

Desolate 1141

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Book 32: Waveshift Realm Chapter 22: End of the Road

Time flowed on, with six hours going past in the blink of an eye. During these six hours, Sectlord Timedream used a total of nine offensive items, all of which had the power of lords of the eight Sacred Cities. Some were stronger, some were slightly weaker. However, Ji Ning's usage of the Shadowless evasion art rendered Sectlord unable to aim the treasures. As a result, Ning was able to block the attacks effortlessly; he wasn't even knocked backwards by them.

"He just disappeared again." Sectlord Timedream continued to flee in terror. He glanced backwards, unable to discern where Ning had gone.

Boom! An explosive sound rang out as the countless threads surrounding him shuddered as something slammed into them.

"Darknorth's here again!" Sectlord Timedream stared ashen-faced at Ji Ning, who had just appeared. Ning had already burst through those threads and was charging straight towards him.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Swish! Whoosh! The streaks of sword-light shot towards him, some fast, some slow, some savage.

Sectlord Timedream was being completely dominated. Even Daolord Snowjoy wasn't a match for Ning in close combat, to say nothing of Timedream. Timedream was, by comparison, much weaker in close combat.

Whoosh. He once more transformed into a stream of light-silhouettes that then reformed off in the distance. This was his dreamform.

"Die." Ning's sword-light didn't slow down in the slightest as it pursued with its chops, stabs, and strikes against the humanoid silhouette. Although Timedream's dreamform was able to dissipate a great deal of his attack power, it clearly was far inferior to the likes of the invulnerable aquaform.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

Sectlord Timedream reformed off in the distance, his face ashen. He hurriedly gulped down a few spirit-pills, a look of despair in his eyes. In six short hours, he had been forced to use his dreamform to flee over a hundred times. Each time, he had been heavily injured and needed to rely on spirit-pills to heal himself.

"I want to see just how many spirit-pills you have." Ning was still brimming with a murderous intent.

"Daolord Darknorth, spare my life. Spare my life! I'm willing to be your retainer for a chaos cycle, and I'll give you all of my treasures. What do you think?" Sectlord Timedream once more begged for mercy, and this time he actively offered to serve as a retainer for a chaos cycle. He was an extremely proud man; it was a testament to how much despair he felt that he was willing to serve another as a retainer and hand over all of his treasures. He wanted to save his own life, but he was out of all other ideas. He had used

up an enormous number of spirit-pills. If this continued, he wouldn't be able to last for so much as another day.

"A retainer? You are weaker than me, and your heartforce is inferior to mine as well. What would be the point of taking you on as a retainer?" Ning barked coldly.

"You are going too far!" Sectlord Timedream roared coldly.

"Damn right I am!" Ning didn't even try to disguise his hatred. Given how long he had chased after Timedream, how could he stop now?

It would be nice, having someone as powerful as Timedream as his retainer... but Ning would never forget that it was Sectlord Timedream who was primarily responsible for Ninedust being forced to suffer such agony. The guilt Ning felt towards Ninedust prevented him from sparing Timedream!

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"Spare my life!

"Damn you, Waveshift.

"Why, why, why?!"

"I can't accept this! This is ridiculous!

"Ahahaha..."

"Winesage! Winesage! Hurry up!

"Why? WHY?!"

As death slowly moved closer and closer to Sectlord Timedream, he began to go completely insane. Although Winesage was moving closer and closer to Ning, he was still a few days ago. Sectlord Timedream wouldn't be able to hold on for much longer. As for the other supreme Daolords, they didn't even dare to move too close to Ning.

Shaka, Snowjoy, Kingfreak, and Timedream... these four supreme Daolords had attacked Darknorth. And what had happened? Kingfreak died! Shaka and Snowjoy had been terrified into fleeing! And Timedream had been chased to the brink of death!

Something like this was more than enough to terrify the vast majority of Daolords. Second-tier Daolords wouldn't even dare to think about getting involved, while even the supreme Daolords grew nervous! Most likely, only Winesage felt no fear at all, but he still had to make it here in time.

"How can it be that things will end up with me dying here?" Sectlord Timedream's aura continued to weaken. He once more transformed into a humanoid light-silhouette, then raised his head to stare despondently at the skies.

Ning's merciless sword-light once more came howling towards him, chopping towards the humanoid light-silhouette. The humanoid light-silhouette slowly began to dim.

“Darknorth, today I’m going to die by your hand... but in the future, you will die as well! Ahaha...” Sectlord Timedream’s light-silhouette let out a berserk laugh as he continued to grow dimmer and dimmer. In the end his silhouette completely vanished, leaving just a few magic treasures behind.

Ning waved his hand, collecting the left-over treasures. Prior to dying, Sectlord Timedream had used up all of his Dao-seals and other disposable treasures. Since he wasn’t going to be able to escape, he didn’t want to let his death to benefit Ning any more than necessary. Only a few unbreakable treasures and precious materials ended up in Ning’s hands.

Ning stood there in midair, staring at the distant mountain peaks. He remained very calm. He could still sense the Ninedust Sectlord within his estate-world, and a hint of guilt appeared on his face. He murmured softly, “Brother Ninedust, hold on. Keep holding on.”

“And big brother Solesky...” Ning could also sense Daolord Solesky remaining in secluded meditation within a different estate. “Once you come out, I’ll expect an explanation from you.”

He had indeed made a breakthrough, which was why he had managed to turn defeat into victory! He had defeated Shaka and Snowjoy, then slain both Kingfreak and Timedream. But if he hadn’t made that breakthrough, both he and Ninedust would’ve been finished!

Big brother Solesky, I’ll demand an explanation from you!

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Ning was fairly calm after having killed Timedream, but the countless other Daolords within the Waveshift Realm were all in a state of shock. He had fought four supreme Daolords by himself and won! Two had fled in terror while the other two, ‘Kingfreak’ and ‘Sectlord Timedream’, had died?!

When King Gorsch had died, it had been because he was outnumbered. Ning, however, had been the outnumbered one... and he had instead killed two of his attackers, supreme Daolords both! This was completely different.

“Daolord Darknorth also trains as a Heartforce Cultivator! His heartworld projection is even stronger than Sectlord Timedream’s was.”

“Daolord Darknorth is skilled in one of those legendary assassination arts. Godsense cannot locate him, allowing him to quietly appear in front of you without any trace at all. He’s utterly terrifying.”

“Daolord Darknorth is also extremely strong in close combat. In close combat, he was able to defeat four supreme Daolords at once.”

All sorts of news spread throughout the land. Countless other Daolords were in a state of horror as yet another terrifying supreme Daolord appeared within their midst!

His heartforce was strong enough that all second-tier Daolords were in a state of terror, as well as a few supreme Daolords! Even if you were skilled in escape, so what? If you weren’t able to resist Ning’s heartforce, you’d still perish.

His assassination arts struck fear in the hearts of supreme Daolords, while his close combat skills were without flaw. He was even more terrifying than the Radiant King, Sectlord Timedream, Palace Lord

Dawnstar, and the others! He was someone who was so terrifying, he could be spoken of in the same breath as Winesage! If Winesage didn't have a Universe treasure, his position might be in danger.

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Virtually all of the supreme Daolords of this era were within the Waveshift Realm, and this naturally attracted the attention of the various organizations, the Palace of Immortals included.

Atop an Immortal bridge which was deep within the distant Palace of Immortals.

A black-robed elder and a bald, golden-furred alien were seated on this bridge, drinking some wine. Next to them hovered a large mirror which was displaying images of what was happening inside the Waveshift Realm. They were able to clearly see the scenes of Ning fighting against four supreme Daolords as well as his slaying of Timedream.

"Old brother Blackcloud, this Darknorth kid is pretty tough. He's even tougher than your disciple," the gold-furred alien said in a praising tone.

"In close combat alone, my disciple should be on par with him. The thing is, this Darknorth kid is extremely balanced in every area. He's without flaw. My disciple's attacks might be a bit more powerful, thanks to that bloodblade of his..." The black-robed, black-haired man paused momentarily as he gave his evaluation. "Still... only people like him who are balanced and flawless are able to survive for long periods of time. His sword-arts are completely without flaw and are perfect in every aspect."

"Agreed." The bald, gold-furred alien nodded.

"This Daolord Darknorth also concurrently trains as a Heartforce Cultivator, and has extremely strong heartforce." The black-robed elder nodded. "I feel as though I'm seeing the second coming of Winesage. Winesage was like this as well, but he now has a Universe treasure."

"Without it, it'd be hard for me to say which of the two is stronger; they'd have to fight it out," the gold-furred alien said. "Now that he does have that Universe treasure, he's the undisputed number one."

"A pity. The exalted rank of number one Daolord is 'owned' by a Daolord of the Dark Kingdom." The black-robed elder shook his head. "Although Darknorth is a member of the Brightshore Kingdom, he's still a member of our Dao Alliance."

The Dao Alliance was a very relaxed organization. One could join the Brightshore Kingdom or even the Ancient cultivators without causing much of a fuss. However, joining the Aeonian Kingdom or the Dark Kingdom was a no-no; those organizations were mortal enemies.

"I have to change the listings again." The gold-furred alien produced that golden book once more. "I've changed the listings more in the past few years than I have in the past thousand chaos cycles."

He flipped the book open. The book was filled with lines of names. He filled the book with his Immortal energy, and the names instantly began to change once more. As they did, all of the other subordinates of the Palace of Immortals received notification and began to spread the news.

In the Endless Territories, this was the latest listing:

The top Daolord: Winesage

The second Daolord: Daolord Darknorth

The third Daolord: Palace Lord Dawnstar

The fourth Daolord: Daolord Dreamlore

The fifth Daolord: the Radiant King

The sixth Daolord: Daolord Skyaxe

The seventh Daolord: Daolord Tigrone

The eighth Daolord: Fiendqueen Dustrain

The ninth Daolord: the Starking

The tenth Daolord: Palace Lord Cloudwalker

The eleventh Daolord: King Cliffbank

The twelfth Daolord: King Wu

The thirteenth Daolord: Daolord Shaka

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Book 32: Waveshift Realm Chapter 23: Another Hegemon

This updating of the Daolord rankings was quickly spread throughout the Endless Territories.

Atop an icy chaos planet. This planet had been frozen into a solid ball of ice for trillions of years, and a cold, knife-sharp wind swept across its surface.

Two figures were seated atop this planet facing each other. The first was a white-bearded old man who had six horns on his head and who was dressed in snowy robes. This was the Brightshore Hegemon. The other person in front of him was a single-horned young man dressed in deep blue robes. The youth had a few scales on his face, and his eyes seemed to contain the stars themselves. He radiated an aura of peace and calm.

“Brightshore, this realmverse of yours really has quite a few incredible Daolords.” The horned youth smiled. “That Winesage is not only a Heartforce Cultivator, he also has a Universe treasure. The only thing that ‘Darknorth’ kid needs is a Universe treasure; once he gets that, he’ll be every bit Winesage’s equal.”

“Haha.” The Brightshore Hegemon began to laugh. “Welkin, do you know how long Darknorth has been training for?”

“How long?” The horned youth was startled. The public ranking didn’t even include each cultivator’s special techniques, much less details such as how long they had been cultivating for.

“Less than a chaos cycle,” the Brightshore Hegemon said. “To be more precise... for less than a hundred million years.”

“What?!” The horned youth said in shock, “How is that possible? I’ve visited countless places while wandering through the vast Great Dark, including quite a few alternate universes. To train to become a Daolord of the Fourth Step, especially one of such power... without question, every single person I met spent an enormous amount of time to reach such a level. Samsara Daolords... each step they take is extremely difficult and more difficult than the last! To go from the third step to the fourth step in particular requires an inordinate amount of time. How could he have accomplished it in less than a hundred million years?”

“But it’s the truth. He belongs to my Brightshore Kingdom.” The Brightshore Hegemon grew even more smug. “Impressed yet?”

“Such a short time period.” The horned youth said softly, “He must have encountered some special circumstances, such as entering a region where time naturally flows much, much faster than normal. It might seem to us as though less than a hundred million years have gone past, but in reality he must’ve trained for thousands of times longer.”

“Perhaps.” The Brightshore Hegemon chuckled. “Even if that’s true, that’s still a very short period of time.”

The endless Great Dark contained infinite possibilities. Even Hegemons had to slowly drift through it, and venturing forth to another realmverse was incredibly difficult. There would also be a number of unique, special danger zones within it. Normally, cultivators could at most train a hundred times faster than the normal flow of time, but some of the natural zones produced by the Great Dark could accelerate time to be ten thousand times faster than normal, or even faster! This was the ineffable power of nature.

In truth, no one in the Endless Territories knew that Ning was actually just a Daolord of the Third Step! It actually made sense for him to train this quickly from the first step to the third step, given that he had the help of the Stone Censer of Reunion.

“I didn’t expect to encounter such a monstrously talented Daolord upon visiting you in your realmverse.” The horned youth quickly calmed down, as by now he truly had seen far too many amazing things. “Still, it’s extremely difficult for these supreme Daolords to succeed in the Daomerge. Given how talented they are, if they were to succeed they would instantly reach our level.”

“Right.” The Brightshore Hegemon nodded. Their level... even in the endless Great Dark, they stood amongst the very pinnacle of power amongst experts. It was far, far too difficult for supreme Daolords to reach their level.

“The emergence of the Voidsea Jadeseals within the Waveshift Realm has caused me to hear the whispers of fate, awakening me from my slumber,” the horned youth said. “The Waveshift Realm definitely isn’t as simple a place as you might imagine.”

“I can vaguely sense something as well.” The Brightshore Hegemon also frowned. “I really wonder what Waveshift was planning.”

“Waveshift has reached such a level in the Dao of Numerancy that far, far too many major powers are requesting his assistance. I wouldn’t be surprised if he is in command of even more mysteries than the two of us,” the horned youth said. “Let’s just watch and see for now. Let’s see what secrets the

Waveshift Realm holds, for it to cause us to sense something! After this matters is resolved, I'll be leaving."

"You have recovered from your wounds?" The Brightshore Hegemon asked.

"More or less." The horned youth smiled. "I've spent so much time sleeping within your universe. Now that I'm awake, it's time for me to leave. It's a true pity. I was THIS close to becoming master of that alternate universe. If I succeeded, I would have become an Otherverse Lord! Alas, in the end I was surrounded and attacked by others. Fortunately, I managed to flee in the nick of time. Otherwise, I would've died there.

"Every time there's a war over control of an otherverse, a large number of people will perish." The Brightshore Hegemon shook his head. "I've chosen to remain in my homeland this entire time. My information network isn't as good as yours. To date, I haven't taken part in so much as a single one of those struggles."

"Brightshore, given how strong you are, even if you failed you would still be able to escape successfully. Even I'm not a match for your spacetime fleeing abilities," the horned youth said. "That's why I told you, long ago, that you should go off adventuring by my side. When you visit more places and make more friends, you'll naturally have a larger information network. Eventually, you might become an Otherverse Lord yourself. Wouldn't that be wonderful?"

"I worry too much about my clansmen," the Brightshore Hegemon said.

"You take too many burdens onto yourself," the horned youth said. "Look at me. Look at how free and relaxed I am! I'm also a Chaos Godbeast, but I've been to far more places than you have. My life isn't nearly as tiring as yours. We Chaos Godbeasts were meant to venture through the stars by ourselves! Who gives a damn about the others? It's enough for me to be happy, right?"

"Everyone has their own preferences." The Brightshore Hegemon smiled.

"Oh, right. Have you found those six materials I asked you to look for?" The horned youth asked, "Those six ingredients once turned up within this universe of yours."

"I've found five of them," the Brightshore Hegemon said. "These items are all incredibly rare."

"I've visited so many places but still haven't been able to acquire all six." The horned youth shook his head, unhappy. "Only when I have all of these ingredients will I be able to fully master my Emphyrean Yang-Nine Ki! Ugh... if I had already mastered it during that last struggle, I might've become an Otherverse Lord long ago."

"The Emphyrean Yang-Nine Ki is one of the most supreme secret arts in existence. It won't be mastered as easily as that," the Brightshore Hegemon laughed. "I fear you'll need to continue your travels through the Great Dark and visit a few more places."

"I won't be the only one. This universe of yours will soon be annihilated by the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels Wheels. By then, you'll have to lead these young fellows in wandering through the vast world as well," the horned youth said.

“The Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels.” The Brightshore Hegemon hesitated, then slowly nodded. “They are one of the most terrifying natural calamities the endless primordial chaos has ever given birth to. Cultivators are not able to resist their power. I’ll try to buy as much time as I can, but if there really is nothing to be done then I really will have to go out wandering as well.”

“Let’s not talk about such depressing subjections.” The Brightshore Hegemon smiled. “Let’s keep our focus on the Waveshift Realm. Given that even you sense something strange about it, it definitely holds a significant secret within it.”

“Quite.” The horned youth grew eager as well.

In front of them was a floating image of the scenes going on within the Waveshift Realm, and at the center was the scene of Ji Ning fleeing at top speed.

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Right now, Ning was the center of attention of almost all the major powers of the entire Endless Territories. Even some of the reclusive Eternal Emperors were watching him.

Swoosh! Ning didn’t know and didn’t care about this. All he wanted to do was escape the nine layers as soon as possible.

Boom! Boom! Boom! One heartworld projection after another descended upon him, with the strongest one at the center being controlled by Winesage. Ning had no choice but to shrink his own heartworld projection in order to resist theirs.

Ever since Timedream died, there were three Heartforce Cultivators left amongst the most supreme Daolords; Ji Ning, Winesage, and Palace Lord Cloudwalker. Cloudwalker was the lord of the Palace of the Heart of the Brightshore Kingdom, which meant he naturally was a member of the kingdom and bound by the lifeblood oath not to kill another member. Thus, Cloudwalker had yet to do anything to Ning.

In terms of just heartworld projections alone, Ning was actually slightly superior to Winesage! But if he expanded his heartworld projection and made it too large, the power of his projection would drop.

Right now, over twenty second-tier Heartforce Daolords were working together to suppress Ning. Just four or five of them working together equaled a first-tier Daolord in might! However, these heartworld projections were a force of energy that couldn’t actually be ‘merged’ together, and so if Ning shrank the ‘footprint’ of his own heartworld projection, his foes wouldn’t be able to do anything to him.

“You won’t be able to escape, Darknorth.” A cold voice rang out far away. “Shaka and the others managed to tie you down for long enough. We’ve already set up an enormous cordon around the surrounding area, and I’m quite close to you. I think you and I should have a little duel. If I’m unable to defeat you, I’ll let you leave and cease my pursuit of you. Without my presence, the other supreme Daolords probably wouldn’t be able to do anything to you at all.”

“Winesage.” Ning continued to flee at a hundred times the speed of light. He barked back, “You want to fight me? Then come catch up to me first!”

Ning certainly wasn’t going to slow down. He wasn’t certain in his chances against Winesage, after all!

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Book 32: Waveshift Realm Chapter 24: Ji Ning and Winesage

Ji Ning continued to flee. On the way, he encountered multiple squads of Daolords, but none of them dared to engage him! Everyone knew how he had been able to fight against four supreme Daolords and kill two of them; this meant that Daolord Darknorth definitely was far too strong for them to compete against.

“It’ll all be up to Winesage.” This was what countless Daolords were thinking.

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Palace Lord Dawnstar’s ranking was now second only to Ning and Winesage’s. He was carrying his giant machete on his back while seated in the lotus position at the peak of a mountain, staring off into the distance as a streak of light flew past. It was Ji Ning. Ning even cast a glance at Dawnstar.

“Be careful, Darknorth.” Dawnstar smiled at him.

“Thank you,” Ning said, then continued to flee.

Dawnstar smiled as he watched Ning depart. He was a member of the Brightshore Kingdom; there was no way he would stop Ning.

“The Palace of Immortals has actually ranked Darknorth above me. I want to see just how tough he is.” Dawnstar transformed into a streak of light that stayed a respectable distance behind Ning. “Winesage was just barely able to defeat me. Now that he has a Universe treasure, I wonder what level of power he has reached.”

Dawnstar was quite eager to see what the results of Ning’s battle against Winesage would be. It must be understood that the ranking given by the Palace of Immortals did contain certain unspoken rules. For example, if you defeated someone in open combat you would take their rank, such as when Daolord Dreamlore defeated the Radiant King!

Another way to gain a ranking was to be acknowledged by countless other Daolords. Ning’s feat of fighting against four supreme Daolords at once and even killing Timedream and Kingfreak was something which Palace Lord Dawnstar and the others would not have been able to do. Thus, the many other Daolords all acknowledged that Ning was second only to Winesage and as such he was ranked number two on the list.

Generally speaking, without a ‘real’ resolution to a fight one wouldn’t be given a ranking. The Ninedust Sectlord and Daolord Snowjoy were both extremely strong, but thus far neither of them had actually defeated one of the top-ranked Daolords! Ninedust had been surrounded by Kingfreak, Snowjoy, and Shaka; he hadn’t actually been able to beat any of them, while his fight with Fiendqueen Dustrain had also been inconclusive. Where should he be ranked at? Eight? Nine? Ten? This was a matter of dispute.

You had to either be publicly acknowledged by the other Daolords, or defeat a ranked Daolord in an open battle!

“He’s publicly acknowledged to be superior to me,” Dawnstar mused to himself. “Given my Dao-heart, his heartforce shouldn’t be able to shake me at all. As for close combat... I really do not fear Darknorth at all! They’ve actually ranked him above me? I’ll have to find a chance to spar with him, then beat him.”

Palace Lord Dawnstar was an incredibly proud person. He naturally didn’t want to accept the results of this new ranking at all.

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“Winesage and Dawnstar were already ranked above me. Now, even Darknorth is ranked above me.” A red-robed youth clutching a blood-colored blade was glaring off into the distance, a desire to do battle radiating from him. “I actually beat the Radiant King. The only problem is, I haven’t actually run into Dawnstar or Darknorth yet!”

Daolord Dreamlore was very conceited. He didn’t want to bother with challenging ordinary Daolords; the first one he challenged was the Radiant King, despite the fact that none of the treasures of the Waveshift Realm had even appeared! In the end, he had actually won!

Right now, he wanted to challenge Dawnstar and Darknorth! If he won, he would then go on to challenge Winesage!

“No one can stop my saber.” Daolord Dreamlord was filled with the urge to do battle.

Whoosh. He flew through the skies at high speed, but he was still quite a distance away from Ning and Dawnstar. Right now, Ning and Dawnstar were located close to each other, while Winesage was just two days away from Ning’s position. As for Daolord Dreamlore, he was still more than ten days away.

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Winesage knew exactly where Ning was, but Ning didn’t know where Winesage was. More than twenty second-tier Heartforce Daolords were using their heartworld projection to suppress his, forcing him to keep it smaller in size and making it impossible for him to actually locate Winesage.

Whoosh. Ning was flying just a few meters above the waters of a vast, turbid river. “Eh?” Ning’s face suddenly tightened slightly. He came to a halt, staring off into the distance.

Another figure had appeared above the surface of the river. This was a man dressed in ancient black robes that were covered with certain diagrams. The man’s hair was rather tousled, and his eyes looked rather bleary. He looked very unkempt, but just by standing there he somehow became the center of this vast world. It was as though he was the hegemon of this land.

“Winesage,” Ning murmured softly.

“Darknorth.” Winesage smiled, his gaze slowly sharpening. “You won’t be able to escape this fight.”

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“Interesting. The top seed against the second seed.” The Brightshore Hegemon and the horned youth continued to watch things play out from their position atop that frozen planet.

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“Winesage is approaching the end of his lifespan. He doesn’t have much time left. Once he dies, Darknorth will be ranked number one. A chance to watch the two of them fight is a rare opportunity indeed.” The bald, gold-furred alien and the black-robed, black-haired elder within the Palace of Immortals of the Dao Alliance were watching eagerly as well.

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In the Endless Territories, everyone from Daolords to Hegemons were paying attention to this fight. Of course, the Daolords wouldn’t be able to actually watch the fight in person or know the details of it, but they were still waiting to see what the results would be.

The top Daolord against the second Daolord! The former had stood atop the rankings for countless years and now was in possession of a Universe treasure. The other had trained for a very brief period of time and had risen to sudden prominence, and had just slain the Kingfreak and Timedream just a short while ago. His momentum seemed unstoppable!

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Above that vast river. Ning and Winesage stared at each other from afar, neither daring to underestimate the other.

“It has been a long, long time since I have lost to anyone. Dawnstar and the Radiant King were very close to me in power, but they are still a bit weaker.” A desire to do battle burned in Winesage’s eyes. Although his voice was quite calm, it still echoed in the air above this river. “The reason they are weaker is because neither of them are Heartforce Cultivators! You, however, are a Heartforce Cultivator. You stand a chance at beating me.”

“But of course... that’s only in the event that I decline to use my Universe treasure.” Winesage laughed calmly. “Don’t worry. For now, I won’t use it! If you can’t even beat me when I don’t use my Universe treasure, you should just go ahead and hand the seal over. It’s rare for me to encounter a worthy opponent. I don’t want to kill you.”

Winesage’s words were calm but filled with arrogance and invincible pride. Even without his Universe treasure, he was still invincible amongst his fellow Daolords! Now that he had one, he truly did look down upon all of his so-called peers. He now generally spent his time with ancient Eternal Emperors and rarely interacted with Daolords.

“Haha, you don’t want to kill me? We haven’t even fought yet. What makes you so sure you can kill me? Even if you use your Universe treasure, you still won’t be able to do anything to me.” Ning let out a cold snort. “Let’s cut the crap. Take this!”

Whoosh. Ning vanished into thin air.

“That’s the assassination art?” Winesage’s face tightened slightly. Boom! Instantly, an awesome aura of bloody light swept out from Winesage, as well as a heartworld projection that was filled with the essence of darkness and death. The two joined together.

Boom! Boom! Boom! A series of explosive sounds rang out.

Ning had merged his nine novessence arts with his heartworld projection, while Winesage had merged his bloodlight arts with his heartworld projection. The two clashed against each other, with Ning holding the slight advantage. However, the bloody halo of light around Winesage was still able to maintain a diameter of roughly ten thousand kilometers.

Ning's silhouette suddenly appeared outside of that field of bloody light. "Your secret arts are pretty strong," Ning praised. The energy of the bloodlight art and the heartworld projection worked together seamlessly to destroy all within their path. If Ning was to enter its range, he would be attacked by it. His past opponents, such as Timedream and Shaka, had weaker secret arts and heartworld projections than Ning. As a result, they had suffered for it in battle.

"Your secret arts are even stronger, but its auxiliary effects are inferior to mine." Winesage nodded. "This secret art of mine is known as the Asura Domain, and my heartforce and perfectly join together with it. Foes that clash against me not only have to deal with the pressure from my heartworld projection and the Asura Domain, they also have to endure heartforce attacks from me."

"Asura Domain?" Ning nodded. He had heard of some of Winesage's supreme attacks before. When Heartforce Cultivators were unable to effectively use either brute-force attacks or illusions, they would need to use softer and more insidious methods. Winesage's Asura Domain was a good example of this. This was a technique that combined both secret arts and heartforce, giving it both a terrifyingly strong suppressive effect as well as a corrosive, soul-invading effect. Any cultivator caught within it would grow increasingly irritable as the fight went on. This impact on their emotions would make it difficult for them to stay in top fighting shape and unleash their full power, resulting in them losing.

Ning's own plan was to master the [Heartsword] technique and do the same. He had gained a basic level of insight into it long ago, but the later stages were extremely difficult. To date, he hadn't spent enough time on it.

It would take him very, very long to advance from the third step to the fourth step as a Daolord. He would have plenty of time to work on the [Heartsword] art.

"Talk is cheap. All the talk in the world won't make you one whit stronger. Show me what you actually have." Ning immediately manifested [Three Heads, Six Arms] and held six Northbow swords in his hands.

Boom! Ning unleashed his nine novessence arts and his heartworld projection at the same time. Ning and Winesage quickly began to move closer and closer to each other, their secret arts and heartworld projections crashing against each other like two worlds colliding.

"Fuck off!" Ning was incomparably valiant as he charged straight towards Winesage, immediately using his Omega Sword Dao – Heavenbreaker. His six Northbow swords were filled with seemingly inexhaustible power, and all of that power exploded like a series of volcano towards Winesage.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 32: Waveshift Realm Chapter 25: A Duel of Supremes

Winesage continued to stand there. His face remained placid, but his eyes narrowed slightly. He didn't move to dodge the Omega Sword Dao – Heavenbreaker. Instead, he manifested a total of six arms and slowly raised them up high. All six of his hands seemed to contain a strange, marvelous amount of

power within them. If mere World-level cultivators were present, their souls and truesouls could well be wiped out just via watching this attack.

Ji Ning, being a major power on the same level as Winesage, naturally didn't have to worry about this.

"Exterminate!" Winesage's six hands simultaneously flipped open and struck outwards.

Bang! Ning's six Northbow swords furiously struck down as well. It was a head-on collision of frontal attacks.

Boom! Ning and Winesage were both knocked backwards. A terrifying shockwave of power swept out in every direction, causing even distant spectators like Palace Lord Dawnstar to be affected by it. Dawnstar revealed a look of surprise: "Winesage's [Extermination Palms] are incredibly dominating, but Darknorth was actually able to block it head-on. The two actually fought to a standstill?"

"Not bad at all. Take another attack from me!" Winesage found his footing atop the water, then charged forwards once more as his six arms spread out in a slow, gentle manner like the wings of a roc.

Whoosh. Winesage moved closer and closer to Ning, carrying a surge of ghostly power with him. His body gave birth to a myriad of shadowy after-images, and his six arms seemed to transform into countless blurs, almost as though he had thousands of arms. Every single hand used different stances, such as claws, palms, or gentle pushes...

Winesage glided towards Ning like a ghost or a dream, his countless hands all reaching out towards him. If the [Extermination Palms] represented the utmost in hard, aggressive, Yang-style destruction, then this technique represented the utmost in soft, gentle, Yin-style attacks.

"Bring it!" Ning was overjoyed upon seeing this. He charged straight towards Winesage, his six Northbow swords transforming to become unpredictable, ephemeral, and translucent, vanishing and reappearing without rhyme or reason.

Slash! Slash! Slash! Slash! Slash! Slash!

Each time Ning's swords and Winesage's palms collided, the collision was very gentle and soft. Both were using very soft, Yin-style attacks... but each strike was filled with murderous intent.

Ning's Shadowless evasion art was born from his Shadowless stance. By now, his Omega Sword Dao – Shadowless was able to make use of all types of energy. It was skilled in energy redirection and completely unpredictable, making it the most soft and Yin-style of attacks.

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The two were like a pair of dancers. Each clash was whisper-soft and the movements were gentle beyond compare, but both moved like incredibly fast blurs. Winesage gave birth to countless fluctuating shadows while Ning would occasionally disappear and then be forced to reappear due to the Asura Domain.

"Interesting." The distant Palace Lord Dawnstar laughed. "Winesage has three killer attacks; the [Extermination Palms], the [Asura Dance], and the [Awakening Dream], with each attack being more deadly than the last. Although the [Extermination Palms] are very dominating, they don't contain enough variability and flexibility. The [Asura Dance] and the [Dreamwaker Finger] are more

unpredictable... but Darknorth is an extremely powerful Heartforce Cultivator. The Asura Domain is virtually useless against him, making it so that the [Asura Dance] isn't able to reach its full potential as well."

The [Asura Dance] was one of Winesage's most powerful attacks. When he fought against Dawnstar and the others, he would generally first unleash his heartworld projection and his Asura Domain! When the Asura Domain was used in combination with his [Asura Dance], his foes found it extremely difficult to do anything to him.

"It seems he'll have to rely on the [Dreamwaker Finger]." Palace Lord Dawnstar nodded. "Winesage relied on this stance to become acknowledged as the number one Daolord of the Endless Territories."

Much like how Daolord Featherdress' most powerful killer attack was the [Featherdress Soulthral Melody], Winesage's most deadly attack was his [Dreamwaker Finger]. Supposedly, it was a killer attack he suddenly came up with after getting drunk and waking up the next morning. In the face of this strike, even the likes of Palace Lord Dawnstar and the Radiant King were defeated... and so, Winesage became the undisputed number one Daolord of the Endless Territories.

But of course, Palace Lord Dawnstar and the Radiant King both had terrifying killer attacks of their own. The reason why Winesage was still able to beat them was principally because they would be affected by his heartworld projection and Asura Domain when they fought him! Even before the battle had begun, they would already be reduced to 60% - 70% of their true power. It was understandable for the two of them to lose to him.

This was why, from a historical standpoint, the vast majority of number one Daolords were Heartforce Cultivators! Even though foes might be able to endure their heartforce illusions and other heartforce attacks, the foes would still be weakened by the heartworld projection, which put the two on uneven playing fields.

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Whoosh. Circular waves rippled out from the surface of the water. Ning and Winesage had just separated after another clash. Winesage stood there on the surface of the water, a smile on his face. "Dawnstar and the Radiant King also managed to just barely withstand my first two killer attacks. My final attack is known as the [Dreamwaker Finger]. If you can withstand it and remain undefeated, that means you are even stronger than Dawnstar and the Radiant King. In that case, I'll use my Universe treasure to defeat you... but of course, if you fall to the [Dreamwaker Finger], you won't be worthy of seeing my Universe treasure."

"The [Dreamwaker Finger]?" Ning said calmly, "I also have a killer attack that I have yet to display. Let's see whose is stronger."

Technically speaking, Ning's three attacking stances (the Shadowless stance, the Heavenbreaker stance, and the Blood Drop stance) were all on the same level. However, his Northbow swords had evolved after absorbing the golden sand from the cracked planetary core, causing the power of the Blood Drop stance to increase fivefold.

Fivefold. What did that mean? As a Daolord of the Second Step, Ning was able to transcend space with ease. As a Daolord of the Third Step, he was similarly able to break past the limit of a hundred times the speed of light with ease. Even Daolord Shaka had been defeated in a single blow by this attack.

Because of the special properties of the Northbow swords, the Blood Drop stance was Ning's most powerful attacking stance.

"Oh?" Winesage began to move. "Then take my blow."

Winesage was like a giant roc who flew towards Ning at lightning speeds. His six hands reached out like talons, each hand coming from a different direction! This seemed like a very casual and gentle attack, but spacetime in the local area began to tremble and shake. It must be remembered that the Grand Waveshift Formation caused spacetime within the Waveshift Realm to be extremely stable, preventing even spacetime techniques from tearing the local spacetime apart. For Winesage's supreme attack to be able to affect spacetime locally was testament to its tremendous power.

Although the attack was very light and soft, it seemed to summon all the might of the local spacetime. Each of the six attacks contained an inconceivable amount of power.

The [Extermination Palms] and the [Asura Dance] both contained certain profound elements of the Dao of Destruction, but the [Dreamwaker Finger] contained the true essence and power of destruction within it. In the instant that it touched the opponent, its full power would be instantaneously unleashed.

"Omega Sword Dao – Blood Drop!" Ning didn't hesitate at all, immediately unleashing his most powerful attack. His six Northbow swords all executed this move, flying out like dazzling streaks of light! Every single streak of light seemed to be capable of tearing through space and time, causing spacetime in the area to tremble and shake. In the final instant before contact, the tips of the six Northbow swords began to spiral slightly. Boom! They instantly increased in speed, tearing past a hundred times the speed of light.

"Eh?" Winesage's face changed. "He broke through the limit and struck faster than a hundred times the speed of light. But Darknorth trains in the Dao of the Sword! Since when was the Dao of the Sword capable of breaching the limits on speed?"

Generally speaking, those who were able to breach that limit and move or strike faster than a hundred times the speed of light actually trained in the Dao of Light, such as the Radiant King or Daolord Shaka! This Dao was a Dao of speed to begin with.

Someone who trained in the Dao of the Sword was able to breach this limit as well? This forced Winesage to feel slightly anxious, but it was too late now. There was no backing out of this attack!

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Ning's six sword-tips drilled straight towards the tips of Winesage's six fingers. They collided head-on! BOOM!

A terrifying amount of force was released on both ends, resulting in an unbelievable explosion!

"WHAT?!" The distant Palace Lord Dawnstar was so stunned his eyes bulged out. "This is impossible!" He watched as Winesage was actually knocked flying backwards, smashing into the surface of the river

and causing the surrounding water to disappear. As for Ning, he continued to pursue Winesage with six Northbow swords in hand!

“The [Dreamwaker Finger] was actually defeated?” Palace Lord Dawnstar could hardly believe it. “He lost in a frontal exchange?!”

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“If Winesage didn’t have that Universe treasure, Daolord Darknorth should be ranked as the number one Daolord in the Endless Territories. Impressive, truly impressive.” The two elders within the Dao Alliance’s Palace of Immortals both sighed in amazement.

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“I’ve wandered through many places and have seen many Daolords who have dazzled me. Today, I’ve seen two more. The one named Darknorth... for him to reach such a level despite merely having trained for less than a hundred million years is simply incredible.” Both Hegemon Welkin and the Brightshore Hegemon were watching this fight as well.

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Winesage slammed into the waters of the river, a look of disbelief on his face. “My [Dreamwaker Finger] was actually defeated?” In the past, prior to him acquiring the Universe treasure, he had reigned undefeated... but today, his supreme technique had actually been defeated? And in a head-on clash, no less. He truly was rendered speechless!

“His swords are not only incredibly fast, they also contain incredible power.” Winesage had a mixed look on his face. “When my life comes to an end, the most powerful Daolord of this era shall be Darknorth.”

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 32: Waveshift Realm Chapter 26: Eternal Emperor

He had gained the upper hand in a frontal clash, but Ji Ning wasn’t excited or smug about it. This was because he knew that Winesage’s attacks were every bit his equal in terms of profundity. He had an advantage in that his Northbow swords made his Blood Drop stance fully five times more powerful than normal. In the end, however, the Northbow swords were not Universe treasures; they were simply ‘qualified’ to potentially develop into Universe treasures in the future, and they were exceptionally strong when executing the Blood Drop stance.

For him to win was normal. If he had lost, he would’ve been shocked!

Whoosh. Winesage flew back to the center of the river, returning to his normal two-armed form. At the same time, a pair of black gloves appeared on his hands.

“Eh?” Ning’s subconscious began to warn him of tremendous danger. He hurriedly came to a halt.

Winesage slowly levitated to stand above the water, a smile on his face. “I really didn’t expect this. If it wasn’t for my Universe treasure, I wouldn’t be able to keep safe my position atop the rankings. Daolord

Darknorth, I admire you very much. You truly are worthy of forcing me to use my Universe treasure.” The black gloves in Winesage’s hands began to emanate a terrifying aura of power.

As for Ning, he warily eyed those black gloves. His Darknorth Swords were only strengthened when using the Blood Drop stance; it didn’t strengthen his other stances nearly as much. True Universe treasures, however, would allow each and every stance to be filled with incredible power.

“Come on.” Ning’s eyes were filled with the desire to do battle. “I’ve heard long ago that Universe treasures are very powerful, but I’ve never tested one out for myself. Show me just how tough a Universe treasure is!”

“As you wish.” Winesage waved his right hand. Whooooosh. His black right glove swept out, causing spacetime to shudder as darkness completely covered the world around them.

“What a terrifying palm.” The distant Palace Lord Dawnstar was stunned. “I’ve heard legends of Universe treasures for countless years, but this is my first time actually seeing the power of one of them in person. In the past, Winesage and I were on par with each other, but I’m now no longer a match for him. The difference in power between us is quite apparent.”

Dawnstar truly felt powerless upon seeing this palm. His saber and his skills were focused on attacking! He was supposedly the best close combat expert in the Endless Territories, an offensive specialty... but when he saw Winesage use his Universe treasure to execute the [Extermination Palms], Dawnstar could sense that the power of this attack was far more terrifying than his own. If he had been surpassed even in his area of specialty, how could he not feel powerless?

“Eh?” An illusory figure suddenly appeared in the skies above the Waveshift Realm. It was Realmsoul Polo. “Winesage has a Universe treasure! Although in terms of enlightenment and understanding he remains inferior to the eight lords of the Sacred Cities, in power alone he’s already reached their level.” Polo had a somber look on his face as he looked at that palm come crashing down. “Such incredible power... it threatens the very stability of the Grand Waveshift Formation. Mm... at least Winesage has the good sense not to cause disruption on a large scale.”

Realmsoul Polo was in charge of overseeing this entire realm. When Ning had used the Hegemon Dao-seal, he had unleashed a level of power that surpassed that of Winesage’s strike. Polo, however, hadn’t cared because that Dao-seal was a single-use item. Winesage, however, would be able to rely on his own power to unleash thousands of chops. If he wished to cause wanton destruction, he could possibly disrupt the stability of the entire formation.

“If he does disrupt the formation, I’ll have no choice but to give him a little warning,” Polo mused silently.

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This strike was used the same [Extermination Palms] technique as before. Ning already understood the principles it operated off of, but the power had increased to a completely different level. This was the level the lords of the eight Sacred Cities had reached! Six Northbow swords in his hands, Ning immediately executed the Omega Sword Dao – Soleheart to defend. He wasn’t so arrogant as to try to take this attack head-on! The difference in power was simply too great.

BOOM! Ning could feel a terrifying amount of power explode against him. Although his Northbow swords had already deflected much of the force, the remainder of it had slammed into him, sending him flying backwards as the water around him was completely annihilated. Ning continued to fly until he slammed into the riverbed, the water around him completely evaporated!

Whoosh. Ning rose to his feet, his face rather ashen. "What a terrifying strike. Thank goodness I've reached the third stage of the Omega Sword Dao, and have the Hegemon armor protecting me. Otherwise, I would've suffered a heavy injury or even died!"

Rumble... the 'surviving' waters of the river came flooding into to replenish the empty area around him.

"He didn't even spit up blood?" The distant Winesage was shocked as well. Not only had Darknorth survived, he hadn't even been injured to the point of vomiting blood?

"Fellow Daoist Darknorth, take a few more strikes from me!" Winesage continued to press the attack. Boom! Boom! Boom! He used a series of palm-strikes, fist-strikes, and finger-strikes against Ning. Ning was forced to rely exclusively on defensive stances; given the overwhelming disparity in power, he didn't have any way to fight back at all.

Ning was hit by one attack after another. This was a crushing assault!

"What incredible defenses."

"Ji Ning's defensive prowess equals his offensive prowess." Palace Lord Dawnstar sighed in amazement when he saw this. He was skilled in offensive attacks, but his defensive techniques were much weaker than Ning's. "He should also have an incredible strong defensive divine ability. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to take hits like that."

"So this is what a Universe treasure is like." After fighting for a while, Ning felt his entire body turn numb from pain. However, he now knew much more about Universe treasures.

Universe treasures provided a tremendous boost in strength, but as with all sources of external power it had its limits. Although Winesage had now reached the level of the lords of the eight Sacred Cities in power, he would definitely be at a disadvantage when fighting them. This was because the eight lords were equal to him in power but superior to him in profundity of technique.

In comparison to the eight lords, the techniques which Winesage and Ning were using would seem a bit clumsy. However, Winesage deserved to be proud; the eight lords of the Sacred Cities stood at the true pinnacle of the Endless Territories and were second only to the three Hegemons in power. Given their status, they normally would never act against Daolords.

Eternal Emperors innately felt a sense of superiority when meeting Daolords, because they knew that even the most supreme of Daolords would eventually die if they failed their Daomerge. There was no way for them to live longer than 108,000 chaos cycles.

"Winesage, your Universe treasure truly is formidable. I'm unable to resist its power at all. Since I've experienced it for myself... it's time for me to say farewell," Ning said loudly. A heartbeat later, he vanished into thin air. The area around them was still covered by the nine novessence arts as well as Ning's heartworld projection, but Ning himself had vanished. Winesage was completely unable to locate him and thus didn't even know what direction to pursue in.

A while later, Ning appeared more than a million kilometers away. “Winesage, farewell,” Ning called out.

After him! Winesage continued to pursue, unwilling to give up, but Ning was able to move at a hundred times the speed of light, the same rate at which Winesage himself flew when using his magic treasure. Given that the two moved at the same speed, and given that Ning was able to use the Shadowless evasion art to disappear at will, there was no way for Winesage to catch up to him at all.

This pursuit went on for a full day. Winesage clearly had no chance at all, but he still refused to give up. His situation was different from Ning’s. For Ning, the 108,000 limit was something which incredibly far off in the future, but for Winesage it felt imminent. He had already been alive for more than 100,000 chaos cycles! This was why he so desperately wanted the Voidsea Jade seal.

Boom! As Ning was flying past a series of snow-topped peaks, he suddenly felt an aura of eternity manifest out of nowhere and cover the area around him.

“This aura...?” Both Ning and the pursuing Winesage were stunned. This aura was a vast and ancient one that radiated eternity and immortality.

Rumble... radiant, incandescent light suddenly appeared above the Waveshift Realm. The light appeared directly above Ning and slowly began to descend, containing a degree of power that was simply inconceivable. Both Ning and Winesage felt a sense of inexplicable terror; the aura of might around this rainbow light surpassed even that of a Hegemon’s.

The countless streaks of rainbow light began to circle around the region which Ning was in, as that aura of supremacy descended.

“What’s this?” Ning and Winesage exchanged a glance, both looking stunned.

“The prime essences of the Daos of the universe have come to offer their congratulations,” Ning murmured. “Yet another Daolord has succeeded in his Daomerge to gain eternity?”

“Someone succeeded in the Daomerge and gained eternity?” The distant Winesage revealed a look of disbelief. “Someone succeeded in the Daomerge? Yet another Eternal Emperor has been born?”

Although he was an incredible figure, his chances at the Daomerge remained incredibly slim. When he saw the prime essences of the universe descend upon the area in celebration, he understood that a new Eternal Emperor had to have been born.

“The Daomerge gave birth to a new Eternal Emperor!”

“Someone succeeded in the Daomerge?”

“Who completed the Daomerge?”

The countless Daolords of the Waveshift Realm watched as the dazzling rainbow light descended, all of them stunned by that invincible, supreme aura that came with it.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 32: Waveshift Realm Chapter 27: Emperor Solesky

“In every generation, only a few Daolords will become Eternal Emperors,” Winesage mused. “I never expected to see one right here!”

“Right.” Ji Ning scanned the area as well.. “I wonder which Daolord made the breakthrough. He’s probably hiding somewhere.”

The descent of the prime essences of the universe covered the area around them, which meant the new Eternal Emperor should be here as well.

Swoosh. The distant Palace Lord Dawnstar flew over as well. He had been following them this entire time, but now he finally revealed himself. He was dressed in ordinary clothes and carried a great machete on his back. He was the pride of the countless cultivators of the Brightshore Kingdom... but of course, the Brightshore Kingdom now had another idol to be proud of: Daolord Darknorth!

“Dawnstar.” Ning revealed a smile.

“Darknorth.” Palace Lord Dawnstar smiled as well. “Haha. I didn’t have the chance to congratulate you on how powerful you have become. After this matter in the Waveshift Realm is concluded, we’ll be inducting you as the new Palace Lord of the Palace of the Sword.”

The title of Palace Lord of the Twelve Palaces was determined strictly based on power. By now, Ning’s power had already outstripped that of any and all Daolords in the Sword Palace.

“Your Brightshore Kingdom is growing stronger and stronger. Both the second and third positions belong to you,” the nearby Winesage said with a smile.

“If you didn’t have that Universe treasure, you might be thrown off your pedestal by Darknorth,” Dawnstar said, then scanned the area. “Haha, I never would’ve expected for a new Eternal Emperor to be born here in the ninth layer of the Waveshift Realm. Every person in the ninth layer is an extraordinary Daolord. This new Eternal Emperor will be a very powerful one.”

“Right.” Ning nodded.

“Agreed. This Eternal Emperor won’t be one of the ones who are killed with ease.” Winesage nodded as well.

Daolords of the Fourth Step were generally divided into four tiers.

The lowest tier was the ‘ordinary’ tier.

The third-tier Daolords included Daolords like like Patriarch Clearwind and Daolord Solesky.

The second-tier Daolords included the likes of Kongsan and Palace Lord Woodflower.

The supreme first-tier Daolords included Winesage, Ning, Dawnstar, Ninedust, Snowjoy, and the others.

Daolords of the Fourth Step who succeeded in the Daomerge and became Eternal Emperors would also result in four different tiers of emperors.

Ordinary Eternal Emperors were the weakest and were virtually unseen, primarily because almost all of them had been wiped out. Alternately, they had gone into hiding or had fled long ago.

The elite Eternal Emperors included the likes of Emperor Mirrorsnow and Emperor Melobo. Most of the living Eternal Emperors in the Endless Territories fell into this category, and they were comparable to the supreme first-tier Daolords in might. Most of them had been alive for extremely long periods of time, and thus they had collected many life-preserving items and techniques. To kill them was very, very difficult.

The next tier consisted of the lords of the eight Sacred Cities and the likes of Patriarch Vulturax.

The most supreme Eternal Emperors were known as Hegemons. There were three of them in the Endless Territories!

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The one advantage Eternal Emperors had was that of time. They were alive for so long that they were able to accumulate many treasures. For Ning to face off against the eight lords of the Sacred Cities was like a second-tier Daolord facing off against a supreme Daolord! There was an enormous difference in power, and that wasn't even factoring in the fact that the eight lords of the Sacred Cities were ancient freaks who had acquired treasures similar to Hegemon Dao-seals. Most likely, they all had many terrifying trump cards to use. There was just no way to battle them.

"Eh?" Winesage scanned the area suspiciously. "Who is the Eternal Emperor? Why hasn't he come out yet?"

"Yes, it's time for him to come out." Ning and Palace Lord Dawnstar scanned the area as well.

Suddenly, Ning's face turned pale.

"What is it?" Both Dawnstar and Winesage noticed the change in Ning's face.

Ning had a complicated look on his face. It was unclear if the expression was of joy or rage. He waved his hand, causing two figures to appear atop the snowy peaks. The first was that of Daolord Badlands. The other was that of Daolord Solesky... or to be precise, Eternal Emperor Solesky.

"Emperor Solesky," Ning said.

"Ji Ning." Solesky still looked as sloppy and disheveled as ever, but his aura was now completely different. He had a stately, eternal majesty to him, as his Dao had gained eternity. Emperor Solesky said hurriedly, "It's not what you think it is."

"You used the Voidsea Jadeseal?" Ning asked.

"I used it." Solesky nodded. "But..."

"Used it?" Winesage looked at Solesky, then interrupted him. "You are the former Daolord Solesky, correct? I really didn't expect this. Daolord Darknorth and Daolord Ninedust risked their lives, so I felt certain that one of them had the seal. In the end, it was with you all along?"

"Daolord Solesky was already famous for his invulnerable aquaform," Palace Lord Dawnstar said. "Now that he is an Eternal Emperor, his invulnerable aquaform is assuredly even better than before. Most likely, it will be extremely difficult for even the eight lords of the Sacred Cities to kill him. As for us

Daolords, we have no chance at all. Emperor Solesky, congratulations. You have gained true eternity for yourself.”

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“Daolord Solesky made the breakthrough.”

“Him?”

“He’s legendary for being tough to get rid of.”

The Heartforce Cultivators all chatted mentally to each other, causing news to quickly spread throughout not just the Waveshift Realm but the entirety of the Endless Territories.

Daolord Solesky. In the past, many Daolords wished to capture him and learn more regarding the Waveshift Realm from him. As a result, many knew of him! Although his attacks were fairly weak, his defenses were incredibly strong, allowing him to survive quite a few blows from even Fiendqueen Dustrain. One could imagine how tough his defenses were!

Now that he had become an Eternal Emperor and his invulnerable aquaform had also reached the eternal level, how much tougher would he have become?

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Many powerful Ancient cultivators resided within a location inside the distant Terror Starsea. The exact location of this Ancient homeland was a mystery, with very few knowing the answer! Even the Ancient cultivators who were granted entry didn’t know the exact location.

An absolutely peerless beauty was seated atop an ancient throne, a royal scepter in her hands. To each side of her sat two rows of Ancients who were all Eternal Emperors.

At the very center of this room was a levitating image that displayed the scene within the Waveshift Realm.

“Who would’ve thought that Daolord Solesky would actually be the one to become an Eternal Emperor?”

“He’s not that strong, but he’s good at staying alive. In the future, we Ancient cultivators will probably need to get along with him.”

“To succeed in the Daomerge is far too difficult.”

The Eternal Emperors of the Ancient race all spoke out in praise.

As for Hegemon Netherlily, she said calmly from atop her high throne, “Emperor Solesky’s emergence is a minor matter. He’s not that powerful, and his existence has no impact on the situation in the Endless Territories at all! The Waveshift Realm... I can vaguely sense that something ten thousand times greater than the emergence of Emperor Solesky is going to happen.”

“Greater?” The Ancient cultivator Eternal Emperors were all rather surprised.

“You are too weak. You won’t be able to sense it,” Hegemon Netherlily said. “The secrets held within the Waveshift Realm are absolutely extraordinary. This is why I’ve been using my attunement to karma to keep an eye on everything happening within it.”

The existence of the Grand Waveshift Formation prevented the other Eternal Emperors from being able to scry the realm in detail, but Hegemon Netherlily was able to accomplish it.

And of course, Hegemon Windrain and Hegemon Brightshore were able to do the same.

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Within the Windrain Kingdom, the most sacred place of the Aberrant lifeforms, gentle rain fell down from the skies. This truly was a world of wind and rain, and it was filled with creeks, valleys, and beautiful rivers.

“Eh?” An enormous face appeared in the midst of a vast forest filled with countless trees. It was a special lifeform that was so incredibly vast, its body spanned the majority of the Windrain Kingdom. An image suddenly appeared in the air in front of the face. This was an image of what was happening within the Waveshift Realm.

“A new Eternal Emperor was born? Daolord Solesky might’ve broken through to become an Eternal Emperor, but this won’t have an impact on the Endless Territories as a whole, much less cause me to sense something.” Hegemon Windrain continued to watch from afar. “Waveshift... what the hell was he planning? What secrets are hidden within it?”

The Dao Alliance’s roots and foundation were incredibly deep, and its two leaders had a very wide web of influence. Despite that, they weren’t even close to living as relaxed a life as Emperor Waveshift.

Hegemon Windrain, Hegemon Brightshore, Hegemon Netherlily... they were far more powerful than Emperor Waveshift, but for them to go from place to place through the Great Dark was extremely difficult for them, whereas Emperor Waveshift was able to accomplish it with ease. It could be said that the most influential Eternal Emperor to ever leave the Endless Territories was Emperor Waveshift.

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“Waveshift Realm.” Hegemon Welkin had been slumbering in the Endless Territories for many years in an effort to heal his wounds. Both he and Hegemon Brightshore were paying close attention to the Waveshift Realm as well. Both of them could also vaguely sense that something big was going to happen there, something which would have an important impact on them.

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The three native Hegemons of the Endless Territories and the outsider Hegemon Welkin, as well as the most powerful and ancient Eternal Emperors, were all able to sense that something was going to happen. This was why they were so focused on the Waveshift Realm.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 32: Waveshift Realm Chapter 28: Crimsonwave Temple

Despite the relative indifference of the Hegemons, Ji Ning and the other Daolords were paying rapt attention to the fact that Daolord Solesky had succeeded in his Daomerge and become an Eternal Emperor.

“True eternity.” Ning looked at Emperor Solesky, a complicated feeling in his heart. If it hadn’t been for happened to Ninedust, Ning would be celebrating... but instead he was trying to keep a tight lid on his temper and prevent it from exploding. His big brother Solesky really had used up the Voidsea Jadeseal and let him and Ninedust protect him like idiots! For Ning to do this was one thing, but Ninedust didn’t have much of a relationship with Solesky; wasn’t Solesky ashamed to allow Ninedust to die on his behalf in the outside world? They had already agreed to hand over the Voidsea Jadeseal if they were unable to continue the fight. So what the hell happened?

Ning had wanted to ask this question for quite some time now, but for the sake of the Daomerge Solesky had completely entered a state of secluded meditation. Even his avatar had gone into seclusion, completely absorbed with the Daomerge. There had been no chance to speak to him at all.

“Darknorth.” Emperor Solesky wanted to explain.

Winesage barked, “Emperor Solesky, when you claim you used up the Voidsea Jadeseal, are you perhaps trying to help Darknorth and Ninedust out?” He did indeed find this rather suspicious. As he saw it, both Ning and Ninedust were much stronger than Daolord Solesky had been. How could Solesky be the one to end up using it, while Ning and Ninedust risked their lives to defend him? What would be the point? Was it possible that Emperor Solesky was lying in an attempt to deceive them?

“I really did use it up,” Emperor Solesky said hurriedly. “I’m not helping them out. They were helping me out! I swear on my very life itself that I’ve already used up the Voidsea Jadeseal and in the process completed the Daomerge. If anything I just said was false, let my soul be shattered and my truesoul forever dissipate!” Emperor Solesky said in a loud voice.

Winesage shook his head. Given that Solesky had just sworn a lifeblood oath, there was no way he was lying. “Alas... all that for nothing.”

“At least there are three more remaining,” Palace Lord Dawnstar said.

Suddenly, a series of figures began to appear in midair. All of the Daolord squads throughout the Waveshift Realm were able to see a version of this white-robed man appear before them! It was Realmsoul Polo once more.

Realmsoul Polo stared downwards, his gaze focusing on Emperor Solesky. “Emperor Solesky, my master has decreed that Eternal Emperors are forbidden from breaching the Grand Waveshift Formation and entering this realm! However, since you were originally just a Daolord when you entered, your presence here will not be ruled a violation of the rules. Still, you must immediately depart from the Waveshift Realm. I’ll open up a corridor for you to leave through.”

“Realmsoul Polo, please give me half a day first.” Emperor Solesky lifted his head and said in a clear voice, “I definitely will not damage any of the formations within the Waveshift Realm.” He knew that he had to give Ning a satisfactory explanation. Otherwise... although they wouldn’t go from being brothers to being mortal enemies, the relationship between the two of them would be dramatically impacted by today’s events.

“Fine, but only half a day.” Polo agreed to his request.

There were many Daolords in the Waveshift Realm, and virtually all of them were Verge-level Daolords. For them to attempt the Daomerge here was reasonable. If an Eternal Emperor from the outside world dared to enter by force, Realmsoul Polo definitely would’ve launched a counterstrike! His master, Emperor Waveshift, had left quite a few tricks and traps behind. However, if a Daolord within the realm actually made a breakthrough, Polo would simply congratulate them.

“What?”

“Daolord Solesky used up the Voidsea Jadeseal?”

“Not Daolord Solesky; he’s now Emperor Solesky!”

“Ninedust and Darknorth fought all that time just for his sake?”

The many Daolords in the realm were all rather speechless. Both Darknorth and Ninedust were supreme Daolords who had beaten back one squad after another of Daolords. Even Sectlord Timedream and the Kingfreak had died! The many Daolords in the Waveshift Realm would’ve accepted either of them acquiring the Voidsea Jadeseal, but who would’ve thought that it would be Daolord Solesky who would end up with it?

“Daolord Solesky really is a lucky man, for him to have become lifelong friends with Daolord Darknorth early on. This time, it was Daolord Darknorth who helped him acquire the Voidsea Jadeseal.”

“His lucky truly was incredible.”

The Daolords all sighed in amazement and envy. Given how strong Daolord Solesky had been, as an Eternal Emperor he would no doubt be able to live an extremely long life. There were no Daolords, at least, capable of posing a threat to him.

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After the airborne Realmsoul Polo finished speaking with Emperor Solesky, the realmsoul continued, “The competition over the first two Voidsea Jadeseals has come to an end. Now, it is time for the final three seals.”

The countless Daolords within the Waveshift Realm all listened intently.

“The final three seals are all located within the tenth layer of the Waveshift Realm.” Realmsoul Polo stared downwards at the Daolords. “I believe that thus far, none of you have managed to reach the tenth layer.”

“Right.” The Daolords all nodded. The Waveshift Realm had a total of ten layers, something which Emperor Waveshift had made known back when he was still around here. However, thus far no one had been able to enter the tenth layer.

“The tenth layer is over there.” Realmsoul Polo pointed towards a certain direction off in the distance.

Rumble...

A distant mountain range began to shake and rumble, then split apart as an enormous edifice began to emerge from deep within it. A terrifying, awesome aura of power emanated from this enormous building, with the aura being so strong that every single Daolord within the Waveshift Realm was able to sense it clearly. Even those who were very far away from it and were unable to see it clearly due to many different formations blocking their vision were able to sense it. It was like a terrifying, slumbering beast that was slowly waking up and making its presence felt.

“How terrifying.” For now, Ning didn’t pay his big brother Solesky any heed as he focused on attuning to that distant, incredible, terrifying aura of power.

The airborne Realmsoul Polo also stared off into the distance, watching as the enormous thing slowly rose. Finally, it made itself fully visible. It was an ancient temple that was a mixture of black and gold, and anyone who looked at it would sense its incredible age.

“The tenth layer is actually that ancient temple over there!” Realmsoul Polo said. “This temple is known as the Crimsonwave Temple!”

“The tenth layer is the Crimsonwave Temple, and all three of the Voidsea Jadeseals are located within it,” Realmsoul Polo said.

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Hegemon Brightshore and Hegemon Welkin had been seated, but they now both shot to their feet in astonishment, staring at the enormous image in front of them and the scene of the ancient temple’s emergence. The temple had three ancient characters written directly above it. The characters were extremely complicated, much like the Dreamdust language and the azureflower seals.

As for the three characters, they stood for: ‘Crimson’ ‘Wave’ and ‘Temple’.

“Crimsonwave Temple?” Hegemon Brightshore and Hegemon Welkin shared a glance, stunned looks in both of their eyes.

“The legendary Crimsonwave Temple?” Hegemon Welkin murmured softly, “The legendary Crimsonwave Temple has actually appeared within your realmverse... how did Emperor Waveshift manage to move the Crimsonwave Temple into his Waveshift realm?”

“Is it really the Crimsonwave Temple?” Hegemon Brightshore was stunned as well.

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“It’s the Crimsonwave Temple!” Hegemon Netherlily shot to her feet from her throne, two blurry streams of light emanating from her eyes.

“Crimsonwave Temple?” The ancient Eternal Emperors all had puzzled looks on their faces.

“What’s a Crimsonwave Temple?”

“Hegemon, what is this Crimsonwave Temple of which you speak?”

All of them were puzzled. Hegemon Netherlily, however, just stared at the ancient temple as she murmured softly, "Myself, Brightshore, Windrain... all of our treasures combined are not worth as much as Crimsonwave Temple. Emperor Waveshift... you truly are incredible."

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"The legendary Crimsonwave Temple?" The enormous face within the vast forest of countless trees revealed a stunned look as well. "The Crimsonwave Temple was actually relocated into our realmverse, the Endless Territories?"

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"Impressive abilities. Simply impressive!" The gold-furred alien and the black-robed, black-haired elder within the Dao Alliance were shocked as well. They stared at the levitating mirror in front of them and at the image of that ancient temple within the mirror.

"When did that brat Waveshift manage to relocate the Crimsonwave Temple into his little world, and without anyone noticing to boot?"

"If it wasn't because he voluntarily exposed it, none of us would know a thing."

"It must've cost him a fortune."

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In the Waveshift Realm itself, Ning and the other countless Daolords simply stared expectantly as the tenth layer, the 'Crimsonwave Temple', made its appearance. They were eagerly focused on the three final Voidsea Jadeseals, and they didn't really know what the name 'Crimsonwave Temple' represented.

"My master has wandered the endless Great Dark. Crimsonwave Temple was the greatest treasure my master has ever gained, after experiencing countless dangers and travails." Realmsoul Polo stared downwards, his voice echoing throughout the Waveshift Realm. "The Endless Territories is my master's homeland and thus he sent Crimsonwave Temple here as an offering to it."

Realmsoul Polo was extremely proud. These words were meant to be heard by the highest-level members of the six powers. Indeed, Emperor Waveshift had offered his greatest treasure, 'Crimsonwave Temple', to the Endless Territories.

"The final three Voidsea Jadeseals are located within the Crimsonwave Temple. Only supreme Daolords will stand a chance at surviving it." Realmsoul Polo looked downwards at the countless Daolords, a hint of a smile on his face.

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Book 33: Crimsonwave Temple Chapter 1: Solesky and Ji Ning

The tens of thousands of copies of Realmsoul Polo began to disappear from the skies above the Waveshift Realm.

"Let's go to Crimsonwave Temple."

"Let's go."

“The realmsoul has already made it clear that only supreme Daolords are capable of surviving Crimsonwave Temple. We’re not on that level of power yet. If we go, we’ll die.”

“I won’t be satisfied if we don’t even go take a look! Plus, there’s always a chance, no matter how slim. We might be able to seize that chance.”

“Even if we don’t go inside, we can wait around outside the palace. We still might have a chance.”

Although the realmsoul had made the situation perfectly clear, there were still many Daolords who elected to head towards the Crimsonwave Temple. And of course, none of the supreme Daolords hesitated at all.

“Shall we head to Crimsonwave Temple together?” Winesage asked.

“Let’s. We’re quite a ways away from Crimsonwave Temple, and there will be many dangers along the path. If we join forces, we’ll move faster,” Palace Lord Dawnstar agreed.

“I’m fine with that. Badlands, what say you?” Ning looked at Daolord Badlands, who smiled and nodded: “This is just an avatar. I’ve been prepared for death this entire time. I might as well go to check out the Crimsonwave Temple first.”

“Let’s move.” Winesage smiled slightly. He had naturally heard of Daolord Badlands long ago; the presence of Badlands’ would naturally be of help.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Winesage and Dawnstar simply flew, while Ning road aboard his flying vessel as he wished to have a private conversation with Emperor Solesky. At present, the only ones within that vessel were Ning, Badlands, and Emperor Solesky.

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Within the flying vessel. Badlands had long ago moved to the front deck to stare off into the distance, allowing Ning and Emperor Solesky to stand at the other end of the vessel.

“Big brother Solesky.” Ning spoke up. “When you were fortunate enough to acquire the Voidsea Jadeseal, we agreed that although Ninedust and I would do our best to protect you, if we were unable to do so you would immediately hand the seal over. That way, we’d be able to avoid a true disaster befalling us.”

“Yes.” Emperor Solesky had a hint of embarrassment on his face.

“But in reality? Both Ninedust and I were at the brink of death, but you entered secluded meditation and surrounded yourself with many layers of wards and barriers, refusing to allow anyone to disturb you at all.” Ning looked at Emperor Solesky. “Tell me. Why?”

Although Solesky was now an Eternal Emperor, Ning still viewed him as a brother. He needed an explanation.

“Ugh...” Emperor Solesky shook his head. “I admit, I’m at fault for what happened! We did indeed agree that I would hide inside the estate while you and Ninedust would flee while defending against the attackers! To tell you the truth, when I saw the Voidsea Jadeseal I did indeed feel a strong, selfish desire

to keep it for myself and never give it up to anyone else. There are no Verge-level Daolords who would be completely immune to its allure.”

Ning simply listened. He acknowledged this point; otherwise, why would so many incredible Daolords have lost their lives here? Even the likes of King Gorsch, Sectlord Timedream, and the Kingfreak had died due to this struggle.

“I made a certain decision. I chose to immediately use the Voidsea Jadeseal,” Emperor Solesky said in a low voice. “This was my plan. I was going to use the Voidsea Jadeseal to simulate a Daomerge! Since it was a mere simulation and not an actual Daomerge, I could stop it at any moment. I didn’t go into true seclusion!”

“My original plan was to finish using it up, then immediately notifying the two of you. I would then be able to swear a lifeblood oath to the others that I had already used up the Voidsea Jadeseal,” Emperor Solesky said. “Once those pursuing Daolords were certain that I had already used it up... although they wouldn’t be happy about it, they wouldn’t continue the pursuit.”

Ning nodded. “What you say makes sense.” If the seal was used up, then Ning, Ninedust, Badlands, and Solesky could’ve all sworn lifeblood oaths and informed Daolord Shaka, Daolord Snowjoy, and the others that the seal had been consumed. Their opponents would’ve been forced to give up, as further battle would’ve been pointless; the seal would’ve already been gone.

“After I came to that decision, I began to use the Voidsea Jadeseal within a temporal acceleration estate,” Emperor Solesky said. “Roughly a month later, it was used up.”

“A month?” Ning’s face tightened. “Then why didn’t you tell me and Ninedust about it?” Back then, he and Ninedust had yet to fall into danger! If they had publicized the fact that the Voidsea Jadeseal had been used up, the ensuing battles would not have occurred.

“I really was planning to make it public...” Emperor Solesky had an ashamed look on his face. “But as I completed a full Daomerge simulation with the Voidsea Jadeseal, the insights I gained were identical to the insights I would’ve gained from the real Daomerge. Certain insights I had spent countless years working on in the Dao of Water began to deepen, and towards the end I entered a very special prajna-type meditation state.”

“I... really did not wish for that state to come to an end. Once the state ended, the flow of insights would’ve ended as well,” Emperor Solesky said. “Thus, I immediately separated myself from the outside world and began the actual Daomerge, allowing myself to engage in the Daomerge while in that prajna meditative state. In the end... I succeeded at one go with my Daomerge and gained eternity.”

Ning was silent.

“Ji Ning, I admit that I was at fault,” Emperor Solesky said in an embarrassed manner. “I was planning to listen to your call and hand it over as soon as you told me to, or immediately publicize the usage of the Voidsea Jadeseal if I was able to use it up, but... do you know how rare it is for one to enter a prajna-state like that? I could sense that I had a chance at succeeding in the Daomerge! I figured, since you had been able to hold on for a full month, you’d probably be able to hold on for another month...”

“Well. I’ve given you a lot of excuses, but in the end I was just selfish and excited. I saw a chance at the Daomerge and so I risked everything to achieve it,” Emperor Solesky said with shame.

Ning turned to stare towards the outside of the vessel, where Winesage and Palace Lord Dawnstar were flying at high speed. His feelings were very complicated right now.

Should he be angry? He simply wasn’t able to get worked up. The Voidsea Jadeseal had belonged to big brother Solesky to begin with; there was nothing wrong with him using it up! The Daomerge simulation could indeed be disrupted, and Solesky hadn’t fully secluded himself; Ning simply had to message him in order to have him come out! But he ended up in that prajna-state, a state which was incredibly rare. Most likely, no one who was about to attempt the Daomerge would choose to voluntarily end a prajna-state upon entering it. Who knew when the next chance would be?

“Ji Ning.” Solesky looked at Ning.

“No one is completely unselfish,” Ning murmured softly. “And the Daomerge is the ultimate tribulation for all Samsara Daolords. I can’t blame you for not wishing to halt a prajna-state upon entering the simulated Daomerge!”

“In the end, I still went against my promise.” Emperor Solesky remained ashamed. “I caused you and Ninedust to fall into a perilous situation.”

“You don’t owe me.” Ning shook his head. “You do owe Ninedust. He was poisoned by Sectlord Timedream’s redscatter venom.”

“Redscatter?” This name caused Emperor Solesky to feel puzzled.

“It is a terrifying poison meant for dealing with Eternal Emperors. Ninedust is suffering endless torment right now, and was in such pain that he screamed for me to kill him,” Ning said slowly.

“What?!” Emperor Solesky’s face turned pale. Ninedust was a supreme Daolord. How much pain did he have to be in, for him to ask for death?

“You were in that prajna-state of yours and refused to end it, choosing to continue with your Daomerge. I can’t blame you for that.” Ning looked at Solesky. “But big brother... you owe him.”

“I owe him, and I owe you,” Emperor Solesky said. “I won’t forget either debts.”

“I suppose the silver lining for me is that I managed to make a breakthrough,” Ning said. “And I didn’t really lose anything.” Ning spoke in a casual manner... but in truth, he had lost quite a bit. He had been forced to use up his final Sword Hegemon’s Dao-seal, after all. Not even the likes of Sectlord Timedream or Daolord Shaka had Dao-seals like that! That dominantly offensive Hegemon Dao-seal was far more rare and difficult to make than the more stable defensive-type Hegemon Dao-seals.

And in truth, Ning had long ago reached the final bottleneck and was about to make a breakthrough at any moment. Even without this near-disaster, he would’ve soon broken through. To go from the second step to the third step wasn’t all that hard, after all.

“Alright. Now I know the situation.” Ning nodded. “Realmsoul Polo won’t let you stay here forever. You should leave.”

“Alright.” Solesky nodded. He really didn’t know what else he could say.

“Oh, right. Big brother, I haven’t congratulated you yet.” Ning smiled. “Congratulations on succeeding in your Daomerge! Countless Daolords have fallen to this great tribulation, and its rare for even a single powerful Eternal Emperor to emerge in each generation of Daolords. Big brother, you are now strong enough to truly wander the universe without fear for all eternity.”

Solesky revealed a slight smile as well. In his heart, he also felt quite excited... but the guilt he felt towards Ning and the others prevented him from displaying any of it. “I’ll leave now. I’ll wait for you outside the Waveshift Realm,” Emperor Solesky said.

“Alright.” Ning nodded.

Whoosh. Emperor Solesky immediately flew out of the flying vessel and towards the outside world. A rainbow tunnel soon appeared above him; clearly, Realmsoul Polo had opened it up just for him. Emperor Solesky immediately flew into the rainbow tunnel and flew out of the Waveshift Realm.

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Book 33: Crimsonwave Temple Chapter 2: The Fruits

Less than half a day after Winesage, Palace Lord Dawnstar, and Ji Ning joined forces to travel together, Ning received a message from his servant.

“Master, I just received an order from the Hegemon.” The green-robed alien located within Ning’s personal estate called out respectfully to Ning. He was responsible for maintaining contact between Ning and the Brightshore Kingdom.

“The Hegemon?” Ning asked.

“Yes. The Hegemon ordered me to deliver a message to you,” the green-robed alien said respectfully.

“Speak,” Ning said solemnly. In all these years, the Hegemon had only spoken to Ning twice. The first time was when the Hegemon had asked himself, Solewind, Greatjoy, and Firesurge to help protect Skyfire Brightshore on his journey to the alternate universe. The second time was when the Hegemon had given Ning that spacetime disc. Other than that, the Hegemon had never reached out to him.

“The Hegemon said that aside from the Voidsea Jadeseals, the Crimsonwave Temple also contains many precious fruits. The Hegemon hopes for you, Master, to harvest as many of those fruits as you can. The more the better! After you do so, the Hegemon would be willing to buy them from you using either chaos jewels, chaos nectar, rare ingredients, precious Dao-seals, rare treasures... anything is up for trade.”

Ning narrowed his eyes.

“The Hegemon also said that any treasure within the Brightshore Kingdom is up for trade. In fact, he’ll also help you negotiate for treasures held by the other organizations, including Universe treasures! So long as you have enough fruit, the Hegemon will help you trade for them,” the green-robed alien said.

“What?” No matter how calm Ning normally was, he was truly stunned now. Apparently the Brightshore Hegemon was absolutely willing to pay any price for the sake of the fruits within the Crimsonwave Temple.

Of course, despite the enticing offer there was still no way for anyone to forcibly bind a Universe treasure. The Universe treasure had to approve of its next master! The Brightshore Kingdom’s Sword Palace already had a Universe treasure, the shattered sword in its storeroom. However, to date no one had been able to bind it or be acknowledged by it. Thus, in truth that Universe treasure was of very limited value.

“The Hegemon emphasized for you to do your best to harvest as many of the fruits within the Crimsonwave Temple as you can,” the green-robed alien repeated.

Ning pondered silently for a moment, then nodded slightly.

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Time went on, one day after another. Ning and the others continued to advance before finally, Ninedust completely recovered from the poisoning. In truth, he had already stopped screaming in agony by the ninth day of his torment. Clearly, his Dao-heart was slowly growing stronger in response to the agony, allowing him to repress the pain and prevent him from screaming by the ninth day.

“Come, come, come! Brother Ninedust’s Dao-heart has been rendered truly incredible by this misfortune. In the future, your chances at the Daomerge shall be significantly better than they were before this. Cheers!” Palace Lord Dawnstar offered a toast.

Aboard the flying vessel where Ning, Dawnstar, Winesage, Badlands, and Ninedust. They were seated in a circle and drinking together.

In truth, this journey was quite an exhausting one for Dawnstar and Winesage. The closer they moved to Crimsonwave Temple, the more dangerous the path became, after all. Thankfully, Ning, Dawnstar, and Winesage all joined together. This alliance of the top three Daolords allowed them to advance much faster than they otherwise would have.

“Haha.” Ninedust roared with laughter. “This was indeed a blessing in disguise for me. My Dao-heart was strengthened by quite a bit. However, to tell you the truth... when I think back to the torment I suffered, I would rather have gone without this ‘blessing’. Ugh. What torture that was! Right, Darknorth. Where’s Solesky? Where the hell is he? I have one hell of a bone to pick with that guy!” A cold light flashed through Ninedust’s eyes.

“He’s succeeded in his Daomerge and gained eternity,” Winesage said with a sigh.

“He gained eternity?” Ninedust stared.

“Envious, right?” Palace Lord Dawnstar said. Clearly, he felt quite jealous as well.

“Darknorth, how did he end up gaining eternity? Did he use up the Voidsea Jadeseal when we were fighting for our lives?” Ninedust immediately asked.

“This is what happened...” Ning began to narrate the details of what had happened to Ninedust.

Ninedust ground his teeth as he listened. "That son of a bitch. He entered a prajna-state, then went into a secluded meditation and attempted his Daomerge. There's nothing wrong with that in principle, but he completely screwed me over." Although he was still quite furious, the rage he felt towards Solesky didn't blaze quite as hot as it had in the past.

"He'll definitely repay you for what he owes you," Ning said.

"Right, what happened after that? Your aura seems to be far more powerful than it was in the past! And how did you end up alongside Winesage and Palace Lord Dawnstar? What the hell happened?" Ninedust asked.

"After you were hit by the poison, Darknorth immediately charged out to face those four supreme Daolords by himself... and he broke through to become a supreme Daolord as well, sweeping all four of them away! He beat Daolord Shaka and Daolord Snowjoy into a retreat, with the Kingfreak and Sectlord Timedream perishing to him," Palace Lord Dawnstar said with a smile.

"Whaaaat?" Ninedust was shocked. He couldn't help but turn and smack Ning on the chest, then say with a laugh, "Not bad! You actually killed Kingfreak and Timedream? Nice, nice, nice! At least you took revenge on my behalf. Heeey... doesn't that mean you are now stronger than me?" Ninedust stared at him.

"The current Daolord rankings have brother Winesage ranked as number one, Darknorth as number two, and me having fallen to number three," Palace Lord Dawnstar said with a laugh.

"The three of you are the top three Daolords of all the Endless Territories. I'm now the weakest one?" Ninedust rubbed his jaw, then glanced sideways at the nearby Badlands. "Oh wait. There's one guy weaker than me here."

"My skills lie in the Dao of Numerancy, not in battle," Daolord Badlands said calmly. "If I chose to go into hiding, you wouldn't even be able to find me, Ninedust."

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This group of Daolords continued their advance. More than a year went by, with them moving closer and closer to Crimsonwave Temple.

The Endless Territories. Vastheaven Territory. Vastheaven Palace.

"Darknorth." A sonorous voice boomed out within Vastheaven Palace.

"Eh?" The golden-robed avatar of Ning, along with the avatars of Emperor Solesky and Daolord Battlemaster, all flew into the air and into the skies. They saw a gold-furred alien slowly walk towards them, causing space to tremble and ripple around him like streams of water. He seemed to walk slowly, but his movements were terrifyingly fast, far faster than the movements of Daolord Shaka or the Radiant King. He reached Vastheaven Palace in the blink of an eye.

"Milord Emperor...?" Ning spoke out.

"Mind if we sit down to have a chat?" the gold-furred alien said.

“Of course! Please come in and sit down, fellow Daoist.” Emperor Solesky’s avatar immediately felt a sense of pressure; clearly, this gold-furred alien was far more powerful than them. Soon, Ning’s avatar and Solesky’s avatar led the gold-furred alien into the palace.

“My name is Goldisle,” the gold-furred alien said. “Solesky, now that you have become an Emperor, I’m certain that you’ll soon be paying a visit to the Palace of Immortals. Darknorth, as a supreme Daolord, once this matter in the Waveshift Realm is over you should also come pay the Palace of Immortals a visit. By then, you’ll both know who I am.”

Ning and Solesky exchanged a glance. They knew that this person was most likely a high-ranking member of the Palace of the Immortals.

“The foundation of the Palace of Immortals is far mightier than that of the other five powers.” The gold-furred alien looked at Ning. “Darknorth, based on my estimations, you should have already been contacted by Hegemon Brightshore of the Brightshore Kingdom. He probably wants those fruits in the Crimsonwave Temple very badly! I’ll tell you this – the Palace of Immortal wants those fruits just as much.”

“Why can’t you go harvest it for yourself?” Ning asked.

“Only Daolords are able to enter Crimsonwave Temple,” the gold-furred alien explained, then continued, “In truth, Crimsonwave Temple was sent here by Emperor Waveshift. It should technically belong to our Dao Alliance, but since Emperor Waveshift established a rule that only Daolords may enter, we shall follow the rules he set. The Dao Alliance has the most Daolords, and I am confident that we are able to pay the best price.”

“Any treasure! We’ll make available any of the treasures within the Palace of Immortal’s treasury for you to choose from. So long as you have enough of the fruit, you can trade for whatever you wish.” The golden-furred alien continued, “Even if the treasure you seek is outside of the Endless Territories and is in the hands of other organizations in otherverses, we’ll work to help you find whatever it is you tell us you need, no matter how rare it is. But of course, you have to procure enough fruit for us.” The golden-furred alien looked at Ning.

Ning felt stunned. This was one hell of a struggle!

“I can promise to you that the Dao Alliance will give you a higher price than any of the other five organizations can offer.” The golden-furred alien smiled. “Based on what I know, Darknorth, you are quite talented in the [Heartsword] art as well, yes? Here’s a copy of the complete [Heartsword] sutra; consider it a show of sincerity from the Dao Alliance.”

Ning was secretly amazed. Not at being given a free copy of the [Heartsword] sword-arts; although it was valuable, giving him a copy for free cost the Dao Alliance absolutely nothing at all. For them to know that he was skilled in the [Heartsword] sword-arts, however... this was impressive. It must be remembered that he had relied on the [Heartsword] sword-arts to attain the rank of Swordlord within the Sword Palace! Very few people even in the Brightshore Kingdom knew of this. The Dao Alliance’s intelligence network truly was incredible.

“The Dao Alliance won’t force you to do anything. Let it all be of your own free will,” the gold-furred alien said with a smile.

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Book 33: Crimsonwave Temple Chapter 3: Separate Paths

“I’ve said everything I came to say.” The golden-furred alien rose to his feet. “I’ll be waiting for you outside the Waveshift Realm, Darknorth.” He then turned and took a single step forwards, space twisting and distorting about him as he completely disappeared.

Ji Ning was quite shocked. This sort of dimensional teleportation was something vastly beyond his capabilities. He mused to himself, “This Eternal Emperor named Goldisle has to be at least on the same level as the eight lords of the Sacred Cities.”

“However... I really will have to acquire as many of the fruits within Crimsonwave Temple as I can. My protective divine ability, the Sword Hegemon’s secret art, and the ingredients I need for the Northbow swords... most likely, I’ll have to rely on the Crimsonwave Temple’s fruits to procure what I need for them.” Ning calculated silently to himself, “I need to upgrade my protective divine ability a bit more, while the Northbow swords are currently only providing a significant enhancement to the Blood Drop stance. My weaknesses are quite glaring. A true Universe treasure is perfect in any manner.”

“And the Hegemon’s secret art. My nine novessence arts are no longer cutting it; they are of increasingly limited use to me,” Ning mused.

The nine novessence arts had been created by Daolord Allgod. When Ning had been at the first step, he had no access to any formations and thus used them in brute-force attacks of incredible power.

Upon becoming a Daolord of the Second Step, Ning’s Omega Sword Dao – Yin-Yang became of tremendous use to him. Even when Ning didn’t actually use the nine novessence arts, the sword-intent of the Omega Sword Dao – Yin Yang had reached twenty to thirty percent of the power of the arts.

Now that he was a Daolord of the Third Step, the might of his Omega Sword Dao – Yin-Yang was roughly at sixty to seventy percent of the power of his nine novessence arts.

As Ning’s level of insight increased, his Omega Sword Dao – Yin-Yang would grow increasingly powerful. The nine novessence arts themselves, however, wouldn’t change at all. He’d eventually have to discard them.

“I’m already a Daolord of the Third Step! For now, the nine novessence arts are still of use to me, but once I become a Daolord of the Fourth Step... by then, they’ll be of negligible use,” Ning mused. “I need stronger secret arts.”

“My protective divine ability... the Sword Hegemon’s secret arts... the Northbow swords... all of them require rare materials!” Ning felt rather eager. “Perhaps these fruits might even move me closer to reviving my wife.”

Reviving Yu Wei. This was what Ji Ning truly wanted above all else.

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The Waveshift Realm. Ning, Ninedust, Winesage, Dawnstar, and Badlands made for a truly formidable alliance. With Daolord Badlands helping guide them away from many dangerous areas, they were actually the first group to arrive before Crimsonwave Temple.

“There it is. Crimsonwave Temple.” Ning and the other four raised their heads to look at the ancient temple before them. The temple was a mixture of gold and black, and they could sense the aura of age which emanated from it. Three strange characters hovered in the air above the temple, and they seemed quite similar to the azureflower seal script as well as the Dreamdust script. Anyone who saw them would immediately understand that the three characters represented the name ‘Crimsonwave Temple’.

Ning stared at the three characters for a long period of time. He could sense that every single character contained boundless mysteries within them.

“The azureflower seal gave me access to the azureflower mist energy. The Dreamdust script was of assistance to my mastery over illusions. As for the Crimsonwave Temple... I can sense that these three characters are also filled with endless mysteries. Analyzing them, however, will be quite taxing.” Ning carefully examined them. The ‘crimson’ character seemed to fill the skies with a blazing red aura. The ‘wave’ character made Ning feel as though he saw an endless sea of waves. The ‘temple’ character seemed to emanate an extremely solemn and stately aura, almost as though Ning was standing at the helm of an endless swarm of soldiers.

This script was an extremely advanced, high-level one that was far more advanced than any language which was commonly used in the Endless Territories. Every single one of these three characters contained extremely high-level mysteries of the Dao within them.

“So we were the first to reach Crimsonwave Temple.” Ninedust roared with laughter. “Everyone, I imagine you all know by now how precious the fruits within Crimsonwave Temple are! We Ancient cultivators also wish to acquire these fruits. I hope that you’ll be willing to sell us any of the fruits you find, but of course it’ll all be up to you.”

“Everyone seems to want the fruits within the Crimsonwave Temple.” Palace Lord Dawnstar said casually, “But for us Daolords, what really matters is still the Voidsea Jadeseals.”

“Agreed.” Ning, Winesage, Ninedust, and Badlands all nodded. The fruits were probably of grave importance to Eternal Emperors, but Ning and the others here were all Daolords! To them, the supreme Daomerge treasure known as the Voidsea Jadeseal was what truly mattered.

“Come, let’s go take a look.”

“We are the first to arrive. We need to seize this opportunity to find the seals.”

“First come, first serve.”

They all laughed merrily as they entered Crimsonwave Temple.

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Crimsonwave Temple was an incredibly vast place. As soon as the five of them entered, they turned pale.

Right in front of them sat two incredibly large corpses, each 540,000 meters tall. Their enormous black feet were pointed directly at the group, the toenails looking dagger-sharp. The two corpses were completely black in color and completely nude, covered only in light green fur. Their faces were very

ugly, while their eyes were flecked with a dark-gold color. The skin on their heads, however, looked almost like a strange hat formed by scales. The awesome auras emanating from the two corpses were so powerful as to cause Ning and the others to tremble.

“These are Hegemonic auras!” Ning, Ninedust, Dawnstar, Winesage, and Badlands traded glances, their faces pale.

“Were the two of them Hegemons?” Ninedust spoke out.

“The auras are so strong that even in death, they bring me a sense of pressure.” Ning said solemnly, “They should be Hegemons.”

“Why don’t they have any armor or clothes on them at all?” Dawnstar was puzzled.

“Were they perhaps looted?” The nearby Winesage chuckled. “The armor used by Hegemons are undoubtedly extraordinary.”

“Something’s wrong.” Daolord Badlands frowned. “These two corpses look absolutely identical!”

“Right.” Ning and the others noticed this as well. There were some members of the same race who looked very similar to each other, and thus Ning and the others hadn’t paid too close attention to their appearances. But as Daolord Badlands had pointed out, these two corpses truly were absolutely identical. Even the wrinkles on their faces were identical!

Whoosh. Suddenly, a streak of rainbow light appeared in front of the entrance to Crimsonwave Temple, reforming into a towering white-robed man’s figure.

“Realmsoul Polo.” Ning and the others turned to look at him.

“Your group was the first to reach Crimsonwave Temple.” Realmsoul Polo weighed Ning’s group with his gaze, then pointed to the two corpses. “As for these two corpses... if you wish to call them ‘Hegemons’, I suppose they could just barely qualify as having reached that level. They are very close to being comparable to Hegemons in power, after all. On the other hand, they truly can’t be considered ‘real’ Hegemons! This is because they are the most powerful guardians which were produced by the Sithe race. The Sithe created them at enormous expense to watch over important locations, with Crimsonwave Temple definitely being one of them. That’s why it had two of these guardians here! They were eventually slain and Crimsonwave Temple was conquered. After a series of twists and turns, it ended up in my master’s hands.”

Ning and Ninedust were secretly startled. These were the most powerful guardians produced by the Sithe? It was possible to create Hegemon-level guardians?!

Ninedust and Ning couldn’t help but think back to that corpse they had seen within that cave in the Terror Starsea. That corpse had been filled with countless stone tunnels and many powerful planets. For the sake of killing that thing, two of the Hegemons of the Endless Territories had fallen!

“This is the most valuable possession my master has ever acquired, and he only gained it after experiencing countless dangers and hardships.” Realmsoul Polo looked quite proud. “The other organizations of the Endless Territories could work together and still fail to acquire this Crimsonwave Temple.”

“Alright. Now look over there.” Realmsoul Polo pointed off into the distance.

Whoosh! Previously, the palace interior had been so dark that they were unable to see what lay at the other side of it. Crimsonwave Temple was extremely large, after all, and it was filled with many regions. Now, three tunnels filled with dark blue light suddenly appeared.

“These three tunnels lead to three different locations within Crimsonwave Temple. You can try them out for yourself... and if you are lucky, perhaps you’ll be able to obtain the fruits within Crimsonwave Temple.” Realmsoul Polo said calmly, “However, acquiring those fruits is extremely difficult, just as difficult as acquiring the Voidsea Jadeseals will be.”

“Let’s go.” Ning and the other four didn’t hesitate at all, immediately moving towards the three tunnels. For now, it was still the Voidsea Jadeseals which truly enticed them.

“Everyone, we should part ways here. Otherwise, if we jointly acquire the jade seals, there will be no way to divide them up,” Winesage said. “I’ll choose this tunnel.” He chose one of the three and moved towards it.

“It’ll be up to your own respective skills.” Palace Lord Dawnstar chose the leftmost tunnel.

“Ninedust, let’s take the right one,” Ning said.

Ninedust hesitated. “Darknorth, there should be a Voidsea Jadeseal in each tunnel. If we go together, how should we split it?” They were good brothers, but they had to agree on something in advance. Otherwise, this might end up harming their relationship.