

Black Plain 1431

Chapter 1431 The Trial 2

"Silence!" The supreme elder of the Edwardstone family roared as he looked toward that old local expert, who had not been given the right to speak.

Minos returned to his seat and said. "The trial cannot be about the victims of the Saints Killing Sect. That is a trial about a sect master's loyalty to the emperor and His Majesty's impositions."

"I did not disregard His Majesty's words in my act. It was merely a fluke of fate, created by the very members of the Saints Killing Sect, something that, yes, favored me. But I did not plan or intend for this to happen at any time."

"I could have gone against the enemy headquarters, but I didn't do that because I knew the consequences." He said, looking for the first time at those judging him. "Thus, I end my defense. I trust the imperial family will decree a fair and favorable verdict for me."

Those members of the imperial family who wished to make Minos at least suffer a little expressed discomfort on their faces, regretting what looked like it was going to happen.

Minos' words had been very well thought out, touching on crucial points already in the minds of each local leader there.

Now, the biggest concern of these men was not even that the empire was getting weaker nor that Minos might be rebelling. But Mortimer could change many things about this state in a short time.

They knew that Minos had no means of opening spatial cracks to the headquarters of the Saints Killing Sect. Only a member of that organization could teleport to a location within the core of that sect.

With all this evidence and new problems to think about, the members of the imperial family already had a good sense of where this whole trial would go.

"Very well, I will now pass the word to the witnesses, and later, the sect master under the trial will have a chance to defend himself against their accusations." Supreme elder Bush said, moving on with the formalities of this trial.

Meanwhile, Isabella was looking at Minos in a satisfied manner, feeling that he would be able to escape from a bigger trouble in this place.

'You're very clever indeed, Minos.' Her eyes arched downward in a happy expression. 'You used Mortimer, your victim, to become the focus of the discussions and make him everyone's real enemy...'

'Great move!'

Oswald was also pleased since, like many there, although he knew some of the histories of the Destruction Eyes, he did not know enough to identify Gavin, Mortimer's motivations, and the future of this man. As such, if it were him, this man would not be able to use this information to his advantage and would probably end up suffering more punishment in a trial like this!

'That red-haired fellow must have told Minos many things...' This bearded, white-haired man thought about it in silence as the witnesses talked about the atrocities they saw and blamed Emperor Stuart.

Minos would eventually defend himself against the accusations made by those individuals connected to the Saints Killing Sect, showing the jury that such individuals wanted to force the situation against him without any real evidence.

After some time of trial, the members of the Saints Killing Sect who had attended this event had already left. They were sure that they would not achieve anything in this place. Instead, there was a chance that from now on, they would face antagonism from some of those organizations present at the trial!

That was the worst-case scenario for them!

Therefore, the trial soon ran to its conclusion when the supreme elder spoke the jury's recommendation for Isabella to proclaim the sentence of this trial.

The one sitting in the emperor's position was the one who had to give the sentence in trials like this, and they could follow the jury's recommendation or not.

Isabella called for silence from everyone and soon stood up to pronounce.

"On behalf of His Imperial Majesty, Harold Edwardstone, I declare Minos Stuart free of responsibility over the recent incident over the headquarters of the Saints Killing Sect." She said loud and clear.

Almost no one in that place was surprised by this, but Sarah jumped for joy upon hearing this since she was the only one who did not quite understand what was happening.

As the people in the surrounding area looked at that child dressed in a pink dress jumping next to Gloria, Isabella continued her speech. "But due to the previous disagreement with the imperial guards and such an unintentional event, we will limit the sect master Minos Stuart in two ways."

"First, the sect master is prohibited from using the mass destruction weapon called the Black Hole Bomb within the empire. The penalty for non-compliance with this will be the declaration of the sect master as a rebel and measures already expected..." She said suggestively, without mentioning it, which was somewhat obvious to everyone there.

"Secondly, the sect master Minos Stuart will have to remain under house arrest for one year and renew his loyalties to the imperial family..."

"I hope you don't quarrel with imperial guards in the future, sect master." She said as she looked at him, considering that this was not an unfair punishment for Minos' threats to the group that had gone to arrest him.

Even though he was innocent, no one could react to the imperial guards, or they would commit a crime, contempt of law, and the emperor!

Because of this, even though he had been declared innocent, Minos was still going to be punished in some way.

But of course, this was not what would happen to ordinary people as the crown princess favored him.

Even though this was clear to everyone, no one said anything against this favoritism since that was life. Connections were everything, and those who had the best individuals close to them could live even better.

With that, Minos' punishment was final, and he soon questioned. "It's okay for me to serve my house arrest in the Black Plain Empire, right? That whole state is my home."

The members of the imperial family closed their eyes to avoid looking at this shameless person, but Isabella agreed with him. "But of course. As a sovereign, that is your privilege. But since you will serve your time in that state, I forbid those involved with the attacks of weeks ago to leave the headquarters of the Gray Clouds Sect for that same period."

"Only those who participated in the attack?" Minos was not bothered by this since several other Spiritual Saints had not joined them. "Very well, we will follow with Your Highness' decisions."

Thus, Minos' imperial trial ended, with the people there finally beginning to discuss today's outcome, concerned about Mortimer and less interested in Emperor Stuart.

Minos returned to his family's side and quickly began preparing for their return to the Black Plain, something that had to happen immediately, given his 'house detention.'

He also wanted to give some orders for the Gray Clouds Sect members to leave for the Black Plain. Thus, he and his group soon left the area, missing the opportunity to fraternize with those local leaders.

It was time to return to the Black Plain and solve the Abe problem!

Chapter 1432 Back To The Black Plain

One week later...

After the previous trial was over, Minos and his family left Payton and finally returned to Dry City.

The Gray Clouds Sect was no longer at war, while the Saints Killing Sect had its 'doors' closed to the rest of the world, with most of its experts in seclusion. At the same time, the imperial family of that state and the high-level powers were preparing for the complicated future ahead. So Minos had not had any problems in these last few days concerning this state.

With that, after giving his orders to that sect before leaving the Flaming Empire, he was now focused on his state, waiting for the reinforcements that should arrive soon.

But while he and his family were returning with their usual routines in Dry City, the time for the previous mercenaries to leave had finally arrived.

And now, Emperor Stuart was receiving them at his palace.

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"Your Majesty, our contract ends next morning." One of the two-level 79 Spiritual Saints said this to Minos as he and the other nine individuals were profiled in front of the imperial throne.

Minos heard this and did not have much to say to these people.

He could renew his contract with these people and keep them in Dry City to help him take on Abe's terrorist group. But now that the war between those two sects was over, Minos would have more support from the Gray Clouds Sect.

He did not want to spend his high-grade crystals unnecessarily, so he was naturally sending these people back where they came from.

"Hmmm, thank you for your services," Minos sincerely said, as these ten individuals had kept the peace in Dry City for the past few weeks.

It was true that they had not confronted and caused casualties in Abe's group. But Minos had never demanded that of these people, so that was not why he would be disappointed.

"If one day you decide to return to the Black Plain, we will welcome you with open doors." He commented, looking into the faces of each of these people. "Until then, I wish you good luck and a safe journey."

"Thank you, Your Majesty!" Those individuals said simultaneously, before receiving the last of the payments they were entitled to from some of the imperial guards in that hall.

Those individuals also said goodbye to some of the experts in the surrounding area, with whom they had kept in touch for weeks and made friendships.

After a brief moment, they left Dry City without looking back.

"What are you going to do?" One of them asked, remembering the offer they had received from Abe in the intervening period.

Abe had offered double what Minos had paid them for these past few weeks. But since they were in the middle of their contract with the local sovereign, they could not change sides, thanks to some rules that their mercenary guild imposed on their men.

But now that they were free, they could do whatever they wanted!

"I'm going back to the empire. There is nothing in this place for me." One of the women in this group commented and was soon followed by others who thought the same.

"There is no reason for us to stay here. To go along with that individual's proposal is tantamount to lusting after death..."

"Haven't you seen everything this Minos has done during the days we've seen him fight?"

"He can cause our deaths." Another person commented, remembering that Minos had terrible means to kill his opponents.

'No fortune is worth the price of death...' The other woman there thought to herself, already satisfied with her gains.

Thus, none of them decided to stay and change their position on the Black Plain. Instead, they all started their journey back to the Western Empire together!

'When I get there, I will have to deliver that old fellow's message...' One of them pondered as he remembered Grant.

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Meanwhile, Minos was still in his imperial throne hall, carrying on with his responsibilities as ruler.

After his last trip, upon returning to the Black Plain, Minos had had great surprises with several of his soldiers who had advanced in level and even stage.

Such was the case with Joey, this administrative soldier in his army, who had reached level 60 after so many years in this organization.

But besides this fellow, soldiers more active in Minos' plans had also achieved improvements recently. For example, Elen and Eduard had reached level 65. They could be considered some of the strongest individuals that had been brought into the local forces by Minos.

Some patriarchs and leaders of organizations in the northern region and the Black Plain Empire were also doing well. But due to their advanced ages, they were beginning to lag behind these young cultivators.

With the recent advances, despite the losses the local forces had taken in such a period, Minos found a stronger Black Plain than he had left weeks ago.

Abe had not acted against Dry City in this period. Still, he and his group continued to disrupt local development by attacking strategic points in this state.

Because of this, the Black Plain lost personnel and growth opportunities during this period, still living through the drama of being blocked by that individual's terrorist group.

Minos had already expected this to happen, so none of this came as a surprise to him when he found out everything. He was just refreshed and focused on what he should do to solve this problem.

After those experts left, he said to his men in that imperial hall. "Begin preparations for the Black Plain counterattack. In a few weeks, the groups from the Gray Clouds Sect will begin arriving in our state, and we will begin hunting down the enemies."

"Yes, Your Majesty!" Some of the administrative members of the army answered him before leaving.

They had to study ways to attack Abe's terrorist group and eventually deal with the Spiritual Sage to stop him from saving the enemy's head. That was complex, even considering the 8th-stage cultivators coming from the Flaming Empire.

Therefore, Minos advanced that matter by giving that order to the army intelligence soldiers before following with new commands to the rest of his forces.

"To our Vogel allies and friendly states, I want you to return to your old positions around the empire to protect our outposts." He said as he looked at those people over there.

Lulu, who was still in this city, then asked in strangeness. "What is the meaning of this? I thought we would return to our states after that situation in the Flaming Empire."

Minos then said. "I need some time before I do that. So I ask you to stay here for the time being. In a few months, we can give up your help."

"What about..." Someone from the Assembly of Vogel was about to say something, but Minos interrupted him.

"Vogel is part of the empire. So I demand that you continue your exemplary service."

"Sigh..." He then looked at his direct subordinates. "For the rest, you can all return to your former duties. I will handle the security of Dry City from now on."

"Yes, Your Majesty!"

Chapter 1433 The Problems Of Migrating A Sect

After meeting with his staff to deal with more important orders for his local forces to act on, Minos focused on bringing his sect to his state.

Taking one of the most influential organizations out of one state and bringing it to another was not simple!

The Gray Clouds Sect was not just an organization that had decided to be in the Flaming Empire and could come and go as it pleased. No, this organization had once been free to do so. Still, at some point in its history, it had become a vassal of the Edwardstone family.

As a vassal, that organization had privileges, such as management of the large territory it was based in in the southeast of that state. But it also had obligations to the imperial family, such as paying fees, sending soldiers to war, etc.

Hence, it was not enough that the sect master decided to take that sect out of the Flaming Empire. That would be like taking a vital piece of a body without even asking its owner's permission!

In other words, it was a delicate issue that would need to be discussed and negotiated. So Minos was planning with his wives and some of the higher echelons of his forces about it.

"For now, I see no problem with you bringing some of the sect forces to the Black Plain, sect master. Of course, as long as you don't bring more than 50% of our experts here." Ivory said this to Minos as she sat across the table from where they were standing in his office. "That will just be you getting the sect to act in this area, which did not constitute abandonment of function on our part. But more than that will create problems for us."

"So how do we legally get this sect out of the Flaming Empire?" Abby asked.

Gloria then said. "One way to do that is to compensate the imperial family in some way that replaces whatever is to be taken away. In that case, we would have to give them something with a 'weight' equivalent to that sect's."

"And we can do that?" Ruth questioned her husband.

"Not today, but perhaps in a few years." Minos replied, wondering what he could accomplish after more time.

"Besides," Gloria continued. "We have some alternatives. For example, if Minos marries Isabella and she is made official as Empress, it will be easy to do that. But the chances of that happening in the short term are pretty low..."

"On the other hand, if Minos saves the Emperor of that kingdom, it is quite possible for that man to lower the cost for us to remove that sect from the empire and bring it here."

"Hmm, that might be the case." Minos nodded, considering that he could also take that organization out of the Flaming Empire by force since he still had the protection of the Church for a few more years.

The Church did not protect him from the mercenaries of the Western Empire because of the agreements it had and the fact that that state was not part of its territory. But the Flaming Empire was part of its domains and naturally feared it.

But even with that possibility, he would not do such a thing since it would form enmity between him and the powers of that empire, which went against his goals.

Moreover, even without being able to bring the Gray Clouds Sect to his state in the short term, it would not affect his actions against Abe. After all, he would already have a few dozen Spiritual Saints at his disposal in a few weeks.

That would already be enough for him to start acting against Abe and develop his state again!

When it came to definitely dealing with this enemy, Minos judged that they could achieve this within a year, when the high-level elders of his sect would no longer have to be under house arrest.

With these high-level cultivators, plus the likely advance he would have by then, he felt they could disturb that Spiritual Sage long enough to kill Abe!

Now that he had the necessary answers, Minos was no longer in such a hurry and was relaxed about his plans.

He then said. "Well, I have already talked to Isabella about bringing this sect here, but she didn't like the idea and thought that the elders of her family would not allow something like that."

"According to her own words, they would probably rather face war with me than accept such abuse."

"But it's true... That's practically a robbery." One of the Spiritual Saints from that sect standing there next to Ivory said this in a low voice.

"Well, we can think about some kind of fractional compensation." Minos thought about that idea.

"What does that look like?" Abby asked.

"We can propose something like, for every ten level 77 Spiritual Saints we take out of that state permanently, we will return one level 79. That would follow for all the 8th-stage cultivators who migrate here from the sect." He suggested. "By doing that, we would hand over more than 100% of the power we take from that state, but we would do it slowly, without losing much in the short term."

"Everyone would gain from that."

"Oh?" Ivory became interested in that. "But how would you return that power to the Flaming Empire?"

"We can't bring more than 50% of the sect members here since that would constitute abandonment of function," Minos said as he saw Ivory nod in agreement. "Then we will keep some people from that sect here below that ratio. We will train them and make them stronger."

"When we have a level 79 Spiritual Saint, we'll bring ten more level 77 ones. When we have level 78, we will get ten more level 75 ones. And so on, until we can migrate almost all the high-level members of the sect."

Members below the 8th stage would not hinder Minos from convincing the imperial family to accept his proposal. Thus, he was not thinking of going through with this plan for all the members of that sect.

Those weaker ones would come to the northern region when almost none of that sect's experts were left in that empire.

"Won't that take a long time to happen?" Ivory looked at Minos with her mouth open in shock.

From Minos' words, it seemed that he thought it was easier for Spiritual Saints to cultivate in the Black Plain than in the Flaming Empire!

Minos then replied. "No, I believe it can be solved more quickly than you think..."

"But there would have to be people in that place who would have to stay behind." Another Spiritual Saint said. "Following your logic, the sect would end up staying with only a few high-level members. But it would be impossible to bring all of them."

"Hmm, but that doesn't matter. After all, I am the sect master, so I would only leave some of my men in that state." Minos said.

"They would take care of the outpost of our forces while most of the force members would be on the Black Plain."

"I see..." Such a person commented, still thinking that it would be pretty difficult for this to work but that it was indeed an offer that would be tempting.

What leader would not covet to exchange weaker subordinates for stronger experts?

There were less than 40 level 79 Spiritual Saints in the Flaming Empire. But there were more than 300 level 77 individuals there!

Hence, this would be quite a trade!

Chapter 1434 Beginning Of The Counter-Attack

A month passed...

After Minos returned to Dry City, his forces came back to how they had been before the first time the sovereign went to the Flaming Empire.

The local forces spread out across this state, returning to protect some of the outer areas that had been sidelined in this most recent period.

At the same time, Minos and his wives were back fighting Abe's mercenaries, slowly improving the Black Plain's position against these terrorists due to their recent advances.

But this was not enough to change much about Minos and Abe's conflict.

So when the reinforcements from the Gray Clouds Sect finally began to arrive in this state, the local forces celebrated. But, simultaneously, the enemies felt the times getting more hostile.

Since the local sovereign's return, the Gray Clouds Sect had sent 30 Spirit Saints to the Black Plain. Of these individuals, 10 were people between the first three levels of the 8th stage, 15 between levels 74 and 76, and the rest were elders at levels 77, 78, and 79.

With this strength, although Minos did not immediately get a group as strong as that of mercenaries that had left Dry City, he did get a lot of power to strengthen himself!

Unlike those mercenaries, these were individuals loyal to Minos, much more willing to follow his orders to the letter and not betray him. At the same time, the Gray Clouds Sect paid them, so they would cost nothing to the Black Plain government coffers.

But not only experts were sent to Emperor Stuart's state. The sect of Oswald and now Minos had thousands of Spiritual Emperors.

In possession of this knowledge, Minos had asked for the initial sending of 2,000 of these individuals!

Because of this group, the trip of reinforcements had taken so long compared to the return of Minos and his family to Dry City.

In any case, now the local forces had been greatly strengthened, and Minos would go out on the counter-attack!

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Boom!

"Ahhhhhhhhhh!"

Swoosh!

"Attack!"

People shouted amid the sounds of explosions and remnant attacks passing on the outskirts of a forested area of the Black Plain, where two groups were facing each other.

"Charge!"

Ka-Boom!

Some artillery near the area, people using cannons and arrays, were mercilessly bombarding the surroundings, knowing that some enemies were hiding there.

The government of the Black Plain had built cities and forests in this previously desert region. So it would not be because of the current greenery that the men of the local army would not destroy the very terrain where part of the terrorists was hiding.

If they had built their territory once, they could do it a second time!

With that in mind, the soldiers in the middle of this raiding party activated their cannons toward that area.

Boom!

While they were punishing a part of that artificial forest, higher-level allies of those forces were fighting the members of Abe's terrorist group.

Pow!

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

A level 73 Spiritual Saint from Abe's group took a powerful punch from his same-level opponent, feeling the weight in his stomach as his body flew backward.

"How can that be?" That individual felt his Soul Avatar succumb after such a blow and looked in a frightened manner at that brown-haired woman.

He had no way of recognizing that woman. After all, he was from the Western Empire, not the Flaming Empire.

But if he were from that other state, he would understand that he would be no match for Oswald's eldest daughter when he had the same level as her.

Besides having better techniques than most people, Maisie had inherited the powerful innate ability of her old father, an impressive will that could strengthen its user and weaken opponents.

Because of this, when she activated her innate ability and made her move, Maisie broke through that man's mental barriers before striking a powerful physical blow against him.

Such a thing had 'knocked out' that man's Soul Avatar, leaving him 'unprotected' against Maisie and her avatar.

Gray Clouds Art!

Maisie's Soul Avatar placed its hands on top of each other, and a tiny spark of light appeared between them. At the same time, the clouds in the surrounding area became darker and gathered around this avatar.

As Maisie's avatar's hands moved away from each other, a powerful blue ray appeared from the middle of the vortex of clouds that had appeared, heading towards the body of that Spiritual Saint.

Ka-Boom!

A thunderous sound reverberated through the surroundings, by which time such an individual had already been attacked.

In the blink of an eye, many people in the surrounding area looked in the direction of such a person and saw a charred but still living body, trembling in pain.

Even though he had survived such a powerful attack, he was not much better off than a dead man after being attacked by this ruthless woman!

With that, when such a person made a vertical move against his neck, using a small blade, he could do nothing to save himself.

Such an attack cut through the skies so fast that he only saw it being hurled towards him, and then such a thing pierced his body, hitting not only his flesh but also his soul.

Spiritual Saints did not depend entirely on their bodies to survive. Thus, to kill one of them, someone or something would have to be able to affect their soul.

But that was not so difficult to do. Even lower-level cultivators like Spiritual Kings could embed their attacks with Natural Laws capable of threatening the soul.

Therefore, a Spiritual Saint like Maisie did that very well and did not spare this opponent of hers from death!

"Ahhhh!" Such an individual let out his last sound of pain in this place that earlier was only the temporary camp of his group but now looked more like a battlefield.

Simultaneous to his death, several people from both groups were suffering in the surrounding area when a teleportation area suddenly appeared nearby, startling the mercenaries.

When one of the few observers from the group trying to escape saw this, he looked in fear toward the man in golden armor who had just arrived.

Then...

"Retreat!"

"Quick, run away! Minos Stuart is here!" He shouted before leaving his post, starting to run along with his superiors who were already leaving the area earlier.

"Minos?" Abe, who was coming to this place, heard this a few moments after noticing that his enemies had discovered one of his posts.

'How did this happen? Is it a coincidence that they attacked this place just when I came here to check on this group?' He paled at the thought of this, already flying to get away from there, along with his bodyguards.

'Damn it!

'Someone ratted me out!' He clenched his fists, understanding that this could only be the case, or Minos would not show up on the battlefield.

"Wynne, stay and delay Minos while I escape." He said to one of the stronger Spiritual Saints in his group, afraid to see that fellow in battle.

"OK!"

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Chapter 1435 Misinformed

When that level 79 man stayed behind to protect the core of his group retreat, Minos had not yet identified Abe's position and was fighting his way through the surrounding area.

Emperor Stuart had earlier received information that Abe was likely to appear at this outpost today through one of the enemies arrested by members of his sect this morning.

With this intelligence, he had immediately ordered the group closest to this location to attack this enemy outpost as soon as possible, considering that such information would expire quickly.

Luckily, Maisie's group was nearby, and she had come to this location and promptly established a teleportation port for Minos to come from Dry City to this place.

With that, although he knew of the likelihood of Abe appearing in this place, as soon as he appeared there, Minos had no idea whether this individual was there.

When he began to look for Abe, Minos took advantage of the fact that he was on a battlefield and promptly began to fight, knocking opponents down and using the energies of part of them.

Devouring Art!

He flew through the area while many enemies were already floating around him because of the Chaotic Gravity. Many of them were also under the effects of Minos' auxiliary technique, losing their energy to him.

Spatial Sword!

Minos saw a level 75 enemy in front of him, trying to hinder him from vascularizing the surroundings. He decided to attack this person, turning his sword against his chest, ignoring the Soul Avatar of this person.

The Soul Avatar was the proper form of a cultivator, the way they had to access the full potential of their techniques. But defensively speaking, this possibility had the same strength as the fleshy body would have using defensive techniques.

Since Minos knew that his strength could already be compared to that of a Spiritual Saint at such a level, he attacked that person intending to hurt him significantly.

Swoosh!

The blade of his sword slashed toward the Soul Avatar's abdomen as this individual tried to attack him, using his strongest techniques to challenge the enemy leader.

Minos could be scary with a black hole or Black Hole Bomb on his side. But without those things, this person judged this local leader as only slightly above average!

"Die, you bastard!" He shouted as he looked up with a smart little smile on his face while the water in the surroundings condensed and formed blades of ice.

Such blades condensed in the Soul Avatar's hands, and he directed them to where Minos was attacking his abdomen.

However, contrary to what that man with long black hair thought, he failed to prepare for both Minos' attack and his attack!

When the blade of Minos' sword pressed against the 'skin' of his Soul Avatar, this man felt like two attacks had struck him simultaneously.

One attack would be difficult for him to withstand without suffering even one damage. Still, it would not cause him any tremendous suffering. But two was beyond his limit, and as soon as the collision of Minos' sword blade and his 'skin' happened, that part of his avatar split open like a torn plastic.

"Damn it!"

He saw Minos entering his avatar control space as his own blades struck this opponent's body.

To the misfortune of this mercenary coming from the Western Empire, besides some of those blades injuring his own body, none of them hurt Minos!

Minos smiled as he felt those things 'massaging' his body while his passive ability to absorb spiritual blows sucked out much of the attack power of those blades.

But not only that, he had his defensive technique, Indestructible Body, active, which would protect him from that.

Finally, his medium-level grade-3 armor did its job and prevented those blades that were left over after the absorption of the Devouring Art passive skill from reaching his skin.

That shocked the level 75 Spiritual Saint, with him realizing that his views regarding the local leader were utterly wrong!

'Shit! I made a mistake!' He tried to escape Minos since, as much as Spiritual Saints could temporarily live without a body and not be completely dependent on them, that was their biggest weakness.

To kill a Spiritual Saint, one would have to strike a blow that afflicted both body and soul. But such a thing had to be specifically on the fleshy body since the Soul Avatar itself was only a projection of the cultivator's soul, not the actual soul.

It would be strange if someone used something so vital to fight, after all...

And so, that individual found himself in range of Minos' sword, promptly returning all his attention to his body and causing his avatar to vanish.

The Soul Avatar was the most powerful form of a Spiritual Saint. But they would have to cast it aside in case their fleshy body was reached by an opponent capable of killing them!

That was how weaker people, specifically those of lower stages, had to defeat a Spiritual Saint capable of using the Soul Avatar!

Clash!

Such a person could grab a dagger from his spatial ring and fend off Minos' point-blank attack.

But Minos had many surprises for him and soon made that man discover some of them.

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Dark Sea!

Darkness appeared in the surroundings of the two as that man lost sight of Minos, and that fellow moved to alternate his fighting mode.

Chaotic Gravity!

As this mercenary stopped sensing his surroundings, a powerful gravitational force began to act against him.

'Damn., What is that now?' He wondered, just before he was punched in the back of the head and narrowly diverted an ax coming from above.

'What the fuck!'

Suddenly, he found himself surrounded by several Spiritual Saints, levels 72, 73, and 74 people, the hostages Minos was holding as batteries in his vicinity.

Because of this, in the blink of an eye these individuals controlled by the Dark Sea and Infinite Dream broke this man's guard, leaving him exposed to Minos.

Poof!

Minos pierced this person's chest with a decisive blow, striking him with a deadly serious impact.

"Ahhhhhhhhhhh!" That person screamed in fear as blood rose up his throat and began to trickle out of his mouth.

Minos saw this and acted, removing his sword from that body and throwing that man to the ground, where people from his group could finish the life of this opponent.

"Soon, you will join the others in nurturing the roots of the empire!" He said as he smiled and flew off in the direction of where he had finally identified the strongest enemies in the area, where Abe probably was.

"Abe!" Minos shouted sharply in the direction of where that individual was fleeing, scaring not only this member of the Vogel family but the other mercenaries escaping the area.

'Bastard!'

'Go to hell!' Abe looked back but kept running, knowing that Minos had no black hole with him to threaten them, but certain that the Gray Clouds Sect reinforcements could be nearby.

In this case, he had to run, even though his mortal enemy was 'vulnerable' right now!

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Chapter 1436 Change Of Situation

As Minos was getting close to the fleeing group where the strongest mercenaries were, he came across a level 79 individual in his path.

"Minos Stuart, I'll have to hold you here for the moment!" While he already had his Soul Avatar activated, such a person shouted at him, prepared to entertain this opponent.

This man was unlike the level 75 Spiritual Saint Minos had just defeated. No, different from such people, this peak individual left behind to deal with him was much more careful and would not underestimate Emperor Stuart.

Was Minos weaker without his black holes 'nourished' with the bodies of countless enemies and Black Hole Bombs? Sure, but that did not mean he was weak and could not do anything against these individuals from the Western Empire.

Minos could create new black holes all the time and be able to fuse others of his techniques, something he had already done in the confrontations against Abe so far. Hence, considering that this brown-haired fellow had advanced in level recently, this peak 8th-stage cultivator was not taking it easy from the start!

Emperor Stuart saw the opponent's movement and took precautions, using the many enemy Spiritual Saints under his influence to serve as batteries.

Minos placed his hands in front of his face, parallel to each other, squeezing the air as if he were pressing an invisible rubber ball. At the same time, his eyes glowed in rainbow colors, preparing to shoot powerful energy beams.

Infinite Dream: Shaking Reality!

Rays of energy shot from Minos' eyes, hitting the invisible sphere being compressed by his two hands.

That then created what appeared to be a small universe full of shining stars.

Chaotic Gravity: Shaking Reality!

The enemy noticed this was not simple when the fusion of Minos' techniques showed its effects.

Even though Minos' attack power seemed to be dangerous only to those below level 75, the fusion had a multiplier bonus that made the power released a little higher than normal.

Because of this, even that level 79 man felt that he could get a little hurt or hindered by Emperor Stuart's action!

Not only that level 79 man felt this. All the cultivators within a distance of 200 meters of Minos were affected by it since he still did not have much control over fusions.

'What the hell is that?' One person from the group of mercenaries swallowed his saliva as he felt the whole world shaking, unable to hold his position.

He felt as if he was suddenly no longer flying, and his legs trembled, bringing him to the ground.

"Is that Minos' current power?" A level 76 Spiritual Saint from the Gray Clouds Sect who was in the vicinity muttered, noting how strong the sect master was already at only level 68.

'Bastard monster!' The level 79 cultivator felt a slight headache at that but continued with his attack, directing an invisible wave that was charged with a powerful mental attack.

Minos felt that, and even though he was quite tired after using his fusion of techniques, he moved, absorbing the energies of his hostages but also manipulating them with his gravitational control.

With this move by Minos, more than a dozen Spiritual Saints stood in front of him in a defensive shield, protecting him from that mental shockwave.

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

"Ahhhhhhhhhh!"

When that movement hit those people, some of them, the weaker ones, suddenly died. But the stronger ones screamed in pain as they felt their mental structures being destroyed by that powerful opponent blow.

As for Minos, even though he suffered a little from that move, the blow had significantly weakened when it finally reached him.

At the same time, with the Infinite Dream, a Golden-grade technique protecting his mind, it would not be a mental attack from that man that would put him at risk.

But it still had a tremendous burden on Minos' consciousness, making him feel an intense headache.

Heaven Seal!

Golden Hammer Descending!

While he and the level 79 Spiritual Saint felt terrible for their respective situations, Spiritual Saints from Minos' group used the opportunity he created to attack that person.

Minos had already removed many of his group's enemies from the battlefield by just arriving at this place. Because of this, several people in his group were free to fight other opponents.

Seeing their leader's situation, the strongest ones reacted quickly, attacking in the direction of the level 79 Spiritual Saint.

This man saw these attacks coming towards him and frowned, looking back to check Abe's situation.

'In another 30 seconds, I'll be able to leave.' He concluded, being little interested in staying there to try to take Minos' life.

He focused his attention on countering his opponents' movements, launching attacks against anyone who stood against him.

Unfortunately, time was not in this man's favor on this day!

When 20 seconds had passed, three men arrived on the battlefield via teleportation zones, those areas set up by Minos' soldiers in the surroundings.

Among these individuals, all of them were high-level Spiritual Saints, 2 level 77 and one level 78.

Not only had Minos been warned to leave headquarters and come to this place where Abe could appear today. The strongest elders sent by the Gray Clouds Sect to the Black Plain had also been communicated.

They had run as fast as possible from where they were to this place, arriving only a few minutes after Minos.

In any case, when he realized the arrival of those individuals, the level 79 Spiritual Saint felt that his escape would be made much more difficult by his enemies.

Not only were these opponents in his surroundings getting more complicated with the arrival of these three people. His situation was terrible. Without many more living allies to share this moment with him, more and more Spiritual Saints from Minos' group were gathering against him!

Since Minos' soldiers were manipulating spatial stabilization arrays where he was, this man could not even use his teleportation array to escape!

'Damn it!'

'I'm finished!' He thought about it, feeling a headache from the lingering effects of the blow Minos had dealt him moments ago.

Thunder Hammer!

One of those newly arrived elders activated his Soul Avatar along with his main offensive technique, acting against such a person without any mercy!

At this moment, Abe's group had already disappeared from that area, but they knew that the fate of their men who stayed behind would be no other than death.

From this day on, they would no longer be the ones who only terrorized those areas. Instead, they would become victims of such surprise actions and would begin to feel the enemy encirclement coming closer and closer to them.

Now it was only a matter of time before a more decisive fight between Minos and Abe would take place!

Chapter 1437 Imperial Family Quinn

Three months later...

In the capital of the Western Empire...

Right now, one of the mercenaries who had recently been in the Black Plain Empire was now going through the imperial palace's security protocols.

After months since that group's departure from Dry City, they had already reached their homeland and returned to their routine activities there.

Some of them had taken time out for themselves since they had earned enough in that period to go months or even years without working. So even those less interested in resting had taken time for themselves, like the man who had taken Grant's message.

But after a few days of relaxing, this fellow had decided to fulfill old Grant's mission and was at this very moment in one of the wings of the imperial palace responsible for low-level affairs.

In the Western Empire, 8th-stage individuals, as was the case with this man, were considered experts. But there were many of them, and there were not only Spiritual Sages above them in the local hierarchy but also Spiritual Demigods.

As such, although people like this were recognized as experts, they had no real chance of coming into contact with the core of any local organization. At most, someone like this mercenary could enter the low-level area of the imperial palace to deliver messages!

"Next!" A woman dressed in armor and with a level 81 cultivation said this as she looked toward this level 78 mercenary.

Walking up to such a person, this man was as humble as he could be and said nothing, waiting for her to ask the questions.

"What is your purpose here?" She questioned him from outside her workplace, where normally the imperial guard would do primary screening to accept or not accept entry or delivery of things by men like this mercenary.

"Delivering a message." He said in a low voice, not showing all the confidence he had in the Black Plain.

"Who is the message for? And who sent it?"

"The message is addressed to the Emperor..." He said in a half-embarrassed tone, trying to make it clear to this woman that he was only a messenger and had no relation to such a person who dared to do this.

She looked at this man strangely as she put one of her hands on the sword on her waist.

He then quickly finished explaining himself. "As for who sent it, that is a supposed former member of the imperial guard, Grant Yates, formerly..." Finally, he told some of the stories of how Grant got lost in the North Sea, something that man had told him to help him in this situation.

Grant had been missing for a long time, so he was probably reported dead or a dissident. But even with these problems, his record in the imperial family should still exist. If one were to search through the list of dead or missing from the group he was part of, they should see his record.

"A former member of the imperial guard?" That woman muttered in surprise as she dropped her hand from the pommel of her sword.

She still could not say for sure if this person was really carrying the letter of a former member of the imperial guard. But this mercenary had given so many relevant and easy-to-analyze details that, at this first moment, she judged his words as accurate.

"Yes, that was the story he told me and asked me to repeat it, Your Excellency."

"But the incident you cited happened many centuries ago... Why did it take him so long to report?" She asked with a serious expression as she indicated for that man to accompany her into a room.

As she walked, she added another question. "By the way, from what you said, he shouldn't have a good hierarchy within the family. Then how dare he try to communicate directly with the emperor? Does he think His Majesty is a bum to take messages from someone of his level?"

This mercenary smiled bitterly and said. "According to Grant, his motives are in the letter. But I can advance that the problem is related to the cause of the sinking of that group's ship in the North Sea. So I believe that is why he wants to communicate directly with the emperor."

"Oh? North Sea?" Her eyebrows drew together since that place would really justify informing the emperor. After all, that terrible place was a nightmare even for Spiritual Sages!

But still, she did not like the idea of a fellow who had disappeared for so long having the chance to communicate directly with the emperor.

'Perhaps this is important, so I will not completely discard this message. But I will not send it to the emperor. Instead, I will let one of the princess' trusted men receive such a thing.' She pondered in silence before hearing that mercenary's other response.

"As for a reason for his delay, Your Excellency Grant was crippled by that incident and only narrowly survived." He said while making a regretful expression since he had heard the stories of many people regarding the way Grant had arrived in Dry City without legs.

"He lost his cultivation and also his legs. Also, it took him quite a while to recover minimally, so he wasn't in danger. After that, he had no means of returning to the Empire." He explained. "Only more recently was he able to join a force in the northern region where he had a chance to regain his legs and improve his situation somewhat."

"It was also through that force that he had the chance to contact me, who agreed to bring his message here."

"I see..." She commented as she realized that Grant had suffered quite a bit and had reasonable justifications for his situation.

It was not ideal, to tell you the truth. He would have been better off risking his own life and trying to come to the empire as soon as possible. But it was not as if he was wasting his time in that region either. On the contrary, he had suffered terrible losses that prevented him from acting as he should.

After thinking for a few moments, she said to that mercenary. "Very well. I will pass this message on to the person responsible for this kind of matter and communicate to the family intelligence regarding this person's situation."

"Sigh..."

"All right." He said as he felt better about accomplishing this mission without any significant problems.

But then this level 78 man heard that woman add. "But I want you to leave your information and means for us to communicate with you. If His Majesty or the family intelligence decide to receive more information regarding Grant's situation, we will contact you."

"What?" He asked in surprise, thinking it would be terrible to get involved this way with the powerful and feared Quinn family.

The Quinn family was the highest-level power family in this empire, an organization full of plots and specialists that someone like this mercenary could not handle.

So for him, it was naturally problematic to be involved with them like this!

He would be a contact, but if he was unlucky, he could soon be marked as someone to die or be tortured!

'Damn it. I didn't want that!' He lamented. 'If I have to give out information from you and the Black Plain, don't blame me for it, Grant...'

Chapter 1438 Princess Amber Quinn

One week later...

After the mercenary hired by Grant to send his message to the Quinn family had done his job, the matter finally reached the family's upper echelon.

That had not happened immediately, as every message that reached the upper echelon went into 'queues' to wait to be analyzed.

There were queues of urgent information and different levels of importance. So the waiting time for each notification that arrived for the top-level members of this family lasted for different intervals.

But the case of Grant's notification was something relatively important, even if it was not that urgent. After all, even if one day or another was not going to change his situation, he was a member of the family and had not reported for a long time.

This family had many rules, and one of them said precisely that one of its members could not stay many years without reporting to superiors. When someone broke that rule, such a person would naturally receive the appropriate punishment, and his case would be investigated.

So when the name of this missing man came up after so long, his notification had gained enough importance to reach one of the princess' men in just seven days.

When he came into contact with Grant's letter and read its contents, that person immediately remembered the incident from centuries ago involving his leader and a trip to Elves Island.

At the time, the princess was a young Spiritual Emperor who had escaped from her guards at the royal palace and fled, searching for teenage love.

She had traveled towards that person, an elf she had met at training in her state. So she had crossed the Central Continent alone, setting out from her empire to the Snow Kingdom, from where she had departed for the Elves Island.

When he discovered what had happened, Emperor Quinn dispatched several groups to investigate the whereabouts of his irresponsible daughter.

But unfortunately, one of those groups had never returned, and the imperial family's investigators had only found the remains of that ship on parts of the Kingdom of the End's coastline. But no survivors, not even the bodies of the crew members of that ship, had been found.

That incident changed the princess quite a bit as some of the bodyguards who had been by her side while she was growing up had disappeared in such an incident. Thus, when this subordinate of hers read Grant's letter, he immediately rushed to the princess!

...

On an island 600 kilometers off the coast of the Western Empire...

That place the size of a large city but without much human presence, just a few houses, a port, and lots of woods and natural reliefs, was the home of the only princess of House Quinn.

A large palace built with a special kind of pink marble was in the central position of this island. One could have a majestic view of the whole place from this place if one could visit the princess in her home.

The man who had just read Grant's letter had arrived at that place at this very moment. He had just passed by the high-level Spiritual Sages and low-level Spiritual Demigods watching over the surroundings.

The people who lived in this place were so important that even Spiritual Demigods were guarding the area!

"Your Highness, I'm here to deal with a bit of the past." He said as he entered the living room of the residence of that woman and her husband, a high-ranking nobleman from a powerful family of a great empire of the Divine Continent.

Hearing those words from the man who had just knelt near where she was sitting, Amber Quinn, level 90, did not understand what that could mean and looked at him. "What do you mean, Jerry?"

He looked at that black-haired, beautiful woman, 1.7 meters tall, dressed all in white, and said. "Your Highness, a few days ago, a letter addressed to the emperor from a Spiritual Saint arrived at our palace."

She frowned as she heard this, feeling that this made no sense.

But Amber had the gift of patience and gave that subordinate room to continue what he had to tell her.

"That letter was not discarded for one simple reason only, Your Highness. It was sent by a man of our royal guard reported missing for centuries. He was supposedly part of the crew that disappeared during that incident involving your first trip to Elves Island."

She remembered that immediately, recalling how she had lost her love of youth back then shortly after she found him on Elves Island.

To this day, she did not know what had happened but considering that such an elf was of common origin, to this day, she thought that her father had eliminated such a person so as not to get in the way of his own plans.

Emperor Quinn had always wanted to marry his daughter to a high-ranking nobleman from the Divine Continent.

Even noble families from that place had the power to compare to imperial families like theirs on this continent.

So politically speaking, he could gain much more for his state by having his daughter married to a noble than to an elf with no background.

Elves were very talented, true. But besides influence having great weight in political matters involving great powers, besides that elf not having a good background, elves, in general, did not like mixing their genes with those of other races.

Hence, Emperor Quinn had naturally always been against his daughter, which had generated all her distrust over the years.

Because of that, she had become much more mature then, coupled, of course, with the loss of some individuals from that group that was supposed to pick her up, people who were close to her.

She usually would not have been so saddened by the deaths of those subordinates. But as the death of her beloved touched her at that time, she had been scarred by the case of her family's shipwreck in the North Sea in that period.

With that, she was very interested in that letter.

"Did you confirm if this person who sent the letter was telling the truth? It could be some enemy trying to lead us into a trap or someone trying to distract us." She said as she looked into the eyes of this kneeling man.

"Yes, I have confirmed that everything he used as evidence is indeed true, Your Highness. He even sent his insignia and gave details that few would be able to give." He said, certain that the text sent by Grant had been written by a former member of the imperial guard.

'If not for that incident, this Grant fellow would probably have reached the end of the 9th stage after all these years.' He thought silently, trying to remember that man, who should be from the same era as him.

But since the Quinn family was large, this person could not remember anyone.

"So where is this message? I want to read it immediately." The princess said before asking. "By the way, where is he? Why didn't he come with you?"

"About that, Your Highness, he is in the northern region of the continent. According to the information from the letter and what we received, he was crippled and is not strong enough to come here."

"Is that right?" She asked as she began to read the said letter.

...

Chapter 1439 Terrorists Under Pressure

After reading Grant's letter quickly, Amber frowned as she read about the North Sea, that fellow's experience, and his strange suspicions.

Grant had obviously 'taken it easy' with his theories about beings plotting in the North Sea of the Spiritual World.

In the time he had lived in Dry City, he relearned how to socialize again. Also, he realized how his words could sound like those of a madman if said or written with the emotion he had when talking about the subject.

So he had learned more 'restrained' ways to avoid worrying reactions to his fantastic theories.

His letter had been written that way, but still, the topic covered was not simple, and Princess Quinn could not help but narrow her eyes and look strangely at those sheets of paper.

She was a low-level Spiritual Demigod who was practically at the top of this world, considering that this was the last stage for even most of the most talented individuals in the world. So she had some knowledge regarding the North Sea that ordinary people did not have.

'The North Sea is strange, but considering that beings are plotting against the entire Spiritual World and that they control all those phenomena in the area is quite absurd...' She thought quietly, extremely serious about the possibilities raised by Grant.

This beautiful black-haired woman then said. "Well, he's clearly a bit out of it after going through his traumatic experience in the North Sea, so let's not judge the exaggerations he wrote here."

"Yes, it's tough to believe..." That man kneeling in front of her agreed sincerely.

She then said. "But as a lost family member, we should pay some attention to what he has to say." She thought for a moment as she watched her nails. "Jerry, take care of the necessary procedures to bring Grant back to the empire."

"OK, Your Highness!"

"On the other hand, I will speak to my father about this. As much as we will need Grant to testify to one of our experts to confirm that everything he has written is not inventions in his head, I think his accounts may, in fact, contain some truth."

"That might be relevant to our family!"

"Oh? Your Highness intends to go to see His Majesty?" He asked as he looked into Amber's eyes, finding such behavior impressive due to the princess' history with the emperor.

She had become much more mature after the incident involving her first trip to Elves Island. But even as she interacted with the emperor, her relationship with him was far from friendly.

The two could even be considered rivals in some situations, especially considering her great influence on the Crown Prince, her younger brother.

Since she had not seen Emperor Quinn in person in over 60 years, Jerry was quite surprised.

"Yes. I'll do that." Her eyes sparkled, considering that this was a chance for her to take care of long-buried business, despite how important it might actually be to House Quinn.

She then stood up and looked at a servant woman dressed in black and white near the front door of that area. "Fern, let my husband know I am leaving for the empire's capital. I will be gone for a few weeks."

That woman, level 87, who was an employee of that woman's husband, a native of the Divine Continent, then said. "Miss, are you sure about this? Your husband doesn't like it when you go out like that."

"Tell him that I am doing this because of a family matter. I am sure he can understand..." She said as she made her way to the upper floor, where her room was.

She had no deep feelings for the man her father had chosen to be her husband. So she did not think the opportunity to leave this house and stay away for a few days was terrible!

'Northern region, eh? More and more news from that place has been coming to my empire... Will that place become influential in the entire continent?' She wondered as she thought of the Black Plain Empire of Minos.

...

While people were dealing with Grant's life in the Western Empire, Minos was dealing with local affairs in his city.

After more than three months after the attack that began the turn of the situation against the terrorists, Minos and his forces intensified their attacks and imposed many defeats on Abe.

In that period, the Eastern Empire's Spiritual Sage, who had been around to prevent Abe's death, had returned to action. And even when Minos had not used his mass destruction weapon or the black hole, he had acted.

Minos had received more reinforcements from the Grey Clouds Sect in this period, 10 Spiritual Saints and another 2,000 Spiritual Emperors, individuals from the beginning, middle, and end of their respective stages.

Because of this, even if he was not using his primary weapons, Minos had already reached the level of being able to put enough pressure on his opponents to force that expert to act.

But to Abe's happiness, that Spiritual Sage had managed to rescue him every time in that period.

However, to the stress of this former Vogel heir, the Eastern Empire's Spiritual Sage was facing more and more difficulties in rescuing him!

And with that, Minos' forces were with morals up there, fighting harder and harder to oppress Abe's mercenaries as they grew stronger.

...

Imperial throne hall in the central palace of Dry City...

In this place, Minos was on his throne, with his wives side by side with him and little Sarah standing between her father's throne, holding one of her mother's legs.

She was dressed formally for this occasion while trying to make a serious expression on her cute face.

"Sect Master... Cough! Cough! Your Majesty, that's the last group your grandfather can send with experts." A high-level member of the Grey Clouds Sect said this while standing with 14 other Spiritual Saints, 7 low-level, 5 mid-level, and 2 high-level ones.

With the number of experts the Grey Clouds Sect had already sent to this place, counting these individuals, this sect was only at just over 50% of its experts in the Flaming Empire.

Consequently, Oswald could not send any more Spiritual Saints to reinforce the Black Plain for the moment.

Minos understood this and nodded at that person. "I understand... In any case, your group should be enough for us to finish turning the situation of my state's conflict in my favor."

"In a few months, we will be able to end all of this!"

"Hmmm." That individual from the Coleman family nodded just before informing about the over 1,500 thousand Spiritual Emperors who had also come with this group.

More people of that stage would be coming to the Black Plain in the coming months, but those numbers of individuals should be enough now.

And with that, after presenting themselves to the sect master in that place, these people would soon join the local forces to continue their pursuit against the terrorists of Abe's group!

Chapter 1440 Change Of Situation

Three and a half months later...

Currently, the Gray Clouds Sect had 51 Spiritual Saints and 7,100 Spiritual Emperors in the Black Plain Empire under Minos' orders to act against Abe's group.

This group had lost some of its 8th and 7th stage members in the weeks that had passed by then but was still going strong while helping the empire resume its development.

For a long time, the local forces were prevented from developing their state due to the actions of Abe's terrorist group.

This group constantly attacked strategic posts of the local forces and government, destroying essential infrastructure and hindering activities such as agriculture and mining.

Due to these constant setbacks, the Black Plain had been forced not to grow since the beginning of Abe's group's attacks and had even shrunk in some respects.

But with the arrival of the Gray Clouds Sect reinforcements, Minos had finally achieved enough to protect his outposts, farmlands, and mines.

Now he could have men to protect these places essential to local growth, making life difficult for the terrorists.

And with that, the Black Plain had returned to growth in this period, with areas affected during the past two years being recuperated and new ones starting to be used.

Migration from neighboring states to this empire was still at a standstill, as few would risk migrating to a place facing such a complicated problem as the terrorist attacks. But the governments under Minos had enough labor force for this return of development, so there was room for growth before the state needed migrants.

In any case, Minos already intended to reestablish the migration routes of people from outside the northern region to the Black Plain and of people from the other states in that region to the empire.

With the ability to defend themselves, rebuild destroyed outposts, and develop new ones around the territory, the local forces had also managed to destroy quite a bit of Abe's forces.

It was true that that member of the runaway Vogel family had mercenaries coming when his men in this empire died. But before, he always 'recovered' his attack power and threat to the Black Plain, and now he could no longer do that.

Even when more reinforcements arrived from the Western Empire to help Abe's purpose, his group could not recover from the setbacks generated by the local forces. On the contrary, even after replacing ten individuals with ten of the same level, their situation only seemed to get more difficult.

Because of this, Abe's group, which could threaten even medium-sized cities in the Black Plain Empire one year ago, now had a hard time taking on even towns!

At the same time, with the number of dead mercenaries reaching higher and higher numbers, mercenary groups from different parts of the Western Empire were already making it difficult for Abe to get more men.

Thus, he was reaching a hopeless point that even the Spiritual Sage watching him had decided to approach him to give some advice.

...

In a part of the Black Plain, 200 meters above ground level in that area not far from Dry City, Abe was in front of the Spiritual Sage, who was floating cross-legged in the air.

Seconds ago, he was caught by a hand through a spatial crack and appeared in front of this man.

He had met this Spiritual Sage on different occasions in the past when this man had saved him from Minos or another high-level member of the local forces. But he was surprised this time, as this was the first occasion he had been 'called' by this expert without risking his life!

As such, he was curiously looking at that man's face as he waited in silence for the Spiritual Sage's words.

"Abe." That Spiritual Sage said after some time being observed by the level 73 individual there.

"Senior..."

"Abe, you know that the group I represent is not in this to help you get revenge, right?" He asked but did not wait for Abe to answer. "Well, our purpose has not yet been fulfilled, so it is in our interest that you do not die."

'That is also my interest...' Abe thought quietly, thanking heaven that these people had not yet found what they were looking for.

"But even if that is our interest, Abe, it doesn't mean we will pursue it to the end." This expert said this, startling the young man in front of him. "That's why I called you here. If you continue as you are, it won't be long before that young man manages to kill you."

"It's hard for me to say this, but that Minos is tricky to read and fight against." He looked toward the direction of Dry City, feeling quite a bit of admiration for this opponent. "Because of this, if things continue as they are, the point will come when I'm unable to rescue you without actually using my powers... When that happens, to avoid attracting the enemy's attention, I will have to abandon you."

"To avoid attracting the enemy's attention?" Abe questioned, as he felt cold sweat dripping down his clothes.

But that Spiritual Sage said nothing to him. This man just looked in another direction, where he felt as if the 'void' was watching him.

"That doesn't matter. I am giving you this warning as a courtesy of an ally." He turned his face back toward Abe's direction and said. "I didn't want to have to do that, but I'll be honest with you. You have about six months or so to live, Abe."

"If you fail to accomplish your goals in that period, you will die."

Abe could not run away from the confrontations against Minos because it was in the interest of the organization that had funded him to keep him making trouble in the northern region. So if he simply got scared and decided to retreat or even run away, what would happen was that organization itself killing him.

He could not return this organization's 'help' with 'ingratitude!'

That would be unacceptable and seen in a horrible light!

Abe knew this and had only the alternative of fighting Minos. Unfortunately, if he did not successfully escape, he would die to his enemy within the range quoted by that expert.

That is, of course, if he could not accomplish his purpose within that period!

To kill Minos Stuart!

He then said after sighing deeply. "I understand the senior's advice. I will try my best to prevent Minos from reaching the end of that period alive."

"Hmm..." That man nodded before opening a wormhole and sending Abe back to where this level 73 fellow was earlier.

When that man was once again 'alone' in that place, he looked toward the 'void.' 'I hope that fellow really can make it through that period...'

"Sigh!"

'Anyway, my time is running out! If I keep this up, I'll be empty-handed when...' He was thinking when suddenly he felt powerful auras that he did not expect to feel coming towards his vicinity.

'Who are these people? What are they doing?' He turned back to look in the direction of where a group of three people had just appeared after a spatial crack had opened at that point.

Someone in the 'void' at a distance from this level 80 man also sensed this and looked at those people. 'Why are they here?'

...

