Kain couldn't believe that his son would even think of doing such a thing.

"The attack on the train, Was that you as well?" Ning asked.

"Which attack?" the prince asked.

"The one when your sister was returning back to the capital," Ning said.

"Yes, that was me too," he said.

While the Emperor was in shock at the horrific things his son had planned towards his own family, Ning started getting curious about how he even got the news.

'Just the next morning, the assassins were on the train. We hadn't told them we were returning or anything. How did they even recognize us?' he wondered.

"When exactly did you learn about your sister's existence?" Ning asked.

"Right after my cousin called my uncle. I was the first one to learn since I was with my uncle," the prince said.

"Your uncle?" Ning asked confusedly. The prince didn't have a sibling, so where did the uncle come from? Ning couldn't help but wonder.

"The Duke, he's my brother-in-law," the Emperor said from the side.

"Ah, I see. That makes sense," Ning said. "That makes a lot of sense."

He finally realized why they were attacked so fast. He understood why the terrorists were in the Duke's house. He understood why he was attacked today, and understood why the terrorists had wanted the gems.

It was all because of this piece of a shit prince.

The Emperor's face was unsightly. His son hadn't just tried to kill the royal family members, his plan was going to kill himself, just like his father did.

The Emperor started shaking once more as his thoughts ran wild. He imagined a day when he himself would have to kill his son, just as he did to his father.

Ning saw this and couldn't help but sympathize with the Emperor. Over the course of the last 40 years, his father's death still haunted him.

"Guards!" he shouted. He couldn't bring himself to deal with his son as he couldn't trust himself to not hurt him.

The guards that were sent outside came back in a hurry.

"Your Majesty," they kneeled before him.

"Take my son and escort him out to the front of the palace. Then, give him 50 lashes. From today onwards, he is to not hold the status of a royal family member and is to be forever be kept to his own chambers. He shall never be allowed freedom," the Emperor announced.

The guards wore shocked faces, but they did what they were told to do.

Ning silently removed his domination skill from the prince, and suddenly, the prince started shouting.

"Father, I'm sorry. I'm sorry father. Please don't punish me, father please!" he cried out as he was dragged away by the guards.

The punishment seemed quite tame for someone with such horrific plans in his mind. He had even killed his own stepmother. Ning wanted to at least cut an arm or a leg, but... he supposed that was perhaps because he didn't understand the love of a father.

He could see the Emperor beat himself up on the inside while watching his son get taken away. He did what was right... but that still hurt him.

Ning could hear the sound of the Empress crying outside while her son was dragged to the front.

The Emperor stood up and walked outside as well. He went to the front of the palace, where the people were already gathering to see what was happening.

The Emperor then gave an announcement, letting the people learn of the Prince's punishment. He kept the crime as vague as possible, but those who knew even the slightest about what had happened could point their fingers towards him.

Lisa was there. She cried, learning that the reason her mother died that night during the assassin attack was because of her eldest brother.

The Empress asked the Emperor to rethink the punishment, but the Emperor wouldn't budge.

The crowd watched as the Emperor's guards lashed the prince a full 50 times, and then he was dragged away.

The Emperor returned back to the Throne room and Ning walked behind him. As soon as he entered the room, he fell to the ground and started crying.

He couldn't show his vulnerable self on the outside, but on the inside, he cried. Ning had seen it all already, so the Emperor didn't care about him.

"This is all my fault," the Emperor said. "I was too passive in my choice of a successor. Had I made it clear that one of them would become the successor, this would've likely not have happened."

"Don't beat yourself over it. You would've only increased the threat on that one person if you had made a choice," Ning said. "Although, it would have helped settle down internal conflicts if you did choose."

"I... I thought it was obvious," the Emperor said. "Adrian doesn't like doing anything political, and Elizabeth was happy in the City of beginnings. So, I thought it was obvious that Gillian was the one that would be my successor."

'I see, so he always knew where his daughter was,' Ning thought. He saw the Emperor start to have a hard time breathing again as he realized what he had done to another one of his family.

'This guy's trauma...' Ning sighed.

"Do you want my help?" Ning asked.

The Emperor calmed himself and asked, "Help with what?"

"I can get rid of your memory of your father's death. You will remember it to be just as everyone else does," Ning said.



The Emperor looked up in surprise. "You can do that?" he asked.

"Yes, I will remove the prince's memories too," Ning said. "Once I remove the memory, no one in the Empire, but I will remember the truth."

"No, one more person will remember the truth," the Emperor said.

"Who?" Ning asked, but then he remembered. "Ah, the Commander General. Where is he? I will remove his memories too."

"He is in the City of Beginnings right now," the Emperor said.

"The City of beginnings?" Ning asked in surprise.

"Yes, he's the one that helped my daughter survive the assassin attack 10 years ago," the Emperor said.

Ning realized who he was talking about.

"Ah, the boss!"

## **Chapter 469: Opposition**

Ning removed the Emperor's memory. From now on, he wouldn't wake up in the dead of night, recalling his father's haunting death.

He also removed all knowledge about the prince's grandfather's diary from the prince.

'I can't believe removing memories was this simple,' Ning thought. He left the prince's chambers and went to his room.

"Lisa must be quite sad," he thought. Learning the truth about her mother's death, learning that it was related to her eldest brother couldn't have been easy for her.

"Well, at least she's not al— Shit!"

Ning disappeared at once and appeared just outside the desert where Reeve was selling his stuff now.

Ning walked up to him and asked, "You doing fine?"

"Ah, brother Ning, you're back. I thought I would've had to go to the city tonight," Reeve said.

"Uhh... how long before you are done here? Your wife needs you right now," Ning said.

"Lisa needs me? Why?" Reeve asked.

"There's... been a revelation in the palace," Ning said. "It's better if you end it quickly and return back."

"One moment," Reeve turned around.

"Everyone, listen up. You don't have to sell me anything. Do what you've been doing all this time, grab a train and go to the city to sell all you want. You will earn a lot more than you are with me."

"Here!" Reeve threw a storage locket at the people. "There are flour and dry food in there, eat accordingly."

"Let's go," Reeve turned around and walked with Ning.

Ning teleported him back to the palace, and Reeve immediately went to give company to Lisa. He on the other hand had nothing to do anymore.

It was starting to get dark outside, so he went to lay on his bed. It had truly been a long day.

However, he felt like there was one more thing he had to do before he went to sleep. So, he disappeared.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ning woke up early in the morning and went to have breakfast. However, before he could reach the kitchen, old man Tim found him.

'Dammit, he better not bother me about yesterday's conflict. I don't have the time for that,' he thought.

"Ning, can you come with me?" old man Tim asked.

"What is it, senior Tim?" Ning asked while following behind him.

"His Majesty is looking for you," the old man said.

"Oh," Ning was a little surprised. He hadn't thought the Emperor would want to see him this early.

Ning followed him and went to the Throne Room where the Emperor was waiting for him.

"Thank you for coming, mister Ning," the Emperor said from on top of his throne.

"You called me your Majesty. Of course, I have to come," Ning said.

"Oh, you're addressing me respectfully today," the Emperor said in a jovial tone.

Old man Tim who was standing behind Ning couldn't believe what he was seeing. His emperor, who was known to be stoic, sometimes even gloomy around the morning was speaking so cheerfully.

'What happened?' he wondered.

"Tim, you can leave," the Emperor said.

"Yes, your majesty," Tim backed away slowly and left out of the door.

"So, why was I called here today?" Ning asked.

"First of all, let me ask you, what Aether rank are you?" the Emperor asked.

"I would rather not say it out loud," Ning said.

"Very well," the Emperor said. "And, your ability to heal despite being stabbed through the chest?"

Ning smiled at the Emperor.

"I see," The Emperor understood he was getting no answers. "Here's the reason I called you."

Ning listened intently.

"I... I am facing a bit of opposition from my own family because of your actions yesterday. While I thank you for what you did yesterday, you did drag my son through the entire palace," the Emperor said.

"I don't see the point of this conversation yet, your Majesty," Ning said.

The emperor tried to speak more but just sighed. "My family, especially the Empress wants you to get thrown out of the palace. She doesn't want a guard who can't respect her or the family," the Emperor said.

Ning looked at the Emperor and asked, "Do you want to throw me out?"

"Honestly? No. I would rather you stay by my side and protect me," the Emperor said. "I want you to be part of my shadow guard. That is the only way I can... make you disappear from the palace without my wives knowing it."

"I see," Ning said. "That's a fantastic idea, your majesty."

The Emperor was just about to get happy when,

"However," Ning continued. "I will have to say no. I was only here to make sure your daughter and son-in-law were out of danger, and now that they are safe, I... really don't see a reason to stick around."

"Huh? You're leaving?" the Emperor asked.

"Well, I was planning to stick around just a few weeks longer, but since I'm apparently being thrown out of the palace, it might be better for me to leave today," Ning said.

"But... but the threat on my children is still there. It's not gone entirely. Surely you can stick around a little longer, right?" the Emperor asked.

"Ah, you must mean the Shadow Pavillion. You won't need to worry about them anymore," Ning said.

"I don't need to worry about them?" the Emperor questioned.

"Yes, I have dealt with them already. You can relax now," Ning said.

"You... did you do something to the assassins?"

"Uhh... let's just say I gave the group a very stern talk and made them see why it was a bad idea to go after the prince and princesses of Xandria."

"They were really good at picking up suggestions and promised never to take any more job regarding the royal family of Xandria," Ning said.

The Emperor's eyes went wide in shock. He wondered what Ning could have possibly done to the assassins to force them to follow him.

"Anyway, since I have classes soon, I shall go meet up with the princess and prince consort and give them my goodbyes.. See you later, your Majesty."

## **Chapter 470: Marilyn Changers**

"You're leaving, Brother Ning?" Reeve asked in surprise. It was just yesterday they had gone to the feast, just yesterday Ning had taken him to the desert.

It was just yesterday that Ning had helped them find out the truth about Lisa's eldest brother.

"I... I expected to be on the road constantly looking at the world, however, because you two were in trouble, I decided to stick around. Now that you have nothing to worry, about... I will leave," Ning said.

"Where will you go?" Lisa asked curiously.

"You know what? I don't know. I think I will stick around in the capital for a while more as I still have classes in the Tower, but... I might end up dropping out as well since I've learned what I wanted to," Ning said.

"I see," Reeve said. "We would love if you would stay for much longer, but leaving is what you desire then we won't stop you."

Lisa walked forward and bowed towards Ning. "Thank you for everything you've done for us so far," she said.

Reeve followed her as well and bowed. "Thank you, Brother Ning," he said.

Ning felt a little emotional seeing that. "Alright, take care. I will come to meet you once in a while, although I don't know how many years later that will be."

"Also, you can contact me through those rings if anything ever comes up. Goodbye," Ning said and walked out.

He didn't have anything more to do, so he went to old man Tim and let him know he was leaving.

Then, he left the palace.

'Should I go back to the hotel?' he wondered. He decided to think about it later as now was time for his classes.

He walked over to the tower and went up the floor to his classroom. Inside, he found most of the students already there.

'Right, they stay in the dorms, so they can easily come to the class whenever they want,' Ning thought.

He looked to the side of the class and saw the seat where Rachel usually sat was empty.

Ning internally chuckled and sat down on his bench. About 2 minutes before it was time for the classes to start, Rachel finally walked in.

The moment she did, her body stiffened as she saw Ning in the class. Ning waved towards her.

Rachel had planned to sit elsewhere, but seeing him wave, she felt that if she were to go sit anywhere else, she would be in danger of being targeted after class.

So, while feeling afraid, while shivering, she went up to her original seat next to Ning and sat down.

"Good Morning," Ning said with a smile.

Rachel felt the skin on the back of her neck stand up when he spoke. "Go-Good Morning," she tried to stop her fear show up in her voice, but she wasn't able to.

"I've been wanting to speak to you about something," Ning said.

"W-wh-what is it?" she asked.

"Well, exactly this," Ning said. "Stop being scared so much. Do you think I'm here to hurt people?"

"I-I'm not scared," Rachel tried to act strong, but her shakiness gave it away.

"So... you can steal people's Aether by touching them, huh?" Ning asked.

"Wh-wh-what? N-no, no. I don't know what you're talking about. I can do no such thing," She cried out.

"You don't have to lie. I know what you can do. Honestly, I'm a little jealous of what you can do. No wonder you got a scholarship with how great your ability with Aether is," Ning said.

Rachel got a little scared at having been figured out. She didn't expect Ning to know what her secret ability was, so she was frightened beyond belief.

"Wh-what are you going to do? Kill me and steal my skill?" she asked.

"What?" Ning looked at her with a weird face. "Why would I kill you? Your skill can't be stolen either. You seem needlessly suspicious of me."

"You are a strong man acting like a student. Of course, you have something suspicious to do here," Rachel said.

Just then, the teacher walked into the class. Ning turned around and stopped talking with Rachel to focus on the class, but the Teacher didn't say anything. Instead, she looked at Ning.

"Ning, come with me," she said.

'Hmm, what's going on?' Ning thought. He stood up and walked to the front of the class before following the teacher Sherry out of the room.

She walked in front of him, a full head shorter than him, and went to an elevator.

After she entered, Ning followed into the elevator and waited for it to start moving.

Before he knew it, the elevator started going upwards, and it showed no sign of stopping.

After going up what felt like 20 floors, the elevator finally stopped, and Ning walked out of it.

"Follow me," Sherry said, and Ning nodded before following her to a room.

There were a few people in the room, including one person he knew, the Vice president of the tower.

As soon as he walked into the room, the doors behind were shut as two bulky men, obviously trained in the ways of Aether stood guard.

'That doesn't seem suspicious at all,' Ning thought. Ning looked around the room and saw at least 7 different people, not including the 2 guards behind him.

The room was situated very high in the tower and was filled with different types of pictures, hung on the wall. One of which, he recognized to be of the goddess that the Aether users seemed to believe in.

"May I ask why I have been brought here?" Ning asked.

The woman in her 50s wore a purple, scholarly robe like everyone in the room, but for some reason, she stood out the most in the group.

"So you must be Ning Ruogong, huh?" the old woman asked.

"Yes, that is me," Ning said. "And you are?"

"I am Merilyn Changers.. I am the president of the Xandria branch of the Aether tower."

## Chapter 471: Stolen Scroll

The room had 9 people in total, not including Ning. 2 of them seemed to be guards, 4 of them were male teachers, and the rest were 3 female teachers.

Of them, the principal started speaking to Ning.

"We brought you here to have a little talk," Marilyn, the president said to Ning.

Ning looked around in suspicion and decided to act a little scared.

"9 people of high Aether Rank. Forgive me if I have trouble believing you, president Marilyn," Ning said. He took a slightly defensive stance against them.

"Oh please, you don't have to worry at all. These people are here just to witness the conversation we will be having," the Principal said.

"Very well, what are we talking about?" Ning asked.

Marilyn smiled and showed him the wooden chair in front of him, beckoning him to sit before they proceeded.

Ning pulled back the chair from the table and sat on it, while the rest of the people, aside from the vice president who sat next to him and the president who sat opposite him, kept standing.

"First of all, is it true that you are an Aether Emperor?" the president asked him directly.

Ning was a little surprised that they asked the question. 'Do they have a connection to the palace?' he wondered.

"Yes, I am," Ning said. "May I know how you came to learn that?"

"I think it's better if we keep that information to ourselves. The person did ask to be kept anonymous," the president said with a smile.

'The person? Is it Rachel?' he wondered. 'Did that girl forget that I'm stronger than an Emperor?'

"So you were that strong when you came to join us, huh?" the President said. "You nearly fooled us into thinking you were a beginner."

"I don't know what you mean by that, president," Ning said. "While I may have a high rank, I'm still a beginner in using Aether. I still have a long way to go."



"While it may be understandable that you still have a long way to go, do you really think we will believe that you are a beginner?" the president asked.

Ning smiled at the president. "I don't care what you believe. Do you think your belief will change the truth?" he asked.

"So you insist that you are a beginner huh? Well, I will believe that then, for now," the President said before bringing out something from her storage.

Ning looked at what it was and recognized the old scroll. That was the same one he had given to the vice president to see how he would react at the time.

The vice president had told him that he didn't know about absorption skills and that he would practice it on his own for a while. Ning had let him take it under the condition that he release its info to the world.

"Changing topic now, may I ask where you came to obtain this from?" the president asked.

"That's a technique that's been passed down my family for a long time," Ning said.

"Do you happen to know the origin of this scroll?" the president asked curiously.

"No," Ning said. "I only know that it has been passed down our family for many generations."

"I see," the president said and brought out a thick book from her storage bag and slammed it on the table before her.

"The vice president came to me a few days ago, showing us that he got something amazing from you. When I went to check it, I realized that I had read about it before," the president said.

"Oh, you read about it before?" Ning asked curiously.

"Yes, here," the president flipped the book and turned it to a page that read about an absorption skill that existed in the past that was stolen by someone, and since then it had been lost.

"Look at it, the marking is the same as well," the president said. "I believe that this scroll was stolen by an ancestor of yours very many years ago and that in fact, it actually belongs to us."

Ning was dumbfounded. He couldn't believe that they actually forged a document to 'prove' that the scroll actually belonged to them. He had actually never seen this much of a farce anywhere else.

"Is that really so?" he acted surprised. "Are you trying to say that my ancestors were thieves?"

"No, of course not," the president quickly tried to keep the situation from exploding. "We don't know how the scroll went on to get lost. It could be? that your ancestor just happened to find it someday."

"What I am saying is that this scroll belongs to the tower," she said.

"How am I to know that this document hasn't been forged and that the scroll of yours you say to have been missing is a fake one?" Ning asked.

The president smiled. She seemed to have been ready for this line of questioning. "That scroll is not the only piece of information about our tower that is recorded in this book."

"You can read everything about the history of the tower and judge for yourself if it is true or not," she said.

'So they prepared well for this, huh?' Ning thought and picked up the book.

He touched the page that held the information about the scroll. It certainly looked legit, but he knew it was fake.

He looked back at the president once before turning back towards the book. 'I see, an Invoker Aether Emperor. She must be quite talented to create something so intricate,' he thought.

He continued flipping the book to the earlier pages and realized that most of this information was actually true. The president was using truth to further legitimize her lies.

Finally, Ning flipped it to the very first page of the book and read to himself what was written on it.

When he did, his eyes suddenly went wide.

It read "The Aether Tower was first established in the Serian Empire, founded by the brother and sister duo, Famir and Mavenna."

## **Chapter 472: Threat**

'Famir? Mavenna? Those two kids started this tower?' Ning felt a sense of pride when he realized what they had succeeded in doing.

Ning was a little hesitant asking about their life when he got to Vilmore again, so the most he had asked was how long they had lived, which the system had told him were 359 and 455 years for the brother and sister respectively.

Learning that they had lived so long, he had simply assumed that they had lived a good life. But, to learn that they actually started an organization that would go on to become the towering figure they were today.

Thinking about all of this, Ning couldn't help but feel... angry.

'These damn fuckers are trying to ruin what those siblings created, using it to further themselves when it was supposed to help the others,' Ning thought.

The siblings, especially Famir knew hardship from a young age. Living in a small village, taking care of his only sister, he knew how hard the average person had to work to meet the week's end.

Ning could guarantee that when the tower was created, neither of those siblings had any intention of keeping something like Aether away from the normal folks.

Yet, the people that came after them had twisted their beliefs, turning what they cherished into something that actively impoverishes the average human.

Ning closed the book and placed it back on the table.

"You can see that the scroll initially did belong to us. However, we won't ask you to return it to us for free. In exchange for returning the scroll, we will give you a high-ranking position in the tower. That way yo—"

"Enough!" Ning shouted. He was truly angry right now. " High ranking position in the tower? What a joke. You have kept this farce going for long enough."

The people in the room were startled at the sudden shout from Ning.

"What do you mean by farce, mister Ning," the President asked.

Ning did not answer her and instead turned to his side to look at the vice president. "How high in the organization do you have to be to learn about the absorption techniques?" Ning asked.

"We don't know about absorptio—"

"I know about your damn treaty with the nobles. I know you keep the techniques for yourself and give them to the nobles only. So just tell me how high do you have to be in the organization?" Ning asked.

The vice president was stunned. He hadn't expected a student to shout at him like that.

"Mister Ning, please understand who you are speaking to. He's the vice president of the tower," Marilyn said from the side.

"And what is that role supposed to mean to me? Is it supposed to be something I should admire? Is it supposed to be something I respect?" Ning asked.

"I admire none of you. You all lost my respect the moment you decided to throw the common man under the bus to further establish yourselves," Ning said.

"How dare you talk to us like that," the president said with a serious face. "Not only did your ancestor steal from us, now you say such rude things in front of us?"

"Hah! Steal? My ancestors stole what? I gave you a made-up scroll, and somehow you gave it a history of your own. You think that scroll that I would use to wipe my ass is of any worth at all?" Ning asked.

"I could shit out 1000 of those scrolls and you guys would all eat it like it's the most wonderful delicacy."

Ning stood up from his chair. "I will give you 2 weeks. In 2 weeks, I want to hear the common folks down by the commercial zone, by the slums learn about the existence of the absorption techniques, and be handed a copy of the scroll each."

"If you do not do that, I will give them scrolls of my own, and believe me, they will be much better than that scroll. With that, I will establish an organization of myself, and topple yours down."

The teachers and president that listened to Ning were in utter shock. They didn't expect the person they had brought in to sneakily join their tower would speak up in retaliation.

"Hah! Do you think your fake threats will work here? Do you expect yourself to be so good to create an organization that will topple ours? Just because you became a mere Aether Emperor, you must have let that go to your head if you seriously believe you have any power against us," the president said.

"You don't have to worry about that. That is my concern now," Ning said and walked away.

The two buff men stood in front of him, not willing to budge. Ning stopped and looked at them. "Move!" he ordered.

The two guards shuddered when they saw his eyes. Those were the eyes of a killer who would kill without hesitation.

They moved to the side, and Ning opened the door to walk away. Just before he was gone, he turned around one last time and looked at the president.

"2 weeks! Remember. I want everyone in the city to have a copy of that scroll," Ning said one last time before walking away.

While Famir and Mavenna cared for this organization a lot, he knew that it would be better to destroy this organization now that it had gone in a direction they had never planned to.

Ning walked into the elevator and pressed the button for the lowest floor. With what had just happened, he had practically expelled himself from the tower now, so there was no point in sticking around.

'Well, I hope the new students don't get indoctrinated into this system that benefits oneself at the expense of others,' Ning thought.

He was very much sure that his threat of toppling the tower would be seen as a joke by them, so to prove them wrong, he needed to think how he would go about it.

He needed to prepare a lot of things.

## **- Chapter 473: Book Printing**

### **Chapter 473: Book Printing**

Ning left the tower and directly went to the commercial zone of the city. He has asked the system and found out that it would cost him quite a lot of energy if he wanted to create books for all of the people in the city.

So, he was instead going to find a book printing company and have them work on it.

He went to the biggest one in the city and found the head of the company.

The head was an elderly man in his late 50s, and from the looks of it, he truly was in his late 50s, and not an overly old man that just happened to look like that thanks to Aether.

'An unawakened,' Ning thought with surprise. 'He will be easy to persuade then.'

"Hello, How many I help you?" the old man asked.

"I'm looking to print a small book that will be around 2-3 pages long. Or it could be a long scroll," Ning said.

"Oh, hmm. I don't know if that's printable here. We are mostly focused on large books with at least a hundred pages," the old man said.

"Oh, but this will be worth it. It will be your biggest venture to date," Ning said.

"Oh, you say so huh?" the old man said, clearly not believing him.

"Yes," Ning said. "This is what I wanted to have printed." Ning brought out a scroll that was about 3 quarters of a meter long when fully unscrolled.

The old man read the scroll for a while, not understanding what he was reading. It spoke of doing things in your body, that shouldn't be possible as a human being.

"What is this? Some sort of prank?" the old man asked.

"It's a way to increase your Aether rank by employing that technique once you have Aether," Ning said.

The old man was surprised to hear what the thing was. "No way such a thing exists. Are you trying to scam people? I must say, sir, I will help you in nothing that helps scam others," the old man said.

"It's not a scam, you can be sure about that. If you still have any hesitation, how about I let you practice with that technique for tonight and see if it works or not. I will come tomorrow to discuss our terms," Ning said and stood up. He understood that he couldn't rush things. Since he still had 2 weeks to spare before making sure the Tower didn't do anything, he could take it slow.

Ning then walked out of the room of the old man, but just before he left, he turned around. "I almost forgot," he said. "You are not an awakened Aether user, right? Here, take this fruit."

Ning tossed the fruit to the old man. "You can eat the whole thing or just a slice of it. Either way, you will awaken with Aether. You can give the rest to your family. Once that happens, you can try out that book," Ning said with a smile and left.

The dumbfounded old man stayed back in his office, wondering what the hell had just happened.

'Aether awakening? A technique to increase aether? No way any of these exists,' the old man thought. He looked at the fruit in his hands and started doubting that the fruit may also be poison.

'Give this fruit to my family? Is he trying to poison us all?' the old man thought. Fortunately, his grandson was born with the ability to use Aether, so he could see if the writing on that book was applicable or not, without making anyone eat the fruit.

More customers arrived soon, and the old man forgot about it all.

Ning made his way to the slum. He had expected everyone to get awakened as an Aether user, aside from maybe the mothers who gave their piece of fruits to their children.

Ning went around looking for such parents, as well as the stupid people who ignored his advice he had written on those pieces of paper and tried using the Aether art without having much Aether in them.

Ning was sure he would find a lot of such people lying around the slum, paralyzed and unable to move.

After all, that was one of the most common medical problems encountered on this planet.

For those that didn't take their share of the fruit, Ning gave them some more pieces of them as he had brought an uncountable amount of them from the forest.

As for those that were paralyzed, Ning first gave them a stern scolding, before giving them the pieces of fruits.

He practically ordered everyone there to not use any Aether arts until he himself told them it was safe to do so.

Since it would be impossible to teach them all, he would wait for the book printing company's old man to agree to work with him.

Ning went back to the city to find himself a hotel and settled in. He then started making plans on what he could do.

Once the books were out, the tower officials would have a fire lit under their asses, so he would have to make sure to do all the publishing in a short period of time.

He was also sure that the tower in other places would start looking out for him once he arrived there.

'The other countries have a worse situation for the non-Aether awakened individual. I should get there soon too,' Ning thought.

Once he had made some plans for everything he was to do, he collapsed onto his bed and went to sleep.

Ning woke up quite late in the morning since he had nothing to look forward to that day except for a meeting with the old man.

So, after he was finally up, he freshened up and left. He arrived at the book printing location and before he could even ask to see the old man, the old man himself came running up to him.

"Young man, you are here," he said in a breathless voice.

Ning smiled. "I see you tested it then," he asked, to which the old man nodded.

"Good.. Let us discuss the terms of the contract."

## **Chapter 474: Fraudulent**

"Mom, where are we going?" A little boy of 8 years old asked his mother, who was rushing somewhere while holding his hands.

The speed was a little too fast for the little child, but the mother didn't seem to notice it and kept running while holding her son.

"We need to hurry, my son," she said. "Or we might be late." The mother rushed for nearly 5 minutes before she reached the location of the crowd she had heard so much about.

The location was in the commercial zone, a little south of the city center. The crowd had formed on the roadway itself, blocking passage for both sides.

People had already started claiming the road to be completely shut down for the next 2 or 3 days.

There were thousands of people gathered at the location with hundreds of people going in and out constantly. This was perhaps a bigger event than the feast the princess had put out 2 weeks ago.

"Please do not hurry. There is enough for everyone," the staff members shouted out loud, but people didn't dare to care for it.

What if they were wrong? What if it ended? They hurried.

"You can only take 1 scroll per family, and that is all that you will need. Please do not take the opportunity for someone else to get it by buying more than one," the staff screamed, but they weren't sure if anyone would listen.

The crowd was massive, but it converged into a single file, looked after by the other staff members to make sure there was nobody that tried to break the file.



The file lead to a paying booth where people would pay before getting their scroll.

The mother who had just come waited in line for a good hour before it was her turn. The staff members had already mentioned the cost of the scroll, so as soon as she arrived, she gave 2 Gols to the staff in the payment booth and went ahead.

She was still in the line, but she quickly noticed the line separating into two files a little ahead.

She reached the next booth which the staff members hadn't told her about and looked at the young man sitting on it.

The young man looked at her and pointed to the left life. "Tell them your son doesn't need it," he told her.

The woman was confused but didn't ask any questions. After a while, the line moved up and she saw a table with some of the staff on it.

"Both of you?" the staff asked.

"Sorry?" the woman asked.

"What did the guy say?" the staff asked.

"Ah, my son doesn't need it," she said.

"I see," the staff brought out a piece of fruit and handed it to the woman. "Eat it."

The woman looked at the fruit with a slight bit of confusion and took a bite. When she did, she realized that the fruit was rather tasty, so she ate it all.

She saw the line move up and walked forward with her son in tow. Finally, she saw it. The thing she had been waiting for.

The Scroll.

The staff member handed her one and she took it. It was there, with her. She looked in awe as the staff member pushed her away for the other similarly curious people to get their hands on the scroll.

When the scrolls were first revealed with a massive in the papers 2 days ago, nobody really came to them to buy them except for a few people that were truly desperate.

After that, once those people spread the word, more people had come yesterday. After those people spread the words, today was the most they had seen in the entire lifetime of the publishing company's book sale.

And more than likely, it would continue to grow for quite a while. Since it was a single scroll of paper printed, the group was looking at a lot of profit in their hands.

Ning had planned to use the profit he would get to make extra copies for the people in the slums.

He stayed in his booth, checking at the people, deciding whether to send them towards the left where there was a fruit or the right where it was only the scroll.

He sighed a little while sending the people in either direction. 'The fruits aren't gonna last after today. I will have to go find more in the forest tonight,' he thought.

He needed a more foolproof idea that didn't depend on going to find the fruit every day. With how many people there were all over the world, it would be better to go find the ores rather than the fruits.

'I'll think about it later tonight,' he thought and continued his work.

Just as he was working, he saw a couple of people appear in front of him wearing the tower's robes.

They didn't look like the top brass he saw 2 weeks ago, so he guessed they were here for the scroll too.

He showed the right direction, but they didn't bother with him and instead went around him in both directions.

'Sigh, here we go again,' he thought and stood up. "Please wait for a few moments. It seems we might have a problem soon," Ning said and walked back towards the group that was handing out the scrolls.

One of the men took out a scroll from his storage and unfolded it to reveal some writings on it.

He then started speaking. "What you are doing here is unlawful. Using a fake subtext of improving the public's Aether rank by reading a scroll is untruthful and fraudulent. You are hereby advised to immediately stop this and hand over all of your remaining scrolls."

The old man that was looking over the entire thing started getting scared. He walked in front of them to speak when suddenly Ning stepped forward.

"I am the one selling these scrolls.. Are you trying to call me a fraud?" Ning asked.

## **Chapter 475: Broken Arms**

There were 5 men from the tower, 2 on the table with the fruit, and 3 on the table without it.

The leader, the one on the table with the fruit, had a long face with a pointed chin. He looked at Ning with his slimy face and put on a serious face.

Ning was sure he had been instructed how to act, so he was waiting for the man to answer his question.

"Yes," the man said. "You are undoubtedly a fraud. You are giving the poor citizens false hope with your lies. People, don't fall for this trap. You are being lied to. There is no such technique as this that can improve your Aether rank."

The crowd started whispering amongst themselves. Seeing the most trusted source in their city calling the scroll fake, they started to believe them.

"I suggest you stop this unfaithful business right now and hand over the scrolls to us, or we will be forced to shut down this production house," the man shouted.

"Are you saying that the people who used our scrolls yesterday and the day before that are frauds too?" Ning asked.

"They are, without any shadow of a doubt, actors that you paid to rile up the crowd into buying your fake scrolls," the leader said.

The crowd was getting increasingly sure that they had fallen into some sort of trap and were now waiting to see retribution dropped on the schemer's head.

"Hmm, if you say I'm a fraud by selling these scrolls, then you can surely tell me what I have to gain from these right?" Ning asked.

"Of course. You are trying to earn a quick buck and disappear," the leader said confidently.

"Is that so?" Ning asked with a smile. The leader saw his smile and got a little worried.

"How about this then? If you say I'm doing this all for money, then I will give it to them for free. I will even return the money back to the people who already paid. Can I give them the scroll now?" Ning asked.

The leader panicked a little. He hadn't thought Ning would go in this direction with his question.

"No, we cannot let this lie spread forward. We have direct orders from the tower to stop your unlawful activity," the man said.

"Under what authority?" Ning asked. "I'm just selling a scroll here. Leave quietly now and let me do my thing."

"Under what authority? The authority of the tower, you bastard. It doesn't look like you will stop it willingly. Men, destroy all of the scrolls!" the leader shouted.

"Any one of you so as touches the scroll will find a bone sticking out of your arm," Ning said in the voice that sent chills down the spine of everyone looking.

"St-Stop listening to him, and just do it," the leader shouted.

The men immediately took the scrolls that were on the table and started burning them.

"You've done it now," Ning said softly. Suddenly, all of the men felt their bodies unable to move.

Even the invokers who were supposed to have some resistance against bodily enchantments were forcefully being controlled.

They floated in the air and moved forward violently to crash with each other in the air before dropping to the ground before Ning.

Ning grabbed the leader's arm and said, "I told you I would break your arm." With that, he stepped on it.

"AAAHHH!!" the leader shouted. As promised, his arm was bent in the wrong direction, with blood gushing out of it and a sharp bone sticking out as well.

Listening to the leader's cries, the rest of the men got frightened. They tried to run away, but they couldn't move.

Ning pulled their arms forward and started crushing their hands. Unlike the leader, he only broke their palm bones. Still, the bones were sticking out of them, and they were bleeding.

"Now get the hell out of my sight," he told them.

The men slowly stood up, red from the pain, and glared at Ning. However, the fear in their heart stopped them from doing anything stupid.

They walked away to leave, but just then Ning stopped them again. "Remind your superiors. They have 1 more day. If they don't do what I told them to do... they will have to start looking for a new job soon," Ning told the men with a smile.

The men nodded and quickly walked away.

The crowd stared in awe and fear, so did the staff members that were selling the scrolls.

"Ah, sorry about the delay," Ning said nonchalantly and went back to his seat to redirect the group again.

A lot of the people in the crowd hesitated, but after seeing Ning's strength, a few of them started to doubt if the tower was correct in this situation.

They could already see them trying to use their powers to stop this sale, so it only went onward to legitimize the current operations in their eyes.

Most of the people still believed the tower, but on the small chance that the scroll did work, they had to get it.

So, within minutes, the line started moving again. People were sold the scrolls and quite a few of the people even got to eat the fruit.

For the next few hours, they peacefully sold the scroll. However, that changed when the crowd saw a group of people flying through the air on what looked like a carriage from far away.

The carriage landed on the road next to the crowd and they watched a few figures in purple robes walk out of it.

Ning looked at them as well and smiled when he saw the group. Finally, the big players were here to stop his work.

"Welcome, President Marilyn, Vice president, and... I don't know who you lot are, but welcome," Ning said to the group of 6 that had walked out of the carriage.

The group directly walked up to Ning, but Ning suddenly put up a hand to stop them.

"I know you are people with a lot of fame but, you cannot cut in line like this. Please go back to the end of the crowd.. You will get your scroll when the time comes."

## **Chapter 476: Offer**

The few people next to Marilyn tried to get physical after hearing Ning's words, but Marilyn stopped them.

She turned around and looked at the man whose turn was supposed to be next and asked, "Do you mind if we slip in here?"

The man shook his head before he even understand what the words coming out of Merilyn's mouth meant.

"Thank you," Merilyn said and then turned to the other people behind the man and asked, "do anyone of you have any problems with us slipping into this line?"

Not a single voice of opposition could be heard from the people behind her.

Ning smirked in response seeing how well respected these actual frauds were.

"Very well. Since there are 6 of you, give me 12 gols and go that way," Ning said while keeping the smirk on his face.

"We are not here to buy your scroll," Merilyn said.

"Oh my, is that true? I'm so surprised," Ning said. He crossed his fingers behind his head and put his feet on the table before slanting back on the chair.

"So, how may I help you with? And please don't give me the 'you are a fraud' bullshit. I will beat the crap out of you guys as well," Ning threatened them.

"You..." the vice president got angry. He couldn't believe that this was the same person he gave a scholarship to just a few weeks ago.

"No, we are not here for that," Merilyn said. "We are here to make a truce with you."

"Oh," Ning said as his right eyebrow moved up. "Go on, I'm listening."

Merilyn looked around and in a quiet voice said, "what will it take you to stop this nonsense?"

"WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN BY THIS NONSENSE?" Ning spoke in as loud a voice as he could. "Talk normally so everyone can hear you."

Merilyn's eyes narrowed in slight anger. "Fine," she said. "What will it take you to stop this farce?"

Ning smiled again. "How could you not know that after I have told you so many times? Share your techniques with the common masses and I will stop doing this, for Xandria only. I will still go to the other country and make them all do the same thing."

Merilyn didn't speak, however, Ning could feel her start to tap into her Aether.

"Be careful. You don't want to do something so stupid in front of the crowd right?" Ning said, his smile the most irritating thing on him.

"Alright, what do you want out of this then? Money? Power? Status?" she asked.

"I just want what my disciples created to go back to being what they envisioned it to be. If that can't happen, it's better to not have it at all," Ning said.

"What? Disciple? What are you talking about?" Merilyn asked.

"Forget about it," Ning said. "Tell me, what do you have to offer me, aside from threats, to stop me from selling these techniques?"

Merilyn thought for a moment and tried to come up with something he could want, but she couldn't think of anything at the moment.

That was when the vice president walked forward and said, "I have been meaning to retire for a few years now. You can have my position if you want."

"Sorry to break it to you but a mere vice president's position is of no interest to me," Ning said. "Even the president's position is the bare minimum since that way I can at least start the reformation process of the tower in Xandria."

"What I really want to do is own the Aether Tower itself. That way I can put it back onto its correct track and reclaim the honor my disciples left it with," Ning said.

"Hah! Own the Aether tower? You are really looking down on the tower, aren't you? Just because the tower is an academic place, you forgot that it is also the strongest military force in the entire world," Merilyn said.

"I know," Ning said. "But there is not a single thing your military can do if you have to fight the whole world itself, can it?"

"The scrolls have already spread, thousands of them. Are you sure you can track them down and destroy every single one of them? What about the people that made more copies of it in secret? What about the ones that already learned it? Knowledge of it is sure to spread to the other cities and soon the other nations too. Are you sure your 'Strongest' army can stop it?" Ning asked.

Suddenly, he felt Aether move towards him. He could probably stop the aether from entering his body with his own Aether, but he didn't. Something then grew in his mind. He didn't feel any pain, or rather he felt nothing at all. However, he could tell that there were parts of his body that were losing function.

"If you won't accept our suggestion, then you can try and fight us. You will see how sorely you have underestimated the tower to make an enemy out of it," Merilyn said and turned around to leave. There was nothing further to talk about for her since the person could no longer talk.

"Have a good day then, Miss Merilyn. I pray that you have a good time trying to explain to people why such techniques had been hidden all this time," he said.

"What?" she looked around in shock. 'How is he speaking right now?' she thought.

"Hmm, is something wrong?" Ning asked when she turned around.

"N-nothing," she said.

"Good then," Ning said. Just then, he gagged a little and spit out a small sharp metal piece out of his mouth.

He tossed the metal onto Merilyn, who moved away and let it drop on the floor. She could hear some sizzling on the ground as the metal melted onto the ground itself.

"Also," Ning continued as his face suddenly turned cold, giving the illusion of temperature dropping around them.. "Pull such a trick again and I will make you understand what they mean by the sweet release of death."

## **Chapter 477: The Ruins Of Afterlife**

After that day, no one from the tower came back to stop Ning directly. Ning was free to do whatever he wanted, and that made Ning suspicious.

'What are they planning?' he wondered. However, they never did anything. They didn't even send the nobles to force him to stop.

So, Ning continued sharing his scrolls and fruits all over the city. Once he thought everyone got what they needed, he left.

He went to the other cities around the country and started doing the same things there as well. He got a local publishing company to start publishing and selling the scrolls as well as the fruits to the locals.

'Dammit!' Ning thought. 'The forest is nearly not large enough to have enough fruits for this place.'

By the time he reached the 4th city on his journey, Ning was starting to feel troubled with the fruits. There wasn't an endless supply, and he would have to find one if he wanted to continue with this.

'Hmm... I should go find some Aether ores,' he thought. There was one place in his mind that held Aether ores, but he wasn't sure just how many there were left.



So, one night, he disappeared and arrived at the southern pole of the continent. The place that held ruins of the peak of Afterlife.

Ning saw kids playing on the ground in the dim light of the sun far off on the horizon. Very few houses were in the city nearby and they were lit up brightly with smokes coming out of the chimneys.

The desert-like landscape with a dry climate that had been previously what Ning expected, had now turned into a cold, winter land with snow all around him.

'Woah!' he thought. "This place has changed quite a bit. Is the climate no longer just contained into the peak?"

Thinking of that, Ning looked towards where the peak used to exist. Now, it was nothing but a hill now.

Ning flew towards the destroyed mountain and couldn't believe that he was responsible for this. He felt a bit sad remembering so many people had died from the earthquake and debris.

'It seems the natural seal around this place has also been destroyed,' he thought.

He shook his head and went to the mountain to check if there were any ores left in the place.

The peak no longer has aurora in it with Qi no longer being expelled through the opening. So, Ning could easily stand on top of it and watch inside.

'Did it turn into a volcano?' he wondered when he saw the crusted land in the middle of the crater as well as the rather massive land around it that could only have been formed from a volcanic eruption.

"Sigh, that place must be buried now. How am I going to get in there?" Ning wondered.

Ning could only think of teleporting into the cave that was at the foot of the mountain, and so he did.

However, where he teleported to was actually on top of the mountain.

'I can't go in,' he thought. That means there was no free space for his body to teleport in there.

Ning scratched his head in confusion. "System, does this place even have Aether ores?" he asked.

<There are some below you>

Ning thought for a moment. He did gain one idea, but he wasn't sure how useful it would be.

'Damn, I hope it's solid as a rock and not clumpy like dirt,' he thought and suddenly changed bodies.

His body fell onto the ground, and Ning quickly took it back.

'Hm... this is quite large,' he thought.

'Wait... what happens if I teleport out now?'

Ning decided to try it out. He suddenly teleported and reappeared on top of the crater once more.

As the rock fell, he changed his body back to the human body. "Phew, that worked," he thought and went back to see the massive hole he had created.

"How deep are the ores?" Ning asked.

<12 meters deep>

'I should be able to collect them then,' he thought and went back to doing the same things over and over again until there were no rocks around that area, and the purple Aether ores were finally visible.

'Nice,' he thought and started scraping out the Aether ores with his own hands that were enhanced.

As he had expected, he couldn't just use his Aether arts on the objects that had heavily concentrated amounts of Aether.

After a few hours, Ning was done gathering all the Aether ores that were surprisingly still there.

He decided to leave, but then he remembered that the area around the peak was a place that didn't belong to any countries.

'There should be people here that would love to get some aether arts as well,' he thought and went over to the people to give them a piece of ore as well as the scroll with the information.

It didn't take very long to pass them all up. He didn't stay long enough to see if they believed him or not, but he just needed a single person to do what he said and from word of mouth alone the whole city would start using the technique.

Ning reappeared back in Xandria and continued with his task. Now, he had enough resources to awaken at least 2 more whole countries.

He went through many cities in Xandria, giving people hope and power. He was soon very famous in all the cities, and most cities had people waiting for him to visit.

By now, they had started calling him a savior and hope of humanity. They asked him who he was, but Ning never gave away his name to them, and instead simply told them he was someone working against the Aether tower to loosen their clutch on the normal folks.

He was soon given a name by the people.. Since he went around giving people the ability to use Aether, similar to what the legends said the goddess did, they started calling him the Apostle of Alexis.

## **Chapter 478: Apostle Of Alexis**

In the Serian Empire, Headquarters of the Aether tower.

A woman rushed through the hallway and entered the elevator. She hurriedly hit the highest button inside the elevator and clutched the piece of paper she was holding to her chest.

After a minute or so, when the elevator door opened, the woman once more rushed to a grandiose door and knocked on it.

The door opened on its own and the woman walked in.

"Your highness, we have a situation," she said.

An old, decrepit man with long white hair and beard, sat cross-legged on the floor instead of the table. When he heard the woman, he slowly opened his eyes.

"Does this situation have anything to do with the Apostle of Alexis?" he asked.

"Yes, your highness. From our report, he is on his way to the Ordain empire. If we don't stop him, he will spread—"

"That's alright," the man said, interrupting the woman. "I will take care of it. Tell the others to not worry about it."

The woman lost all sense of panic and felt incredibly relieved. "Will you? Thank you, your highness."

The woman left the room and the door shut behind her. The old man stayed in the room for a while and contemplated what he had to do.

So, he stood up and walked to the desk, and picked up the phone. He hit a number he had remembered and waited for the other person to answer.

"Your highness, is it you?" a woman spoke in a raspy voice on the other side.

"Yigri, I need you to prepare something," he said.

"What is it, your highness?" the woman asked.

"I need your best work," the man said and waited for the woman to answer.

He didn't get an answer for half a minute before the woman replied, "I will need at least 2 weeks, your highness. Maybe even more," she said.

"I am fine with that. Let me know when you are done with it," the old man said and ended the call.

He then went back to sitting cross-legged and started his absorption technique once more.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ning arrived in a city called Harnot in the Ordain empire. He walked out of the train and looked around the station. The place wasn't any different from back in Xandria.

Even the ethnicities looked quite similar. There may have been a few differences here and there, but overall, they looked the same as the Xandrians.

Ning was about to walk out of the station when he was stopped.

"Are you new?" a pair of guards asked at the pathway outside. Ning noticed that it wasn't just him that was being stopped, but others as well.

"Yes, I'm new," Ning replied.

"Perform an Aether art," the guards said.

"I said, perform an Aether art. Are you deaf?" the guard was a bit rude.

'What the hell?' Ning thought before creating a tongue of flame that lasted for a second at most.

"Wear this on your arm at all times," the guards said as they handed him a red armband.

"This is?" Ning asked.

"To separate you from the dud. If you are found not wearing the band when you are in the city, you will be penalized," the guard said.

Ning looked and saw that the guard himself too had a red armband.

Ning nodded and walked on after wearing the armband. He saw other groups of people wearing similar bands, and a few of them wore white ones.

'Is... that the band for the duds?' Ning wondered.

There were almost as many duds as Aether users in the city from what Ning could tell.

Ning walked out of the city and thought of what he needed to do next. As always, his first choice was to find a publishing company to print his scrolls.

After that, he just needed to find a hotel for himself.

Ning looked around, trying to find a ride when he heard someone shouting.

"You think I will pay 10 Sils for your shitty carriage," someone was shouting at a carriage driver.

"Sir, that is the price of the carriage ride for where you want to go," the driver said.

"You dare talk back to me?" the man suddenly slapped the driver in front of the whole crowd.

"What the hell?" Ning said softly. He expected the driver to hit back, but for some reason, he simply stood there with his head low while holding his cheeks.

Ning looked at the crowd and not a single person walked up to do anything. Even the 2 children and woman next to the man looked at the situation with no hint of shame in their eyes.

"2 Sils, that is all I will be paying you," the man told him.

"Sir, 2 Sils is just not enough. I have a family to loo—"

The man slapped the driver again. "You dare talk back to me? Have you forgotten your place?" he screamed at the poor driver again.

Ning couldn't keep watching this, so he walked forward.

"Brother, how much will it cost me to go to the Sweetpea street?" Ning asked.

"Who the hell are you?" the man asked. "I already chose this carriage, go away."

"But it doesn't look like you are going to use it. If you are, why don't you pay his 10 Sils price?" Ning asked.

"Hah, are you empathizing with a dud? You are one stupid idiot," the man said.

"You think he's different just because he has a white band on his arm?" Ning asked. Without waiting for an answer, he snapped his finger and the man's red band slipped out of his hand and into Ning's own.

He then turned around to the driver and gave it to him. "Wear this," he said.

"I-I can—"

"You can after you eat this," Ning said as he brought out an Aether Ore.

The driver's eyes opened wide in shock. He may be a nobody, but he knew what an Aether ore was.

"Wh-who are you?" the driver asked.

"I am the Apostle of Alexis, and I have come to this city to turn every single dud into an Aether user."

"By the time I leave, I will make sure there is not a single person here that can look down on you all."

## **Chapter 479: Vandalism**

Ning lived in a small house close to the western border of the city.

This was not a house that he owned or one that he rented. It was a house owned by a dud couple that were going to be out of a few weeks, so they had decided to give him the house.

After all, he didn't have a proper place to stay after the hotels decided to kick him out all because he was the Apostle of Alexis.

These people that were born with aether couldn't stand seeing someone of slower status rising to the same ranks as them. The differences between a normal man and a dud was slowly disappearing, and they didn't like that.

Ning could only sigh when he thought that. The prejudice and hatred the aether users had against the duds was so deep rooted that they couldn't see the rise of the duds being anything other than bad.

Ning woke up in the morning and pulled out something to eat. Once done, he walked out of the house and shook his head.

Once more they had trashed the place. There was trash all around the front yard, not a single place for him to set up his shop at.

There were also writings on the wall that called him words like traitor and waste of Aether.

'Am I going to have to not only help the duds get Aether, but also go around teaching why there should have been no distinctions in the first place?' Ning wondered. That was too much work. He would rather not have to do that.

He sighed as he looked at the outer wall with the large texts. 'I better clear this all before the people—'

Suddenly Ning's hand moved behind him and caught a stone right as it was about to hit his head.

He pulled the stone front and saw that it was about the size of a chicken egg.

He turned around and saw that there were a bunch of young men there glaring at him. Ning looked at the young kid at the center, about 15 or 16 years old.

"Did you throw this stone at me?" Ning asked.

"Ptui!" the kid spit next to him. "I was only throwing stone at a pile of shit in the middle of a garbage. Didn't know there was a human here."

The bunch of kids next to him started laughing as if he had said the funniest joke they had ever heard.

Ning looked around him at the pile of garbage and smiled. "Did your parents ever tell you that why you should never throw a stone at a pile of shit?" he asked.

"Why?" the kids asked with a still smiling face.

"Because if you throw a stone at shit, it usually splashes back on you."

Suddenly a bunch of stones flew off from near Ning, accurately hitting the shin of all the legs that those kids had.

Not a single bone was broken, but the kids fell onto the ground and started crying out in pain.

People started to gather around his house and saw the bunch of kids on the ground. They didn't sympathize with the kids.

They were known troublemakers that ran around the city causing problems to the duds. Their parents had high status in the city, so the duds couldn't even do anything against them.

Right now, all they thought in their heart was whatever happened here, the kids deserved it.

Ning walked up to the kid and pulled up the leader of the group and asked him, "are you responsible for this?"

"Fuck off! Do you think I will answer you?" he shouted.

"You will if you don't want me to break those legs," Ning said as he grabbed at the same part he had hit the stone at and started putting incredible pressure at it.

"AAHHH!!" the kid started screaming in pain. "Answer me quickly or your bones will break in half."

"N-No!" the kid cried.

"Very well," Ning put more pressure on it, getting the bone to the point of snapping.

"Wait! Wait! Wait! It was us. We did it," the kid shouted.

Ning let go.

The kid immediately started massaging to red, almost purple spot on his leg where Ning had been putting pressure.

"You did it?" Ning asked. The other kids were fully terrified seeing what the main kid was going through.

"Yes, we did it," the kid said.

"Under whose order?" Ning asked.



"No, no one. We just heard the adults talking about you and came to do what we did," the kid said.

"Alright, you have 1 hour to fix this house the way it was before. If not, I will break all of your legs for sure this time," Ning scared them.

"Ye-yes!" the kids nodded quickly and stood up to go clear the garbage and the writing on the wall.

Ning didn't care how they would do it, he only cared that they did.

He cleared a bit of trash in one area, and setup his table there. People started gathering in a line in front of him.

There were people who hadn't yet gotten their share of ores and scrolls to become an Aether user yet.

So he spend the next few hours waiting for people to come. From what he knew, there shouldn't have been that many people left yet, and in a matter of days he should be able to leave this place.

The line was disrupted as a bunch of buff adults walked up to Ning with a bunch of sticks and metal rods.

They slammed his table the moment they arrived, smashing it into bits.

"What are you doing?" Ning asked.

They didn't answer and instead surrounded him and grabbed him by his arms, pulling him up.

A man appeared from the crowd with an almost obese body and a fancy looking suit.

"Who are you?" Ning asked.

"I am the mayor of this city, and I have come here to punish you for the chaos you have brought into my city."

## **Chapter 480: Killing**

"The Mayor?" Ning looked at him with a curious face. "So you are Vandal Might, huh?"

"Yes, I am Vandal—"

The mayor looked behind Ning and saw the bunch of kids who were busy scrubbing away the words from the wall.

"You kids, what are you doing here?" the mayor asked.

"Uncle Vandal," the main kid seemed to know him closely. "Th-this man hurt us and forced us to work for him."

"You!!" the mayor got angry. "Not only are you causing chaos in my city, but you are also beating up the youths of my city as well. You really need to be taught a lesson."

"Calling yourself the Apostle of a goddess that doesn't exist, disrupting the society, you are worse than a criminal scum," the Mayor said.

"Can you stop talking please, and do whatever you came here to do?" Ning asked.  
"Because unlike you, I have a responsibility to improve this city."

The Mayor snapped. "Beat him!" he ordered.

The men at the side started striking at Ning's stomach with the metal rods and wooden sticks. Some hit him on the legs, some hit him on the chest, and some hit him on the shoulders.

Some even struck him on the head, clearly with the intention to kill.

He was struck from all sides for at least a whole minute before the mayor asked his goons to stop attacking.

The crowd gasped all around them, and some even tried to come to the front to save Ning, but the Mayor had people behind him guarding him.

"Is he dead?" the Mayor asked.

"Sir, he's not even bleeding," one of the men said.

"What? How can it be?" the Mayor got surprised.

Ning straightened his back and cracked his neck. He turned his head around to the back and looked at the kids who had fear and shock in their eyes from seeing a person being nearly beaten to death.

"You kids can leave now, run off," Ning said.

The kids looked at each other in confusion and didn't know what to do.

"I told you to run away, or do you want to keep scrubbing this place?" he asked.

The kids nodded and walked away.

Ning then turned to the crowd and spoke, "Take your kids away. They shouldn't see this."

The many parents in the crowd immediately searched for their kids and started taking them away.

They believed he was talking about himself being killed and even held a tear in their eyes for him.

Only if they knew what he was thinking.

Ning finally turned to the mayor. "You really came here planning to kill me, huh?" he asked.

"You bast—"

"Who was the one that hit me first? It was you right?" Ning asked one of the burly men standing to his right.

"So what if it was me?" the man asked.

The man holding Ning's right arm suddenly felt an incredible force throwing him upwards.

Everyone looked at the man being thrown high in the air, and at the same time, Ning used the free right hand to directly grab the throat of the man who had just spoken.

"You have one last time to take yourself and your children away from here," Ning said. The crowd finally understood what was going to happen.

Some left, but most stayed behind to watch. They wanted to see what was going to happen.

Ning looked back to the man and asked, "So what if it was you right?" He could see the fear rise up in the man's eyes.

The man suddenly struck the wooden bat right on Ning's head again, but as he did, his hands limped and there was no force at all on the attack.

Ning let go of his hands and watched the man fall to the ground with a crushed neck. Without a shadow of a doubt, the man was dead.

The catharsis of seeing people that had always looked down on them and treated them poorly getting hurt would feel incredible was what the people that stayed behind had thought.

However, seeing a person die so easily, even if they had hated them, made them feel a little sick.

Ning turned to the Mayor again and showed a devilish smile. "You see, I have a little rule for myself. Well, it's less of a rule and more of a restriction. I never kill people that have no desire to hurt me or the others."

His voice turned cold. "You guys are not it."

Suddenly a spear formed right into his hands. The men couldn't understand if he had created it, or taken it out of his storage bag.

Either way, it was too fast. Ning swung the spear towards his left arm, cutting the hands of the man that held him.

With the same motion, he stabbed upwards and pierced the man that was falling down in the shoulder.

He swung the back of the spear and hit another man in the face, breaking his jaw and cheekbones. He then stopped a rod swing from another man in front of him and cut the rod in two before stabbing him through the throat.

Ning remembered the people who hit him with full intention to kill and he only killed them. As for the others, he beat them until they wished they were dead.

The mayor fell down on the ground as he watched the big men he had brought to kill this so-called Apostle get beaten and die to his hands.

He wanted to run away, but his legs weren't working.

When Ning was done, half the men were dead, and half were unconscious after going into shock.

Ning walked up to the Mayor and stabbed him through the calves, making him scream at the top of his lungs.

"Did you think that just because I was single, I was an easy target for you?" Ning asked. "Sorry to say, but you poked the wrong beast today."

Ning pulled the spear out of the Mayor's calves and pierced it through his skull.

Ning finally looked up and around him at the terrified faces of the crowd.. 'It seems I cannot stay in this place any longer.'