

## **Black Plain 1501**

### Chapter 1501 Dealing With The Visitors

Three days later...

After quickly traveling through the territories between Payton and Dry City, Minos finally arrived at the headquarters of the Black Plain Army.

Upon appearing at that place in the core of the Dry City, he immediately saw several soldiers in the surrounding area kneeling, welcoming him back from his trip.

Minos looked at these soldiers and greeted them with a nod before identifying where the ones he had left in charge of his city and empire were.

He then walked over to Dillian and the level 79 Spiritual Saint, already sensing the presence in the center of his city some 8th-stage experts he still didn't know.

'Those must be the visitors from the Evergreen Empire...' He considered this as he looked in the direction of those new auras.

In any case, he wouldn't talk to them until later that day, and in the blink of an eye, he was already standing next to his followers in the imperial palace.

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"Your Majesty..." The crowd in that throne hall said as they saw Minos entering through the front door, with Dillian standing up to make room for their leader to sit down.

Seeing the people, Minos smiled for a moment before getting straight to the point. "Well? How were the last few weeks? Did these visits make any trouble?"

"No, Your Majesty. They just stayed in our city, and since we said that only you could handle the decision regarding their questions, they just waited for your return." Dillian replied.

"What they want is the same as that Spiritual Sage, right?" Minos asked, just to confirm.

"Yes."

"I see..." Minos sat down on his throne and thoughtfully put one of his hands around his mouth. 'I'll have to refuse, but will they be as easy to deal with as that Spiritual Sage?'

Then the Spiritual Saint of the Gray Clouds Sect there asked. "Your Majesty, besides this matter, how was it in the Flaming Empire? Are there any more elders with you now?"

Hearing this, Minos was a little distracted from this situation and said. "Yes, I made an exchange in my journey through the sect territory. I now have 20 more Spiritual Saints and left 2 elders in the Clouds City."

"Oh?" That man opened his mouth and smiled, satisfied.

With this action, the Black Plain and the Gray Clouds Sect's core became stronger simultaneously!

The exchange could be more or less similar to exchanging six for half of twelve, but it was more complex than that in practice.

The Black Plain had many places without Spiritual Saints, but that was already in need of experts at that stage. So even if these people were not that strong, they could help meet this demand, something low numbers would not solve.

On the other hand, the sect headquarters didn't need that many numbers as it was winding down its activities. Meanwhile, they required stronger specialists capable of putting fear into their opponents.

Thus, every exchange Minos made generated more power for both sides!

But then Minos briefly informed those people of what happened in the past few days. "As for the outcome of the local leaders' meeting, I feel that we gained nothing. Maybe it was even a loss..."

He briefly summarized what happened and gave his opinion on what he thought would follow in the upcoming months, worrying the crowd in the imperial throne hall.

Some were from the Flaming Empire, so they would naturally worry about the risk of Mortimer rebelling against the imperial family and causing chaos in that territory. But even those who had no origins related to that state were worried, as the Black Plain had plans for the state of Isabella.

"Sigh..."

It really is a complicated position..." Dillian commented, feeling how unfortunate it had been that Gavin had died to have his powers stolen by Mortimer.

'That young man was so promising...' He thought. 'If he stayed longer on the Black Plain, he would still be alive, we wouldn't have this problem with Mortimer, and he would become a pillar of the empire in the future...'

Others who knew Gavin also lamented once again of the fate of this man, while others thought of the day when they could get revenge with fear on the bastards of the Saints Killing Sect.

Some of the men of Minos in the throne hall were relatives of the Spiritual Kings killed by the Spiritual Emperors of the Saints Killing Sect, the ones that were sent to the Black Plain to kill the local sovereign. As such, they had a history against that organization, and now that they were 100% on the opposite side of Mortimer's organization, they wanted to act more than ever.

"Anyway, I will deal with the problems with the Flaming Empire in the coming days... As for the Spiritual Saints who came with me, I will bring them here as soon as our visitors leave." Minos said after a while. "For now, bring them here. I want to finish this matter as soon as possible."

"As you wish, your Majesty." A member of the imperial guard said before turning and leaving with a group of men to fetch those three visitors.

Minos continued in that place, having a brief talk with his men, listening to the recent achievements of the army and the imperial government.

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After a few moments, the two men and the woman in the Dry City, on orders from their organization, the Blood Triangle Pirates, were taken to face with Minos.

The three watched this fellow silently for a moment as they got to know him after hearing of Emperor Stuart's achievements and accomplishments for weeks.

Not only was Minos a talented cultivator, but he had also developed this place from a town, barely larger than a village, to a grand metropolis, the core of an empire, in just a few short years.

This was impressive!

As such, even considering that they were from a much more powerful and developed place, these three people didn't deny the merit of the Stuart Emperor, and when they greeted him, they were genuinely sincere.

"Your Majesty, it is a pleasure to meet a living legend like you." The woman leading the group said this as she made a gesture of greeting typical of the Central Continent.

Minos thanked her for the gesture and the words. "Hmm, you are very generous...

Anyway, I understand you are here in my city seeking cooperation, right? What do your group want?"

"We are searching for something that we believe your Majesty can help us find, considering how far your influences currently go." One of the men said, smiling at Minos as he spoke.

"My influence reaches the northern region and the four neighboring territories to the south of this region. Even though it truly is a large influence, I can't find a single item in that entire territory.

I also have no seer powerful enough for that." Minos said, speaking the truth to conceal that he already had such an item in hand.

To identify something in such a large area, the service of seers could help greatly. But the northern region was vast, and the Black Plain Empire still didn't have enough strong seers for a job like that.

At the same time, Minos was extremely busy. Anyone studying this territory could easily see this. So even if he had the ability to do so, it was fair to say that it would create problems if he accepted such a quest.

The three listened to him, and one of them said. "We know it won't be easy.

For some reason, even our seers cannot identify the vicinity of the item...

Still, we hope to ally with the Stuart family to get your members to advise us regarding this problem.

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#### Chapter 1502 Negotiation

"Is that so?" Minos asked those individuals before adding. "Some years ago, I met a Spiritual Sage who was protecting an enemy. This person was in pursuit of the same thing you are..."

Can you tell me what this is about? I'm curious about something that people so powerful and willing to spend fortunes are running after."

Those people were not surprised about this, knowing who Minos was talking about.

"Your Majesty is referring to the man from the Eastern Empire?" That woman said. "They are enemies of the Evergreen Empire, so they want to prevent any forces in our state from developing or achieving their plans."

"Yes, the Travisani family only seeks this item to hinder us. But Your Majesty should not worry about that. They will not get involved with you because of a possible relationship between us."

"As long as you don't go to their state, of course." Someone else added.

But Minos insisted on his question. "You haven't talked about what that item is about. What is it for?"

The woman leader of that group looked at Minos and smiled bitterly. "That is something we are not allowed to discuss, Your Majesty."

"Hmm, I understand." He said as he closed his eyes momentarily. "Well, I can't go after something I don't know and don't understand its implications. I'm already too busy with my state's recent problems, so I can't accept this deal, no matter how generous you are."

Those people did not like to hear that, and one of them stepped forward, saying. "Your Majesty, reconsider. That is very important to us, and we are willing to pay a lot for it."

Minos looked at that man and said calmly. "Currently, my state has to establish developments in the northern region states that are joining my empire.

At the same time, I have to deal with the crisis in the Flaming Empire, where Mortimer Burgess has just advanced a stage and become a Spiritual Sage.

Also, I still have to deal with the situation in Vogel and Blackrock, territories that are not yet converging with my interest.

In the midst of all this, there are various day-to-day problems related to managing a growing force, such as the Black Plain Army.

So how am I going to help you with so many occupations momentarily?

You guys talk about paying a lot... But what good is a generous payment that is not recurring? By developing my state, I am creating recurring sources of income, which eventually won't even need my effort to grow.

But do you want me to stop developing my state to help you with a job that will end once I complete it?

Tsk!

You guys aren't even willing to give me more information about it...

I'm not interested!"

Upon hearing Minos' argument, those three people clenched their fists but said nothing since there was really nothing to be said.

Minos was within his right to refuse them, and the conditions didn't seem that favorable for him.

These people weren't so shameless as to deny this, and as such, they preferred to remain silent, trying to think of something.

"But..."

"Your Majesty, isn't there any way we can make a deal?"

This item is very important to us, and due to the circumstances of how it was lost, we know that it can only be in this region. But unfortunately, we have no way to find it because something near it is getting in our way." That woman said, trying to be as sincere as possible to gain some ground in negotiating with Minos.

Minos remained calm, listening to all that. 'Yes, it is in the Spatial Kingdom, so obviously, no one will be able to get its position...

Not even a God could do that without first invading that space!"

That woman continued. "However, I know that our entire organization will be very grateful if you can help us. Maybe we can even solve that problem in the Flaming Empire for you..."

A Spiritual Sage is not much for us."

Some people in the surrounding area who didn't know about the map in Minos' hands opened their eyes wide upon hearing this, thinking it would be worth it for them to make a deal with these people.

But none of them would express their opinion while Minos was in front of these people.

Minos heard this and felt bad that these people were so insistent, offering difficult offers for him to justify refusing.

He then said. "That is a very generous offer, but I will have to ask for a while to think about the answer. How about you return to my state in six months? At that time, I will be able to answer you definitively."

Those people looked at each other, realizing that Minos wanted to test Mortimer's strength and see how terrible it could be to face a Spiritual Sage before asking for help.

It was always better to solve your problems without depending on others or agreements. So he wanted to see how much help he would need from them to decide if he should accept the offer.

They were not against waiting only six months for Minos' answer, and after a few moments of looking at each other in silence, the woman declared. "Very well. We will leave to settle some matters and return after that period."

"I hope Your Majesty will make the decision we expect at that time." One of the men said, smiling, as he gestured goodbye before he and the other two left.



As those people left the imperial throne hall, the high-level elders in the surrounding area soon approached Minos, with that level 79 individual asking. "Your Majesty, why don't we just accept this agreement? From what these people said, we wouldn't even need to complete the service for them to resolve Mortimer's situation."

"It's not that simple," Minos said before muttering so those closest to him could hear. "I already have that map in hand. If I sign an agreement with them, I will have to hand over such a thing to them and lose any possibility related to it."

Minos didn't know why these people wanted that fabric map so badly. But he was aware that the price these people had offered him was not great, next to the total value of it.

So he preferred to keep it to himself and see if it was worth something to his state. If not, he would negotiate it with those interested in the item for a much higher price!

At the moment, he was not strong enough to do that. So he couldn't let any of those people know the truth, so he had to reject any deals regarding that map.

Those elders readily understood this upon hearing Minos' words, noting that their leader was not being overly stubborn in refusing such a proposal.

Afterward, Minos would also explain a little better why he disliked the group of pirates these people belonged, to which Emlyn had a great desire for revenge.

He would not try to exterminate this group. Still, he was fully aware that he would have to help Emlyn take her anger out on the people in this organization, which would make him an enemy of it.

As he liked to anticipate the movements of enemies, even though he was not a mortal enemy of that group, Minos already considered himself as such, for this was the expected consequence of what would happen in the future.

So, the three of them left Dry City while the local leader returned to the core of his empire, organizing what needed to be resolved before returning to the Flaming Empire.

Chapter 1503 Positioning

After six days...

After the departure of the high-level Spiritual Saints from the Blood Triangle Pirates group from Dry City, Minos brought the Spiritual Saints who came from the Gray Clouds Sect from the Spatial Kingdom.

These people would have to take on responsibilities in the Black Plain territory before entering the Spatial Kingdom's seclusion. Then since Minos would soon return to the Flaming Empire, they all had to be let out of that cultivation shrine.

With that done, Minos took the last few days to solve some minor problems in his state, which was growing its borders.

To this end, he had brought Gloria back to the mainland so that she could deal with the Church's affairs concerning the accession of those territories into his state.

Meanwhile, he visited Stone Island and the Kingdom of the Waves to observe the development of noble assemblies in those places and to see local progress.

All the states in the northern region were getting stronger with the advances of the Black Plain, and some even had level 67 cultivators in their ranks already.

But the numbers of Spiritual Emperors in these places were still low, and the cultivation speed of most of these individuals was not high.

What was really impressive was the number of Spiritual Kings throughout the northern region, which had multiplied by more than ten times in the last four years.

After visiting the northern region, Minos returned to Dry City, where he was receiving envoys from Vogel!

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At the imperial palace in Dry City...

Minos was sitting beside a small artificial lake within his estate, eating some chestnuts next to Sarah, whom he had brought from the Spatial Kingdom, while Ruth and Abby were in seclusion.

In front of the two, more than a dozen people, all of them mid-level Spiritual Saints, were on their knees, respectfully declaring their allegiances to House Stuart.

Some did not have satisfied expressions on their faces, as was the case with the matriarch of House Guzman. But even people like her were willing to say every word to avoid the worst.

The Assembly had already decided with a huge majority that it should increase Minos' powers, recognize him as the legitimate sovereign of Vogel, and end the question of voting on his continuity as the leader.

So with this decision, it made no sense for the noble families in that area to continue to disagree with him, as this could result in punishment before long.

As such, those local leaders who had not yet sworn allegiance to Minos were now in Dry City to resolve this situation, making it clear to the emperor that he would have no more problems concerning this.

"... Your Majesty, House Guzman swears its eternal loyalty to House Stuart and is at your disposal to act on behalf of the state..."

"Your Majesty..."

Several of them declared their vows while Sarah watched them with her eyes wide open, with her father watching the fish in the lake beside them.

"You see, Sarah, these people have opposed me for years. But because I am stronger than them and am willing to act, they now pledge allegiance to me..."

That is the way you should deal with subordinates in the future. If they show rebellious behavior, you should give them a reason to fear you." Minos said in a low voice to his daughter. "When they bend their knees and repent, you should guide them as best you judge, but without giving awards.

Those who need to be reminded that they need to respect us do not deserve unnecessary awards.

Only those who know their positions and support us without having to show our weapons deserve opportunities and awards."

Sarah shook her head as she paid attention to those people who were supposed to be of higher levels than her father but who had to obey him anyway.

Some of those individuals listened to Minos' words, feeling ashamed for being used as a negative example in the princess' education.

'At this rate, even with this little one, we won't be able to find someone to support us in the imperial family...' One of them thought quietly, mournful of their circumstances.

Unfortunately, there was nothing left for them to do!

Those more powerful families of Vogel had already received communication from the noble families of Blackrock about what Minos had done in that state. Because of this, with no more hope of having any relevant support against Emperor Stuart, they decided to surrender and at least move on in peace within the Black Plain Empire.

These individuals already knew of Mortimer's advance and potential problems for the Black Plain because of that man. But this would not help them at all, for the master of the Saints Killing Sect actually wanted to dominate them as much as Minos did.

However, Mortimer was ten times worse than Minos, not only for his level but for his record against the northern territories of the Flaming Empire.

Minos at least treated their family as part of his empire. Mortimer, on the other hand, would treat them like slaves!

Between the two of them, they preferred Minos leading them, and so, even considering the difficult situation of this sovereign, they were willing to bend their knees without any more future hopes.

So they would remain in front of Minos and Sarah for a few moments, serving as an example for the little princess' education, while they finished presenting themselves to the emperor.

Minos would eventually send these people out for his men to take care of making agreements and also to collect information.

From now on, Vogel would be less independent and would become more like the Brown and Cromwell areas, which did have their independence but followed larger orders coming from Dry City.

Anyway, with this change, the imperial family would soon have many more resources and territories to exploit, which would be used to strengthen the imperial family's ties against other states.

But Minos would not neglect Vogel. On the contrary, he had plans to strengthen this place, using it to stimulate the rest of his empire through synergies.

Meanwhile, from now on, he would have more than 600 Spiritual Saints at his disposal, something that previously he could only ask the Assembly to help him get the support of some of them.

Thus, the core of the Black Plain could grow much faster from now on!

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In the days following the 'surrender' of the noble families of Vogel to Minos, envoys from Albano and Rosser arrived in Dry City to take up matters with the emperor.

They already knew of the officialization of Vogel's status in relation to the empire and wanted to demonstrate their partnership with House Stuart for the best outcome between their connections.

More agreements would come from the meetings that would follow after that, strengthening the relations of these two states with the Black Plain.

In the end, these two states would still make people available to help protect the borders of this state with their kingdoms, freeing up soldiers from Minos to protect other areas.

As the representatives of these states departed the empire's capital, a group from Blackrock arrived in Dry City with the crown prince among its members!

It was time for this other state to position itself!

#### Chapter 1504 Surrender

"Your Highness, you should be careful when talking to His Majesty Minos Stuart. He is not a person we can play with." A level 76 elder said in a low voice to his leader while riding on a brown-furred horse.

The crown prince of Blackrock, Godfrey Blackrock, level 75, heard that and remained quiet, feeling the wind on his face, making his long black hair sway in the air.

"Elder, do you think I'm crazy? Why would I talk nonsense to someone who can seriously hurt a large portion of my state's leaders?" Godfrey asked the royal guard responsible for the safety of his group on this trip.

That man could do nothing against Minos. But the journey between Blackrock and the Black Plain had its dangers, so someone as prominent as the heir to that state had to be protected by one of the strongest men in his kingdom.

"Just reminding you, Your Highness." That man said, while the other three individuals in that group, passing through the avenues of Dry City, listened to everything in silence, looking at their surroundings with interest.

"Our situation is delicate, and any slip could cost us our fate!"

With the blow they had suffered from Minos and Mortimer's ascension to the 9th stage, King Blackstock had no choice but to send people to the Black Plain to negotiate a deal with Emperor Stuart.

Now the condition of these people was not only weakened by Minos' attack. They were terribly endangered as, at their worst moment, one of their worst enemies had achieved a breakthrough.

Blackrock's advantage due to Harold's absence had simply disappeared, and now the tensions between the four territories and the Flaming Empire had increased again.

Because of this, that state's sovereign had not taken long to make the decision that was left to him.

Ask Minos for help!

"I know..." The Crown Prince said after the worried words of his elder.

During this dialogue, they were intercepted by members of the Black Plain Army and some of the Gray Clouds Sect.

"Well, well... Look at these high-ranking members of the Blackrock family..."

"I never thought I could see one of them outside that state..."

"I've fought on our sect's battlefield with that territory, but I've never heard of the Crown Prince going out to battle..."

There are rumors that he is not brave."

Immediately, Godfrey looked in the direction of those people coming in the opposite direction from his group. "Who are you? I want to know where the..."

But then, the level 76 old man in that Blackrock group stopped his leader from saying more. "Cough... Uh, young people, we are lost in this city. Can you help us find a way to the capital's core?"

One of the local army soldiers, impressed by the lines of those individuals from the Flaming Empire, members of his group, looked at that old man and nodded.

Meanwhile, another army member asked their group mates from the Gray Clouds Sect not to provoke those visitors.

After months since the peace and integration of forces from Oswald's sect with Minos' army, these people had been working together with soldiers to supply the local demand.

As such, not only in Dry City but throughout the empire, groups with a composition similar to this one were not uncommon and worked to maintain order and peace, with both sides learning in the meantime.

For the soldiers in the army, this was a chance to learn from people who were more talented or used to a higher level of difficulty in some subjects. For the members of that sect, this was a chance for them to learn more about the state that would be the future of their sect.

So when one of the soldiers said something to those individuals with a history of hostility with Blackrock, they stopped talking nonsense and moved on, leading the way for Godfrey's group.

"Why did you do that? Do you by any chance think I would take such offenses quietly to the point that you would stop me, and I would not be offended?" The prince asked the strongest man in his group.

That elder said while he had an ugly expression on his face. "Your Highness should get used to the new times. When Minos Stuart is involved, be humble and don't look for trouble in this place or any other.

That will avoid pain for yourself and loss for the family!

That is my advice, Your Highness."



...

After a few moments, Godfrey's group arrived at the local government headquarters, where Minos, Sarah, and Gloria were gathering and having lunch.

Minos couldn't be bothered to do two things at once when he was as busy as he had been lately. So he promptly ordered his guards to allow those five people to enter the dining hall of his residence.

Within minutes of their arrival in that building in the heart of Dry City, the Crown Prince of Blackrock and his four traveling companions were in front of the table where Minos, Sarah, and Gloria were sitting around.

"Your Majesty..." The five said, with Godfrey saying the same after a few seconds of his fellow travelers.

The four were naturally more in awe of Minos and respected him more since they had seen him in action that fateful day.

As for the prince, he had not seen the same to be so respectful to Minos, so he had been a bit distracted not only by Gloria's beauty but also by the quality of those people's food.

Minos already had medium-level grade-3 cooks in his city, something he had gotten through the elders of the Gray Clouds Sect, not because of his own local men.

His head cook, Alex Shepard, was currently at level 66, close to becoming a medium-level grade-3 cook. But he could not compare with the elders of that sect, who were between levels 70 and 75, so he had been learning from these people in the imperial palace while temporarily no longer cooking for the local leader.

Anyway, due to the food quality on Minos' table, Godfrey lost some of his concentration and felt saliva forming in his mouth.

His family had medium-level grade-3 cooks. But it had been long since he had tasted a delicacy produced by beings of this classification.

Gulp!

While this fellow was distracted, Minos asked as he cut a piece of meat on his plate. "Visitors from Blackrock, to what do I owe this visit? Are you here for something important? Unfortunately, I am very busy, so I must receive you at lunchtime..."

"Your Majesty need not worry." The level 76 man said while smiling and trying to ignore the level 78 Spiritual Saint guarding the entrance to that dining hall. "We are here on a critical matter."

"Oh? And what would that be?" Minos asked while Sarah had already dropped her cutlery to observe those people.

"We need Your Majesty's help to keep the peace in Blackrock. So we are naturally here to surrender." That old fellow said, not expecting the prince to say such words.

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#### Chapter 1505 Blackrock Resolution

When that man said the word 'surrender,' Gloria opened her mouth in surprise that he was so direct. 'It seems that news of Mortimer's advance has already spread to all the neighboring states...' She thought.

Meanwhile, little Sarah had a smile on her face, seeing that her father's domains were about to increase. 'Daddy is getting more and more influential...

What will it be like when I become as strong as him? Will I also be famous and respected?'

Minos then said to that level 76 man, looking at him and Godfrey. "That's good to hear, but those words should be spoken by the Crown Prince, not by a member of the Blackrock royal guard..."

That royal guard looked at Godfrey while the others there, Minos and Gloria, watched this fellow in silence.

Minos knew that the heir of Blackrock was an arrogant troublemaker.

This person would probably not be a problem for him in the short term since the fear of someone with his abilities would not be slight, even coming from someone with an uncontrollable personality.

But still, Minos thought it best to overpower people like Godfrey with iron fists, leaving no room for surprises.

That fellow realized that Minos wanted to see him on his 'knees,' and he clenched his fists, feeling frustrated at being oppressed by someone lower-level than him.

"Your Majesty..." Godfrey said with some difficulty. "It is, as Senior Oliver said. We are here to surrender to the Black Plain Empire."

"What else?" Minos asked.

"Your..." Oliver was about to say something, but Minos showed one of his hands, indicating for him to shut up. "The king's representative must speak."

Godfrey then answered Minos with some difficulty. "We hope to obtain the assistance of the empire in case enemy forces attack us..."

"You want protection, then..." Minos said before putting a piece of meat in his mouth and enjoying that delicious meal.

He then looked at Sarah and gestured for her to say something while his mouth was still full.

"What... Uh... What do you intend to do for us?" That young girl with red hair, just like her mother's, asked timidly.

Gloria smiled at her daughter as she saw her learning from her father but said nothing.

Prince Blackrock then replied. "Your Highness, we intend to put our contestations regarding the actions of the Black Plain Empire in Vogel behind..."

"Prince Blackrock, I don't know what you are trying, but starting your answer that way will not help you here." Gloria stopped him from finishing amid her tasting of red wine. "We already know that you will no longer challenge us. After all, why else would you come here if you weren't going to do that?"

Oliver looked steadily at Godfrey to stop winding up and say everything he should.

That fellow sighed and said. "We intend to secure the empire's border with our state and free the men of the Black Plain Army from having to do this service in the Snow region. At the same time, we will publicly retract our protestations, showing the entire continent that we are on your side.

Furthermore, we are willing to lower the price of several resources native to our state to the empire and still accept calls from Your Majesty." He said, looking at Minos.

They were proposing not to become a territory part of the Black Plain Empire, like Vogel, but rather a weaker ally who would receive protection in exchange for various other services.

Minos was not against that. On the contrary, he was inclined to accept agreements of that nature.

"Very well.

I feel the Blackrock family is sincere in their wishes and can enter into an agreement with my family based on these initial terms." Minos said as he finished eating his meal.

The members of Godfrey's group sighed in relief when they heard this, more relaxed that this individual hadn't put everything at risk and that they had gotten the support they needed.

After this, they would exchange a few more words with Minos until he sent them elsewhere in the Dry City core, where they were to negotiate the minor details of an agreement between House Blackrock and the imperial family.

Only after that would Minos sign Soul Contracts, marking his increased influence in strengthening the empire.

...

After those people left, Minos stayed with his wife and daughter, talking about recent matters concerning his last stint in the Flaming Empire.

"Your mother and father tried to get me into the Church after they admitted defeat relative to that bet." He said to Gloria as he saw Sarah running through his residence.

"That's the natural thing to do... If I were in their shoes, I would try the same thing." Gloria smiled at him.

"Speaking of which, I forgot to tell you something..." Minos remembered something.

"What?"

"Your mother has reached level 78. You should send her congratulations..."

"Oh? Is that true?" Gloria's eyes sparkled as since she had been born, her mother was at level 77.

So this advancement was no small thing for that woman, and Gloria was naturally happy to hear that her mother was getting stronger!

She constantly saw Abby's parents getting stronger, as these two were just Spiritual Emperors, relatively young. Both were only a few hundred years old, with Eliot at level 66 and Nicole at level 64. So Gloria, like Ruth, was anxious about seeing the same thing happen to her family.

"Has Grandma Margot gotten stronger?" Sarah asked upon hearing that.

Of all her grandparents, only Gloria's parents had not advanced in recent years.

Maisie had advanced recently, and Abby's parents and Ruth's parents had improved since that young girl's birth.

So she was happy to hear that, jumping toward her father.

Amid this family moment of Minos, his daughter, and his wife, a flying beast from afar suddenly flew over Dry City, causing a large shadow to appear over this territory.

Such a shadow caught the attention of the top specials in that city, promptly causing not only the Gray Clouds Sect members but also Minos and Gloria to look up into the sky and move.

Minos immediately sent his daughter into the Spatial Kingdom before flying out of the Dry City Defensive Dome with his wife.

"Your Majesty..." The level 79 elder in that city said, while already standing next to Minos, Gloria, two level 78 individuals, and five level 77.

Minos then said. "I know... Let's see what's up with that."

They headed towards that level 79 being, a beast that was so strong but was only serving as a mount for a human.

Because of this, the local forces were on alert, as only a Spiritual Sage or someone as strong as one could make a beast at this level subject itself to become a mount.

Thus, they came across a young-looking man with blond hair, tall, dressed in dark blue armor, level 84.

"Who of you is Minos Stuart?" He asked calmly. "I have a message for you from Grant."

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## Chapter 1506 The Message

"Grant? What message?" Minos asked as he identified himself as the one the Spiritual Sage was looking for.

That level 84 man looked at Emperor Stuart and was surprised, remembering the words of his old friend, who told him that Minos was only a Spiritual Emperor.

But the young man in question was clearly a Spiritual Saint!

In any case, Minos was accompanied by several high-level Spiritual Saints and was probably even the local leader.

With that in mind, that man said. "Grant is arrested in the capital of the Western Empire.

After returning home after a long time away, he reported everything that happened concerning his incident to the imperial family forces. Because of this, he was spared most of the punishments he would suffer after being away for so long.

But even so, he has earned 100 years of house arrest in the capital and cannot leave to join you in the northern region."

Minos heard that, changing his expression little by little, more or less prepared for the fact that Grant could not return in the short term but surprised at the size of the punishment.

It was already expected that Grant would be held in the capital of the Western Empire for a few years. But a whole century was too much!

"A hundred years? All that?" He questioned.

"Yeah, Grant said some things... About his theories... Anyway, his ideas were not well received, and some think he's crazy and that his time in the northern region was too hard and he needs peace of mind in a safe place."

Nevertheless, Grant was being treated as a patriot who had lost his powers defending the imperial family.

He was in prison, but from the imperial family's point of view, this was more like sending him to a camp than to an actual prison.

He couldn't leave where he was, but the house and the resources he earned as payment for his back fees were generous to the point that he wouldn't even have to leave the house to have it all there.

But even though he was comfortable, he was being forced to stay under house arrest for the next century on the grounds that, in addition to the time he would have to pay for his absence, he was mentally confused.

Minos understood this, for Grant's ideas were really problematic for people with no prior information to see the logic in them.

He then asked. "But is he all right? Why did a Spiritual Sage come to deliver this information to me?"

That man smiled and said. "He is fine... Anyway, Grant is actually a good friend of mine even before his departure for that fateful journey in search of Her Highness.

At that time, he was already a level 70 Spiritual Saint, and I was only a level 65 Spiritual Emperor.

But I had known him since my youth.

We traveled countless times on imperial family missions. He helped me a lot since I was just a Spiritual Warrior. Eventually, we even became family when our children married..."



Because of this background, when this fellow discovered his old friend was still alive, he visited him and then promised to deliver a message to Minos.

That had happened weeks ago, so only now was this man there to meet this young man Grant had such high praise and expectations of.

"So you are a friend of his..." Minos understood why someone so powerful would serve as a messenger for Grant.

Only by an emotional decision would an expert lend himself to that kind of service.

"But then, what was the message he sent?"

That Spiritual Sage became more serious and said. "It's about what's in the North Sea. He told me he found a clue about that in our city."

Grant was under house arrest, but some people were working for him, and through that, he had been studying old books and buying information regarding his obsession.

With the time he had since arriving in that city, he improved his theories and came up with important information that could help him and Minos.

"Oh? What is it?" Minos asked with interest.

That Spiritual Sage narrowed his eyes, seeing that Minos seemed interested in this as if such information was very important to him.

'Does this young man believe what Grant has been talking about?' He wondered since, even though he was Grant's friend, he himself found it hard to believe those ideas.

In any case, he would keep his promise to his friend and say to Minos. "Kid, I'll tell you what he told me. But I'll tell you in advance that I didn't quite understand what Grant meant.

Anyway, he said that he found a map of an ancient island and that the home of the wicked lies in God's Right Eye, under the ominous Desolate Sea.

You will find the clues to your target by following the only path there."

"God's Right Eye?" The Spiritual Saints next to Minos and Gloria repeated those words without understanding their meaning.

But then that man hurled a map in Minos' direction; the item Grant had asked him to deliver to Emperor Stuart along with his words.

"Grant thinks you will find the answers you need if you can get to that place.

Supposedly, there are traces of enemies in that place."

Minos heard all this and looked at the map, unable to identify where this place was just from the map, as there were only the directions to inside the island and nothing else.

But there were countless islands in the Spiritual World, and much could have changed in the past millions of years.

So just because of Henricus Longus' memories alone, he would not readily know how to identify such a place from having that map in hand.

'I don't know where it is... But apparently, empires of the highest level seem to contain better information than mine about the phenomena related to the North Sea.' He thought about that as he noticed that Grant had gotten information easily just by being in that place.

Obviously, Grant had not stumbled upon this information or gotten it from a single informant. Instead, he had spent years connecting the dots, the many pieces of information he had come into contact with since his return.

But still, finding something like this that way could be considered easy, considering how mysterious the North Sea was to most people on the continent.

With that in mind, Minos promptly set the goal of visiting one of these states in the future before he began to resolve his doubts about the threat that Henricus Longus had warned him about.

"Very well. I will do my best to follow his hints and eventually visit him in the Western Empire with my findings." Minos said to that individual as he thanked him with a gesture of gratitude.

The Spiritual Sage saw this and asked with curiosity. "Do you believe in the things Grant fears? Do you think there is something in the North Sea that could threaten us all?"

"I believe it. Grant is not crazy." Minos said without hesitation. "In all his years in my city, he had always exhibited the same determination and poise as when I first met him in the Kingdom of the End."

'Other than that, I have my reasons for believing him...'

Chapter 1507 Return

"Is that so?" That Spiritual Sage was surprised to see this talented young man showing such confidence in Grant's words.

He thought it was nonsense, an invention of a tired and traumatized mind. But he would say nothing to his old friend.

As for Minos, he merely gave advice. "Well, if you believe and are okay with it all, good luck. I would only advise you to be careful about following Grant's ideas.

He has suffered a lot, and his mind may have made up some of what he claims to have seen...

So he may even be able to tell lies that he himself believes to be true."

"I appreciate the elder's concern," Minos said without taking those words to his heart.

Minos would not need to tell this man for such a person to know that he would not follow any advice. Then this Spiritual Sage sighed as he saw Emperor Stuart's countenance, trying to put this 'lost' matter aside.

"Well, that was all I had to say concerning Grant's message... But seeing you and this city, I must say that the stories about you do not exaggerate at all, young man." He commented, taking a brief look at the capital of the Black Plain Empire.

He knew who Minos was and the accomplishments of this emperor, which had already drawn the attention of even high-level empire families.

"The elder flatters me. I have worked hard to reach this current state..." Minos said, without pulling too much subject, since he preferred people of that fellow's strength to stay away from his city.

"I wonder..."

Anyway, when you go to the empire to visit Grant, come see me." He tossed a pendant in Minos' direction. "That is my symbol. You can use it to reach me. I will guide you through the capital once you go there for the first time."

Minos accepted that without any problems, soon after watching that individual leave with the giant beast that served as his mount.

He wouldn't use his space skills to leave. Instead, he would just enjoy the ride back in his mount.

With that, he would soon return alongside Gloria to his imperial palace while the elders of the Gray Clouds Sect made their way back to where they had come from.

They were all aware of who Grant was, and with that expert's departure, there was nothing to worry about.

In the meantime, Gloria asked him. "What are we going to do with this information?"

"For the moment, nothing," Minos replied. "Grant lost his cultivation when he was level 70, and even the strongest of his group, level 76, died in that situation in the North Sea.

So we can't get involved with that for the time being."

"And when will be the time for us to do something about it?"

"When I reach level 80, at least... Anyway, we already have several other problems to deal with in the short term, so let's put this information from Grant on hold.

First, we'll deal with Mortimer and then the Flowers Kingdom."

"What about the issue of the Blood Triangle Pirates?" She asked.

"When I am in the Flowers Kingdom, I will try to get more information about that. Then, I will try to develop the elders of the Gray Clouds Sect and the Black Plain Army soldiers a bit more.

Only when those two forces reach a new level will I search for the truth about that map!"

"Are you already planning to go after it?" She was surprised since Minos had previously seemed to plan to leave this for much later in his plans.

But he was hurrying as more and more people wanted it. "Yes, we will be able to do that in about 5 to 10 years."

...

That way, Minos would continue for a few days in Dry City, solving local problems at Gloria's side. After that period, he sent her to the Spatial Kingdom and returned to the Flaming Empire.

No one else from the Gray Clouds Sect had advanced this time, so Minos did not intend to make any personnel exchanges at that organization's headquarters.

He simply headed toward Payton, where he would begin living temporarily in this state while dealing with the threat called Mortimer.

...

In Payton...

The atmosphere of tension in this city was not small, even considering that no attacks had happened since Minos had left.

But everyone in this city, even those who were not important individuals for the imperial family, already knew about the local drama, about the risk of one of the sects rebelling against the local sovereign.

As such, the movement in the streets was less than normal, while worried looks could be seen from imperial guards' faces to those of ordinary commoners.

Amidst this place's bad and cloudy weather, Minos arrived at a local teleportation port, dressed in dark golden armor, his countenance neutral but attractive as ever.

"Sect Master Stuart!" Someone shouted as he identified Minos in that square.

People in the surrounding area stopped what they were doing to look in Minos' direction. Still, unfortunately for most there, when he heard the first individual identifying him, the Stuart Emperor disappeared from the area without a trace.

His speed could only be understood by high-level Spiritual Saints. So the ordinary inhabitants of this city could only see him disappearing from the area as if he had never been there.

Also, due to Minos' speed, he was in front of the imperial palace in the blink of an eye!

"Sect Master Stuart, how nice that you are back!" A level 75 guard shouted as he saw Minos entering the interior of Isabella's family palace. "Are you going to see Her Highness? Or are you in search of the supreme elder?"

"Unfortunately, I will have to see that elder..." Minos smiled bitterly, as he would rather deal with the beautiful and tolerable Isabella.

But since he was there on official business, he had to search for the person with more extraordinary powers locally first.

After hearing Minos' comment, the imperial guard smiled, knowing that this sect master and the supreme elder did not get along.

Anyway, with Minos there, this guard and all the others in the surrounding area breathed a sigh of relief, feeling that they would be safer now that he was in their city.

In this way, it didn't take long for Minos to come face to face with that old fellow, who welcomed him better this time, given the local circumstances.

"You really didn't take that long to return..." The supreme elder said as he saw Minos and felt better that someone so strong was there to put up with the local challenges alongside him.

"I told you it wouldn't take long..." Minos replied, noticing the difference in the treatment he received from this man. "Has something happened regarding Mortimer?"

"No, but he has visited more than half of the prominent sects and families in the empire... In any case, have you brought some of your weapons?"

"No. But I have the necessary devices to create one or another of them..." Minos said calmly.

"Good. I believe we will soon need them to ensure the empire's security!"

## Chapter 1508 Peace

Two months passed in the blink of an eye...

After Minos arrived in the capital of the Flaming Empire, he spent his days quietly in this city, sometimes having fun with Isabella, often training with local leaders.

He had not gone to the Spatial Kingdom in this period so as not to be absent nor draw attention to what he had in a place with many prying eyes.

But even so, he had improved his cultivation a little, as Payton was still a place with a higher density of spiritual energy than the capital of the Black Plain Empire.

One couldn't compare this place to the Spatial Kingdom, but it wasn't bad for training for just a few weeks.

In any case, Minos would not change levels in a short time, so nothing of great relevance to him or the local forces happened in this period.

Mortimer was still planning his moves with meetings with leaders of organizations in the empire, being careful, as Minos had expected.

But not only was the leader of the Saints Killing Sect taking action, but the imperial family was also using Minos' presence to negotiate with their vassals about their responsibilities in a crisis with Mortimer.

At first, the Edwardstone family should not have to negotiate or rather strengthen ties with their vassals. It was the duty of such organizations to support their sovereigns. However, in these difficult times, one couldn't stand still by their own pride.

Those who were threatened, even if they were previously the most powerful, had to humbly bow down and review their agreements, promising generous gestures to those willing to honor their promises.



The leaders of this great family knew this and had done their best to negotiate with the largest sects and families in the empire.

The supreme elder even used the fact that Minos and Isabella were close to each other to show that someone with a future as promising as he would be on the side of this family and that it would be wise not to stand against them.

Anyway, the two sides were negotiating their alliances. At the same time, the tension throughout the state increased to a level rarely seen before!

...

At this moment, Minos was meditating in a cultivation chamber in the imperial palace, which only the highest-ranking members of the royalty could access.

In theory, this was the cultivation place of the emperor's lineage.

But in the absence of Harold and strains of the most important members of the imperial family, Minos had gained access to this fine place of training and cultivation.

He was one of the few with the peace of mind to continue his cultivation routine even in this crisis.

In the middle of his meditation, Isabella's mother entered that place, bringing some food and drinks for Minos.

Minos no longer needed to feed himself to nourish the cells of his body. But he liked to do this at least twice a day.

Madeline Shaw, level 78, knew this and constantly brought something for Minos to eat when Isabella couldn't do it.

"You can control an impressive amount of spiritual energy for someone at level 70... It's no wonder you're so strong." She muttered, still impressed with Minos' cultivation even after watching him do it for a few weeks. 'I don't think I could do anything like that until I was at level 77.'

As this woman compared herself to Minos, he opened his eyes due to the delicious fragrance reaching his nose.

Immediately after that, he thanked his mother-in-law and started devouring the meal she had brought him.

"Minos, if something happens to me, I expect you to care for Isabella with everything you have. Even if you must take her out of the empire." She said, thinking that Mortimer would probably target the main line of the imperial family when he was going to start acting.

Minos understood this woman's concern and wasted no time talking nonsense. "Nothing will happen to Isabella while I'm around."

"Good!

I just wish Harold was around right now... He could solve all our problems in no time."

"Hmm, I'm sorry about that." He said, looking into her eyes.

"Don't be sorry. Harold made his own decisions, and it's not your fault what those women from the Flowers Kingdom ordered." She said as she shook her head, indicating that she didn't blame Minos.

"Anyway, I know that one day you will go to that state to try to rescue my husband, but be careful. I have been to the Flowers Kingdom, and I can tell you that the life of those women is to think of methods to deceive men.

They can't act against men outside their territory without plausible justifications or even exaggerate too much, even at home, or they would have to face the whole continent. But don't think they can't make your life hell just because of those limitations."

"I am aware..." Minos said, knowing that those women were complicated. 'But their little games also give opportunities to those who accept the danger of going to that place...

If I don't falter, I might gain more than just paying my debts to Harold.'

"Well, I won't get in your way anymore. Go back to cultivating. I'll take care of some business..." She said before leaving there, as she was going to talk to her family, a local noble organization that was showing worrying signs to her.

This organization had been very loyal to the imperial family since her marriage to Harold. But in that man's absence and Mortimer's growth, they now didn't seem ready to fight for Madeline's home.

As the former home of the empress, this woman simply could not accept that this house would be on the opposite side of her and was striving to keep the situation in favor of the imperial family.

She was not weak and had a lot of influence in the empire!

'Those old men can't do that to me after all we've done to help them over the years...' She flew toward the neighborhood where House Shaw headquarters was located in Payton.

While she went to do this, Isabella was attending to her responsibilities as Harold's heiress, which continued to increase with each passing month.

To give you an idea of how busy she was getting, if nothing wrong happened in her path in the next two years, she would take over her father's position for good.

So no matter how much Minos was in the city, she didn't stay with him all day, but only in the evenings.

As for cultivating, she struggled to do so, but she couldn't get as much peace of mind as Minos to cultivate daily and make progress in her strength.

But amid her work, this woman found herself distracted from the papers she was signing due to the hectic and hurried entrance of one of her subordinates into her room.

"Your Highness, terrible news is coming from the Imperial Army's southernmost outpost!" That man said this in a worried tone.

"What?" A level 77 woman, who was standing next to where Isabella was sitting, asked.

"Elder Lucas has just been reported dead!" He referred to the man responsible for that post, a powerful level 78 Spiritual Saint!

With those words, silence filled the surroundings of that office, with some people turning pale at the thought of what might be behind it...

'Mortimer!'

#### Chapter 1509 Beginning Of The Attacks

While Isabella was notified, so were the supreme elder and other high-ranking individuals in the imperial palace.

When he received the same news as the local heiress, the old regent paled at what could be the beginning of the dark confrontation ahead for this family.

If this were Mortimer's doing, as the core of the family already imagined, most likely, they would face the danger that a Spiritual Sage was aiming at their heads from now on!

Due to the difficulty of acting against someone at the level of the leader of the Saints Killing Sect, fear and anticipations were the most common and expected feelings to be felt by the members of the imperial family.

But even in terror, the regent promptly activated his family's emergency devices, ordering all ranks of his forces to go on alert from now on.

If Mortimer were starting the silent war against the Edwardstone family, they would do anything to hinder his actions!

...

"So an elder was found dead?" Minos asked the man who had just notified him about this relevant fact.

"Yes, sect master Stuart. We found the corpse of elder Lucas, untouched externally but without signs of his soul, with his heart frozen." That level 75 Spiritual Saint ahead of Minos reported the details of this fact.

"Hmm, that must be Mortimer's thing. Spiritual Sages can use their spatial manipulation skills to end the lives of their victims by the interiors of these people, destroying the soul while killing the body." Emperor Stuart commented in a low voice as that individual nodded in agreement.

"Yes, the wretch probably started his journey against the family!

Tsk!

What a great disgrace!"

"Do you know what the family will do from now on?"

That imperial guard said. "We will activate the defensive arrays of all our posts and avoid leaving unless it is vital."

"Do you have high-level grade-3 specialized space stabilization arrays at all posts?" Minos questioned.

"Not at all, just the main ones." That man understood Minos' meaning and felt these measures would not help the family much.

"Hmmm, send a message to the supreme elder. Tell him to send those arrays to the outer ranks of the imperial family and leave the headquarters without it."

"What?" That man questioned incredulously.

"At the same time, ask those above level 77 to return to the headquarters.

Let's lure the enemy to this place."

That individual remained uncomprehending, but seeing Minos gesturing for him to do so immediately, he ran from there without further ado.

Meanwhile, Minos had it in mind to speed things up a bit, seeing that his plan to prolong a confrontation against Mortimer would not work out.

'It looks like he intends to take the Flaming Empire before he tries anything against the Grey Clouds Sect, and he's already starting the killing spree...' He pondered, feeling that if he allowed this to go far, Mortimer would destroy the foundations of the imperial family before he reached level 71.

By then, the empire would be significantly weakened, and Mortimer would probably have twice as much local influence.

That would make any action on his part difficult and would prolong the situation between him and Mortimer for longer than he would like.

With that in mind, he changed his plans and was not slow to use one of his men in that city to send messages to his men.

"Send a letter to Dry City with the information I intend to confront Mortimer.

The elders at levels 78 and 79 must come to Payton urgently.

At the same time, notify the sect headquarters of what is happening, order them to put that place on a state of alert and the elders of those levels to come to the empire's capital." He said.

Upon hearing that, the level 76 Spiritual Saint of the Gray Clouds Sect, who was there to maintain communication between Minos and the rest of his men, promptly left to settle these matters.

He was naturally scared, but there was no use stopping to lament or hesitate under the circumstances.

Only by acting as efficiently and quickly as possible could he help them!

'It's time for war!'

...

While Minos went back to meditating, keeping his vigilance under that imperial palace, Mortimer was in a secret post of his organization, celebrating his first action against the imperial family.

After finishing the period of negotiations with the powerful families of the Flaming Empire, this man decided to start the attacks against House Edwardstone without delay.

He did not know what might happen if he delayed acting since, as much as Minos did not scare him in the short term, the people who were involved with this young man scared him.

He had people around the northern region and the four enemy territories of the Flaming Empire inform him of important decisions made by the local leaders. So after the changes in Blackrock's attitude and intensified collaborations between Albano, Rosser, and the state of Minos, he naturally began to worry about the sacrificial weapon of those forces.

But not only that, but recently, forces of the Blood Triangle Pirates group had been reported in the capital of the Black Plain Empire, and Mortimer feared that Minos would strike some kind of deal with this organization.

So to take this state and get the leadership of the empire's many sects and noble families, he wanted to act as quickly as possible to finish House Edwardstone and avoid bigger problems.

With that, the night before, he had attacked the nearest outpost to where he was, secretly entered elder Lucas' room, and destroyed the soul of that level 78 individual.

Now he stood by those allies willing to act alongside him.

"My friends, I have initiated the first of many attacks that will take place in the coming days against the cursed Edwardstone family." He said while he had an evil smile, opening his arms in front of half a dozen people. "From now on, we are at war against the imperial family!

Disregard their orders, act according to the leadership of my Saints Killing Sect, and attack experts above level 77 of that family or the Gray Clouds Sect if you get the chance."

Those people nodded as they raised the drinking cups in their hands, confident that House Edwardstone could not stop Mortimer's movements.

Next to this individual, they would reach a new level!

As for Minos, they feared this fellow, but not enough to consider him a danger to an entire state!

He could be strong against the enemy states of the Flaming Empire, but against this state, he didn't have enough for that.

As for his potential? That didn't matter if he wasn't alive to grow!

Since the empire could be dominated quickly and Mortimer planned to neutralize Minos in the coming months, these people were confident in their path!

With this, they celebrated for a few minutes inside a floating island before leaving to follow the orders of their new leader!



From now on, a war of rebellion would begin in the Flaming Empire!

#### Chapter 1510 The Tension Of Isabella

Three weeks after Mortimer's first attack against the imperial family forces...

After Minos' recommendations, the supreme elder of the Edwardstone family had difficulty understanding his plans but agreed to follow them with many reservations.

In this way, the headquarters of the imperial house of this state had called back its main men to the capital while it had sent its space stabilization devices to the outposts.

Not all outposts had received these arrays, but the most relevant ones were protected from Mortimer showing up and destroying them.

At the same time, unprotected outposts had lost all their essential personnel and were now running only with people below level 70, those who were taking care of the state administration.

The high-level elders of the Gray Clouds Sect in the Flaming Empire and the Black Plain Empire had also moved to Payton in these days, following Minos' plans.

Not only that, the sects and families that were in agreement with the imperial family's intentions had sent high-level elders to this city as well, but without sending all their leaders, of course.

They had to protect their territories while helping their sovereigns!

Thus, the capital of the Flaming Empire had changed quite a bit in terms of the number of experts locally during the past few weeks.

Because of that or not, Mortimer had not yet visited this place, even though he and his group had begun their movements through the shadows.

A few more imperial family experts had been dead around this state before reaching the capital or the posts which received the space stabilization arrays.

At the same time, members of the Gray Clouds Sect had been attacked on their travels, while some noble families and even sects had stopped their communication with the rightful sovereigns of this state.

In other words, the situation had worsened, and now this state was in the midst of a silent war between Mortimer and Minos!

...

In the capital of the Flaming Empire...

Minos was at this moment standing next to Ruth, whom he had just brought from the Spatial Kingdom alongside Gloria.

After months of seclusion in the Stuart family's cultivation sanctuary, Ruth finally broke through the 7th stage barrier and reached level 70!

She had advanced to this stage days ago. Still, only two days ago, Minos had discovered such great news when he decided to go to the Spatial Kingdom for the first time since arriving in Payton.

As such, she had already learned her 8th technique, a Golden-grade one, just like Minos' and Gloria's.

As for Abby, she was not far from her breakthrough, but she was still in the Spatial Kingdom cultivating.

Anyway, they were now together with Isabella at the residence of this woman, who was quite worried due to the current circumstances of her family.

"Minos, what can we do now? More than 20 specialists from my family have been killed in the last few days. Now Mortimer's target will probably be over the imperial palace..." Isabella said while in a fetal position on her bed.

Ruth and Gloria looked at that level 73 woman and felt slightly sorry for her.

Minos also felt something similar and said. "Your family will suffer a little more until it's all over, Bella. It is inevitable. But when he attacks this city, you will lose more than you think you risk.

That will make the situation a little better."

Isabella understood that and remained silent, fearful of the possibility of Mortimer targeting her life and her mother's during the attack that everyone in this place expected to happen soon.

Unfortunately for her, she didn't know the same things Ruth and Gloria did and were in the dark about Minos' abilities.

So unlike the princess, the two wives of Minos were calm about this situation.

To them, this was just another battle they would face on their way, as it had happened countless times before.

"Don't worry, Isabella. Everything will be all right. Mortimer is a monster but doesn't know what awaits him in this city." Ruth commented, consoling that woman, who, although more experienced than she and Gloria, had experienced few such situations in the past.

"That's right," Gloria said. "Don't overthink. We wouldn't be here if Minos couldn't handle the situation."

"Is that true?" She looked at Minos.

"Hmm, well, it's not a lie. I can't protect everyone, but I don't think Mortimer is hard to take on. After all, I forced a Spiritual Sage to run away even before..."

Now this newly advanced Spiritual Sage might lose a lot of what he has if he underestimates me."

With those words, Minos reassured that woman.

At the same time, the high-level Spiritual Sages in the surrounding area listened to his words, believing or doubting those words.

Some felt this was just to reassure the cowardly princess, who had never experienced war. But others genuinely believed that Minos had something up his sleeve to use against Mortimer.

That was mainly the case with the high-level elders of the Gray Clouds Sect but also with the leader of the Holy Sect, who was also there.

'Looks like we'll have quite a battle in this place...

Sigh!

I hope I survive to witness the rise of Mortimer or the take-off of Minos and the Black Plain.' That level 79 individual thought to himself as he sat on the ground, not far from the many high-level Spiritual Saints there.

They were there to protect the core of that family and fight in the war about to happen!

...

Meanwhile, Mortimer was in the vicinity of one of the big cities of this state, dominated by imperial forces.

He was preparing to continue his attacks in this place and kill some more high-level Spiritual Saints of the Edwardstone family.

However, upon arriving there, he faced a protected outpost surrounded by high-level grade-3 arrays.

He tried to open a spatial crack within that protected area, but the spatial stabilization arrays prevented him from thriving.

'Uh? This again?' He wondered as discontent expressed itself on his face.

This was already the third location he had passed protected with these arrays, something he did not expect to find in many outposts of his enemies' forces.

Then as he noticed the pattern, he wondered what it meant. 'Are they using all their arrays of this type in their most important posts?

But they shouldn't have many of those arrays!

I've been investigating them for a long time! It's impossible that they have so many to protect the headquarters and all the relevant posts...' He was thinking about that when an idea popped into his mind.

'Could it be...'

"Could they be protecting some posts and concentrating their experts in those places?"

Unfortunately, he couldn't see through the defenses of that place without first destroying some of the arrays in his way.

Since it would be too much trouble for him to do that, and it would show him to the entire empire as too violent a person, he decided to pursue a less problematic alternative.

"I will see all the ranks of that damned family. I will certainly identify their weaknesses, and a means to attack them!" After muttering this, he disappeared from that area.

