

## Desolate 1241

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 19: Dispersed

“And who will teach me? You? You don’t even have a Universe treasure to your name!” Emperor Goldface smirked. “Makes sense, though. You are just a Daolord. It’ll be almost impossible for you to convince a Universe treasure to submit to you.”

“Even without a Universe treasure, I’ll still knock you flat on your ass,” Ji Ning said coldly.

“You’ll lose the attitude soon enough.” The look on Emperor Goldface’s face was growing uglier by the moment. He had already manifested six arms and wielded six long shuttles in his hands, each of which glowed with golden light. One of the six had an especially extraordinary aura. It looked semi-translucent, and the cold aura radiating from it caused Ning to instantly understand that it was a Universe treasure!

Of Emperor Goldface’s six weapons, one was a Universe treasure while the other five were most likely lifeblood weapons.

Of the major powers present, Hegemon Brightshore was on the best terms with Ning. He knew just how powerful Ning had become, as he had watched that earlier battle from start to finish. This was why Hegemon Brightshore did not move to stop this fight, while Ning had personally waved off Daoist Bluestone. As for the other major powers, they naturally didn’t move to prevent the fight. They were all curious and wanted to see just how powerful Ning’s [Omega Sword Dao] was.

Whoosh. Endless flower petals began to appear around Emperor Goldface. Some were red, some were black, some were blue, some where violet... the multi-colored petals all danced through the surrounding area, pressing down upon Ning.

Ning didn’t hesitate at all in unleashing his own secret arts. Countless arcs of sword-light appeared around him, while an incomparably beautiful pair of golden wings appeared right above him. The two worked together perfectly in accordance with the profound principles of the Omega Sword Dao – Yin-Yang, with the golden wings being escorted by countless arcs of sword-light. It looked like a phoenix being escorted by countless lesser birds, hurtling through the skies and sweeping towards Emperor Goldface. At the same time, a massive heartworld projection descended as well, with a giant sword-mountain at the very center of it.

[Grand Diffraction Sword]! [Lumisword Godwings]! The two had been merged together via the Omega Sword Dao – Yin-Yang, then reinforced by the descent of Ning’s heartworld projection.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The countless flowers instantly began to crumble. A single strike was all it took for Emperor Goldface’s secret art to begin to crumble.

“My ‘Hundred Flowers Realm’.” A look of rage appeared on Emperor Goldface’s face. “Kill!”

Swish! In the end, secret arts were external sources of assistance. He, Emperor Goldface, was most skilled in close combat. His fame had been gained from his genuine abilities.

“Kill!” Ning charged forwards as well. Swish! Swish! Swish! Six tidal waves of sword-light clashed against the six shuttles. Both sides used very bizarre and rapid attacks. Ning was using his Omega Sword Dao –

Shadowless and his Omega Sword Dao – Blood Drop. He was extremely confident in his close combat abilities. However, Ning’s face soon tightened. “He’s fast.”

Emperor Goldface walked the path of the Dao of Light, after all; in terms of raw speed, not even Daoist Bluestone was a match for him! In addition, the Dao of Light was omnipresent and omniscient. There were no openings at all, making it so that even Ning’s unpredictable sword-arts found it hard to break through Emperor Goldface’s wall of shuttle-light.

In addition... one of those six shuttles was a Universe treasure! Thus, some of Emperor Goldface’s attacks were incredibly powerful. This made it quite hard for Ning to battle him.

“Hm? He’s pursued speed to the utmost, focusing all of his efforts on it. Even I am inferior to Goldface in terms of speed... but I didn’t expect for Daolord Darknorth to be able to block these attacks.” Daoist Bluestone laughed as he evaluated the progress of the battle.

“Goldface’s path is that of the Dao of Light, after all. He is indeed highly skilled in speed and agility.” Empress Jade Phoenix nodded as well.

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Ning and Emperor Goldface continued their furious battle, but this sort of fight was quite uncomfortable for Ning. It reminded him not to underestimate anyone who had nearly reached Hegemonic levels in the Dao. Even though he was suppressing his opponent with a heartworld projection and two secret arts, his foe was still able to move with unbelievable speed.

“Break for me!” Ning suddenly let out a furious roar, and his sword-stances changed. Previously, his attacks had been fast and bizarre, but now they completely changed to become incomparably brutal and explosive. Ning was now using his most overwhelming powerful attack, the Omega Sword Dao – Heavenbreaker.

Boom! Boom! Boom! His attacks exploded with power, causing the surrounding spatial fabric to collapse. The three spectating Hegemons hurriedly moved to stabilize spacetime, calming it down in the area around them. However, spacetime the area where Ning and Emperor Goldface were battling had been completely annihilated.

“What?!” Emperor Goldface suddenly turned pale as he saw a terrifying flood of sword-light crash towards him. This tsunami of sword-light was incomparably ferocious, so mighty as to cause even him to feel a tinge of fear. The only person in the Dao Alliance who had ever given him such a sense of pressure was Daoist Bluestone.

“Block!” Emperor Goldface hurriedly strove to defend against the attack.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Ning’s six swords continued to furiously chop out against him in accordance with the principles of the Omega Sword Dao – Heavenbreaker. Emperor Goldface was completely unprepared for this avalanche of attacks. He had reached an apex of speed and agility, and there was no one in the Dao Alliance who could compare to him in this regard. However, what he feared the most was having to deal such overwhelmingly powerful attacks that he had to face head-on.

Daoist Bluestone had crushed him in just this manner. Long before Daoist Bluestone’s Primaltwin had been transformed into a Black Emperor, the two had fought a public battle. Daoist Bluestone’s staff-arts

had struck down like titanic meteors, causing Emperor Goldface to turn completely pale with fear. This was why he had chosen to go into seclusion and had trained so painstakingly in private. He wanted to one day wipe away the humiliation of that loss.

Alas... he wasn't able to exceed Bluestone in power. When he heard that Daoist Bluestone's Primaltwin had been transformed into a Black Emperor, he had instantly felt despair.

"I told you that I'd knock you on your ass, and that's what I'm going to do." Ning's six Northbow swords howled down angrily like an endless storm of strikes. Delightful, truly delightful! No wonder so many cultivators chose Daos that were focused on crushing foes with overwhelming power. But of course, if one purely focused on such techniques then one's foes would be able to avoid your lethal strikes with superior agility. Ning's advantage lay in the fact that his Sword Dao was truly perfect. Foes were unable to avoid his strikes... and so even Emperor Goldface was being smashed down to the brink of defeat.

Swoosh! Emperor Goldface's face turned uglier and uglier to behold. With a swooshing sound, he transformed into a dazzling line of light that quickly retreated far away at incredible speeds.

The battle came to a temporary halt as Ning simply stared at the distant Emperor Goldface.

Emperor Goldface felt incredibly ashamed and enraged. He roared loudly, "Everyone, Daolord Darknorth is nothing more than a Daolord, but his sword-arts have already reached incredible heights. This [Omega Sword Dao] truly is extraordinary! I imagine that it would be very useful even for Hegemons; the three of you might gain much from studying it. However, he asks too much!"

"Daoist Bluestone offered him many treasures, but he still refuses to show us his technique... and he dares act with such gall before us! Since he refuses to give us face, why should we give him any face? I think we should join forces to capture him and force him to hand over his [Omega Sword Dao]! Let's work together. He won't be able to escape!" Emperor Goldface roared.

Everyone fell silent.

Empress Jade Phoenix glanced at him, then turned to look at the other Emperors and Hegemons.

Hegemon Netherlily watched silently, not saying a word.

Emperor Blackcloud glanced at his peers as well.

The entire region fell into an unnatural, awkward stillness. Ning's face tightened slightly. He then turned to glance coldly at Emperor Goldface. If they all worked together, he would indeed be in quite a bit of trouble... but logically speaking, Hegemon Brightshore and Daoist Bluestone probably wouldn't act against him. If so, he wouldn't be in that much danger. He had yet to reveal his 'Shadowless body'. In truth, even if all of the major powers present struck against him simultaneously, the end result would at most be him being forced to disperse his body and reveal his invulnerable form.

"Enough!" Daoist Bluestone barked coldly. "Goldface, you go too far."

"I'm trying to help you out, Bluestone!" Emperor Goldface was rather irritated.

"I didn't ask for your help," Daoist Bluestone said flatly. Emperor Goldface instantly felt even angrier.

“Since we weren’t able to come to terms, let us bring the conference to an end.” Hegemon Brightshore spoke up as well, breaking the unnatural stillness. Just now, there had indeed been a few major powers who were intrigued by Goldface’s suggestion... but since Hegemon Brightshore and Daoist Bluestone had both spoken up, that little ploy came to no fruition.

“Darknorth.” Hegemon Brightshore glanced at Ning and smiled. “Come and visit whenever you like.”

“If you are ever willing to let me view your [Omega Sword Dao], anything’s negotiable,” Hegemon Windrain said with a smile.

“We Ancient cultivators would also welcome a visit from you whenever you wish to come, fellow Daoist Darknorth.” Hegemon Netherlily rose to her feet as well. All three Hegemons were quite interested in Ning’s Omega Dao... but there was a limit to how much they were willing to pay for it.

“Hmph.” Emperor Goldface let out a cold snort, then waved his hand and tore a hole through spacetime. He stepped into the hole and then vanished.

Emperor Goldisle, Emperor Blackcloud, and Empress Jade Phoenix said a few words to Ning before leaving. This realmverse conference had come to an end, and the various major powers all departed.

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Ning and Daoist Bluestone simultaneously appeared at the peak of a mountain.

“Brother Bluestone.” Ning smiled.

“Brother Darknorth.” Daoist Bluestone smiled towards Ning as well. It was time to chat.

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 20: Whitethaw**

A cool mountain wind howled past the two. Daoist Bluestone immediately began to swear an oath: “I, Bluestone, swear on my very life itself that I absolutely will not show fellow Daoist Darknorth’s [Omega Sword Dao] technique to anyone else...”

The words to the oath echoed within the mountains. Ji Ning smiled, then waved his hand and gently tapped the air. Instantly, a crystal formed from his godsense flew out from his finger. This godsense crystal contained extremely detailed information regarding Ning’s Omega Sword Dao, as well as images of how each stance was used and executed. Since Ning had already chosen to engage in this trade, he wasn’t going to be miserly about it.

“Godsense?” Daoist Bluestone was overjoyed upon seeing this. He immediately said, “Brother Darknorth, I really must thank you.” He had thought that Ning would simply record information about the technique into a jade slip for him to view. Who would’ve thought that Ning would actually use a small portion of his godsense to transmit the legacy to him? This was a form of transmission that was far more detailed than information written within a jade slip could ever be. Jade slip transmissions were via diagrams and characters, but godsense transmissions included many actual demonstrations.

“It is nothing more than a wisp of my godsense,” Ning said.

“Then here are the treasures I promised you.” Daoist Bluestone waved his hand. Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh. Instantly, a series of fist-sized drops of silver liquid appeared next to him. Every single drop was perfectly round. Despite Ning’s visual acuity, he could see no flaws in the perfect spherical shape of the silver drops... but he could vaguely make out light flowing inside the spheres!

“These are the ‘Silver Daolord bodies’ of the Sithe.” Daoist Bluestone pointed at the silver droplets. “If you undergo the Ritual Sacrificium, you can send your soul and truesoul into the liquid and become one with it, transforming yourself into a Silver Daolord! Every single Silver Daolord has a body that contains Archon-level power, but your insights into the Dao will determine how much of it you can bring to bear.”

Ning knew this already. When he had been in the world inside the Stone Hellephant Wall, he had encountered those three clan elders. They had a very low level of insight into the Dao, and thus they weren’t able to unleash the amount of power which Silver Daolords should’ve been capable of.

However... Ning truly felt shocked when he saw those twenty-five drops. Those twenty-five drops represented twenty-five Silver Daolords!

“You have that much?” Ning said in surprise.

Daoist Bluestone nodded. “I originally acquired a total of twenty-nine drops. I gave four drops to others long ago, leaving behind these twenty-five. This is all I have.”

“Brother Bluestone, there’s no need for you to give them all to me,” Ning said hurriedly.

“They are of no use to me.” Daoist Bluestone shook his head. “The friends and family I truly cared about... they died long ago. Given my current level of power, these things are of no use to me.”

Ning couldn’t help but sigh. Indeed, the most powerful person in the entire Flamedragon Realmverse was Hegemon Brightshore. If you wanted to help train and strengthen a cultivator through using external tools, you would at most be able to help that person break through to become a Daolord of the First Step via using certain pills and treasures. However, it would be extremely difficult for that person to make any further breakthroughs. Thus, if one wished to become a Daolord of the Fourth Step then one would have to rely on his or her own abilities and slowly train away.

As for the Daomerge? Nobody could help you there! Not even the legendary Autarchs could help you with the Daomerge. If they could, then they would be able to ‘manufacture’ Hegemons on a large scale. The battle against the Sithe wouldn’t have been so difficult!

It was precisely because no one could help anyone else with the Daomerge that virtually no cultivators could live beyond the 108,000 chaos cycle limit! The major powers who were able to live past that were all generally quite lonely. At most, they would occasionally befriend other Eternal Emperors.

Some of them might feel regret... but most of them were able to see the bigger picture. Take Ning for example; if he was able to accompany his family and friends for 108,000 chaos cycles and then die alongside them, it would all be worth it.

“Aside from these Silver Daolord ‘bodies’, I have an even more important treasure to give you,” Daoist Bluestone said. “Silver Daolord bodies might be viewed as highly valuable by various organizations, but Autarchs probably won’t be interested in them. This treasure, however... even an Autarch might take some notice.” As he spoke, he waved his hand and caused a strange creature to appear at the top of the

mountain. This creature was completely covered in slick white fur and was extremely muscular. It looked humanoid, and it had a very honest, amiable look on its face.

“Master.” The strange, white-furred creature bowed respectfully to Daoist Bluestone.

“This is a Sithe Protector,” Daoist Bluestone said. “It is a very special golem.”

“A golem?” Ning nodded slowly. As soon as he saw the creature, he could sense that it didn’t have any lifeforce within it. He had already guessed that it was a golem.

“The Sithe generally created three levels of combat golems. The weakest are comparable to supreme Daolords, the average ones are comparable to Archons, while the most powerful are comparable to Hegemons,” Daoist Bluestone said. “However... there are a few other rare types of golems. Extremely high-status or influential members of the Sithe who were weak would generally be assigned Protectors!”

A reminiscent look was in Daoist Bluestone’s eyes. “Come to think of it... its previous guardian was a fairly high-status individual who was both greedy and afraid of death. That’s why he left behind so many treasures for me to find. A pity... if I had found those things earlier, then my little sister...”

“Haha, but I digress.” Daoist Bluestone came back to his senses and said towards Ning, “You can bind this Sithe Protector. It will recognize you as your master, and it is very good at being a guardian. With it by your side while you are out adventuring, it might be able to save your life if something bad happens. In the more distant future, you can give it to an Autarch. The Autarch would probably be interested in it, as these Sithe Protectors are quite rare.”

Ning nodded.

“Whitethaw, from this day forth your new master shall be brother Darknorth.” Daoist Bluestone looked at the white-furred creature.

“Master...” The white-furred creature was a bit reluctant to part from him.

“Brother Bluestone, this golem should still be of use to you, right?” Ning couldn’t help but speak out. Daoist Bluestone’s Primaltwin was a Black Emperor and was out adventuring; it truly had the power of a Hegemon and didn’t need protecting. Daoist Bluestone’s true body, however, wasn’t that powerful. If this Protector was meant for guarding high-level Sithe, its protective abilities had to be exceptional. Why wouldn’t Daoist Bluestone keep it for himself?

“No need to worry about that. I have other options available,” Daoist Bluestone said. Ning nodded, no longer arguing.

“The main treasures of interest are the Sithe Protector and the Silver Daolord bodies. The other treasures are of little use to you and no use to an Autarch.” Daoist Bluestone casually tossed a gourd to Ning. “There are some Dao-seals and other treasures here of varying power. The best four or five are Hegemonic in power; you can go ahead and gift them to your friends, I suppose.”

“Alright.” Ning smiled and accepted the treasures. These things truly were of limited use to him, as even a strike from an actual Hegemon would not be able to injure him. In fact, it might not even be enough to force him to reveal his invulnerable form! However, they would make fine gifts for friends, family, or disciples.

Ning had acquired quite a few treasures from the Eternal Emperors he had slain. Most of those things would be of limited use to him. At his level, there were fewer and fewer items that were of use to him.

“Is there anything you need?” Daoist Bluestone asked. “If there is, just tell me. I already told you that I can help you deal with Archon Silksnow and Emperor Bloodsnow. It might be difficult, but given enough time I’ll be able to handle it.”

“No need for now.” Ning smiled. “If in the future I fail in the Daomerge... then before I die, there will be a few things I would like to request of you, brother Bluestone. I hope, when the time comes, you won’t refuse.”

“A minor matter.” Daoist Bluestone nodded.

“Oh, right. Brother Bluestone, do you have a detailed map of the Terror Starsea?” Ning asked. He needed to accumulate treasures... which meant in the future he would definitely adventure through the Terror Starsea! The most detailed maps were kept highly secret by the various major powers, and they wouldn’t casually reveal those maps to others. During the Dawn War, the cultivator civilizations had been very unified. Now, however, the Sithe had been extinguished. There was no external pressure to force the various cultivators to share everything selflessly with each other.

“Haha, you are asking the right person!” Daoist Bluestone laughed loudly. “That great fortune I encountered, I encountered while adventuring within the Terror Starsea. My Primaltwin often adventures within the Terror Starsea as well. I’m not sure if I know more about the Terror Starsea than everyone else in the Flamedragon Realmverse, but I definitely rank in the top three for sure.”

“Here. Here’s a detailed map of the Terror Starsea.” Daoist Bluestone tossed out a golden scroll. He added, “But you have to be careful. The Terror Starsea was one of the battlefields where the Dawn War was fought. Many major powers on both sides fought there and fell there. Even Hegemons perished in large numbers! The place is filled with danger, and many of those dangers can annihilate even Hegemons with ease. You have to be cautious.”

“Understood.” Ning unfurled the star map and took a look at it, quickly memorizing its contents.

“Haha. If there’s nothing else, let us part ways now. If there’s anything you need, you can seek me out through the Dao Alliance.” Daoist Bluestone waved his hand, causing the distorted field of spacetime to return to its normal calm. He then ripped open a dimensional hole next to him.

“Farewell,” Ning said. He watched as Daoist Bluestone stepped into the dimensional tear.

Ning stood there by himself atop the mountain. He nodded slowly. “It is time to visit the Azureflower Estate... but prior to that, I need to pay a second visit to the Stone Hellephant Wall.”

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 21: Archon Silksnow’s Plan**

The conquest of the Sacred City of Silksnow had concluded long ago. As time flowed on, word began to spread through the Endless Territories. By now, even many ordinary Daolords had gradually begun to

hear the word. By now, even the World-level cultivators of the Twelve Palaces of the Brightshore Kingdom had heard the stunning news about Daolord Darknorth.

Countless cultivators had been completely stunned by this this revelation. News of the battle had stirred waves in the realmverse. Everyone was talking about how 'Daolord Darknorth crushed over twenty Emperors by himself' and how 'Darknorth blew through eight Eternal Emperors and annihilated them with ease, then sent Archon Silksnow fleeing and the others fleeing for their lives'. They spoke of how 'Daolord Daolord is close to the Hegemon level of power', how 'Daolord Darknorth has surpassed the eight lords of the Sacred Cities in power', and how he was the 'number one Daolord to ever exist'.

All sorts of flattery could be heard. All of the cultivators felt proud that one of them, a Daolord, could achieve such a level of power.

At first, those who heard the news were rather puzzled. They couldn't believe that it was true. However, as more and more information spread out, they began to understand that all of these stories were real! They naturally began to spread the stories even more vigorously, and the legend of Darknorth began to spread even more energetically than the legends of Emperor Heartsword had! Emperor Heartsword had been an Eternal Emperor, after all... but Darknorth was just a Daolord!

How was it that a Daolord had reached such an incredible level of power? It could be said that within just a few short centuries, everyone within the Endless Territories was talking about the legendary Daolord Darknorth! He was the topic of every get-together. It could be said that Daolord Darknorth's fame and reputation was now second only to the three legendary Hegemons!

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A desolate, barren planet. Every so often, a few flickers of flame would appear on the surface of the planet.

The skinny, white-browed Archon Silksnow had hidden himself within a valley inside this planet. When the flames moved close, they would naturally part before him. He sat there in the lotus position within the valley, a cold and dark look on his face.

"Damn him. He's forced me to go into hiding at the very margins of the Endless Territories." Archon Silksnow's face was downcast, but there was nothing he could do. If he was a bit closer to Ning, both would be able to sense each other due to the resonance between their realmship parts! His only choice was to hide far, far away. He knew that he absolutely could not reveal the fact that he owned a realmship.

Even Nign and Ninedust merely believed that Archon Silksnow also had a realmship part... they had no idea that what Archon Silksnow had was a complete, albeit damaged, realmship that was actually usable!

This was a secret which Archon Silksnow had never made public. He was the only person who knew this secret. If it was ever made public, he would be in serious trouble. Most likely, even the three Hegemons would hunt him down with all the resources available to him, seeking to kill him no matter what the cost. A complete realmship would allow one to easily travel between realmverses and otherverses. It was definitely every bit as valuable as Crimsonwave Temple!

But of course, Archon Silksnow's realmship was damaged and needed repairing.

"Darknorth. Darknorth!" Archon Silksnow's eyes were filled with hatred and malice. He was by nature a savage and violent man. It was this brutal nature of his that caused so many evil Daolords and Emperors to choose to follow him.

Emperor Bloodcloud was just as strong as him, but he wasn't as decisive. He wasn't determined enough or ruthless enough when necessary. Only Archon Silksnow was ruthless and dominating enough to become the leader of their group.

"No rush, no rush. What I need to do is to repair the realmship as soon as possible. Once I repair it, I'll be able to use it to escape with ease. Not even Hegemon Brightshore would be able to stop me, despite his unparalleled mastery of the Dao of Spacetime." Archon Silksnow felt quite confident, because a fully operational realmship was truly unmatched in terms of tunnel through spacetime. It vastly surpassed Hegemon Brightshore in this regard.

"Right. If I can't handle Darknorth, I should go find Ninedust. Ninedust has a realmship part on him as well." Archon Silksnow nodded slowly. "Perhaps the part he holds will be enough to repair my realmship."

"Ninedust... hmph. He seems to be extremely good friends with Darknorth. If I can't kill Darknorth, I'll kill Ninedust. Hmph. Let's see what Darknorth can do about it." Archon Silksnow's eyes flickered with dangerous light, but he then frowned. "However... I need to first locate Ninedust. Based on the information I uncovered, he entered the Terror Starsea a long time ago. How suicidal of him! Still... the places he would dare enter would probably be of no danger to me."

"To the Terror Starsea I go!" Archon Silksnow decided to head to the Terror Starsea to hunt down Ninedust and take the realmship part.

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For now, Ning had left all his troubles and worries behind... because he had already left the Flamedragon Realmverse. He had entered the Great Dark and was hurrying towards the Stone Hellephant Wall.

"Here we are." Now that he was a Daolord of the Fourth Step, he was far faster than before. Just a short while after heading out, he reached the Stone Hellephant Wall.

The entrance to the enormous silver Stone Hellephant Wall remained open. Prior to Ning and Ninedust's original arrival, the local cultivators had long ago searched the insides of the Stone Hellephant Wall and had realized that there was no way out. Thus, even though it had been hundreds of millions of years since Ning had left the Stone Hellephant Wall, not a single one of them had exited via the entranceway! Even if they did, though... when faced with the endless darkness of the Great Dark, they probably would've been completely lost.

Whoosh. Ning flew into the passageway, quickly descending upon that world inside. Darknorth Palace remained the preeminent power of this planet... and no one even realized that Ning had already left and then returned.

Boom! The headquarters of the Fumo clan, one of the 'three great clans'. This was a place protected by many barriers and a Sithe disc, but an enormous explosion suddenly rang out as a terrifying, watery streak of sword-light tore straight through the layers of barriers with overwhelming power.

"What?!"

"W-what's going on?!" The countless Fumo clan members were all shocked and terrified.

Sithe discs were used by the Sithe to construct and stabilize large-scale barrier formations. They were generally used in sets of nine, twelve, or more in order to set up the formations. These locals, however, didn't really know how to use them properly. They didn't have enough of the discs anyhow, and so they merely used a single disc... and with Daolord-level energy, at that! Despite that, the barriers were still strong enough to defend against ordinary Archon-level foes.

If they had eleven more discs and used them properly with an Emperor controlling them, not even ten Hegemons working together would be able to burst through the barriers! Alas... the original attacker had been Autarch Bolin. He had blown through the formations with ease, destroying everything with impunity. Quite a few Sithe discs had been destroyed by his assault. Autarch Bolin wouldn't even bother to look at ordinary treasures; he only took away the precious ones, such as the complete realmship.

"Spare us!"

"Spare us, Lord Darknorth!" The Fumo clan members finally saw the white-robed youth standing in midair.

"Hand over all of your Emperor-class golems," Ning called out from the skies. "You are permitted to keep a single royal golem."

"Understood." Although the Fumo clan members were both terrified and reluctant to comply, no one dared to voice an objection. In the past, they had been the rulers of this planet... but they were completely unable to fight back against Ji Ning. Even their protective Sithe disc had been torn apart. How could they even think about resisting?

Soon, Ning departed with the Emperor-class golems and the royal golems (comparable to Daolords of the Fourth Step) in tow. He also took away many of their magic treasures. The Fumo clan now only had a single royal golem left to them. This was now the most powerful force they had to muster. With it, they would probably be able to stay strong... but if they spread themselves too thin and attracted an entire host of enemies, they would still be doomed.

Ning couldn't be bothered with intervening in the lives of the local cultivators on this planet. He was now on a completely different level compared to before. He simply blew through the barriers protecting the three great clans, then swept them clean of their Emperor-class golems, royal golems, and treasures.

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Now that no one had access to any Emperor-class golems, no clan on this planet was overwhelmingly more powerful than any other clan. No one was invincible any longer... and so, the planet entered a brand new era.

Ning once more entered the secret Sithe ruins located within this planet.

“Whitethaw, guard the entrance.” Ning waved his hand, causing that honest-looking Sithe Protector to appear by his side.

“Yes, Master,” Whitethaw said respectfully, then stood in front of the entranceway to the ruins.

Ning nodded. He had once sparred against this golem... and even when he fought with all his power, he still wasn't able to seize any advantage over it! Whitethaw was like an immovable mountain. Even if a Hegemon came, he would still be able to protect Ning for a time. With Whitethaw watching the entrance, there was no way any of the golems within the ruins would be able to escape.

Whoosh. Ning transformed into a streak of light as he flew into the shattered palace ruins. A number of Emperor-class golems secretly watched him from behind the barriers that were still active within the vast ruins. For now, Ning ignored them as he flew straight towards the core regions.

“You again?!”

“Darknorth, how dare you return!” Four streaks of light flew over towards Ning. It was the four Archon-class golems.

Ning slowed down when he saw them, then smiled. “My four old friends, join me in leaving these ruins. Life here is far too boring. The outside world is much more interesting.”

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 22: Sparrowfiend Crystals**

Even Ji Ning had to sigh in amazement at the aura which the four golems off in the distance emanated. All those years ago, he had been forced to fight with all his power to just barely tie down one of them, and by relying on defensive sword-arts at that! Every single one of the four golems brought him a tremendous sense of pressure, even though they were slightly weaker than Archon Silksnow.

Back then, that had been more than enough power to truly crush Ning.

“Darknorth, you actually dare to return? Do you have a new trick up your sleeve or a powerful helper?” The four golems flew over, actually feeling quite excited inside. Life without any opponents to fight was truly boring and lonely, and they were never permitted to leave the restricted area they were guarding.

“No helpers. I just wanted to invite you to come out with me.” Ning waved his hands, causing two of his Northbow swords to fly out from the sheath and into his palms. Ning then strolled forwards, almost like he was taking a walk through a park.

“Let's go.” The four golems exchanged a glance, then immediately charged towards Ning.

Ning's twin swords transformed into two streams of water, easily piercing past his enemy's scimitars and defenses. The Northbow swords became extremely soft and flexible, easily wrapping around and completely tying up one of the golems. Ning murmured softly, “In you go.” The golem was drawn into his estate-world.

This caused the other three golems to immediately feel shocked. One against four, Darknorth was able to capture one of the golems with ease? The difference in power between them was enormous!

It must be remembered that Ning was able to defeat even Archon Silksnow with a single blow! When faced with these four golems who had weaker techniques and weaker insights into the Dao, gaining victory was simplicity itself.

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Ning fought for the amount of time needed to boil a kettle of tea before finally capturing the last of the four golems. The reason it took this long was because two of the golems had transformed into invulnerable forms, making them quite difficult to catch. Ning was forced to use his secret arts and his heartworld projection to furiously deplete their energy stores. Only when their energy stores were depleted was he able to capture them.

Ning bound all four of the golems to himself, making himself their master.

“Master, you aren’t going to wipe out our golem-spirits, are you?”

“Haha, no need to worry. The three great clan leaders of this world were worried about their secrets leaking out, which was why they wiped out those golem-spirits in the past. I’ve already wiped these ruins clean; what would be the point of doing that? And, if I did, the new golem-spirits would start at a very low level of intelligence and insight. It would take forever for them to reach your current level of power.” Ning smiled. “I’m not going to cause trouble for myself like that.”

Only then did the four golems calm down. In truth, they were indeed willing to accompany Ning. That way, they wouldn’t be forever trapped within this tiny little area! However, they had to obey the orders of their masters to resist any intruders with all their might. To be able to leave would be absolutely blissful! However, it would be a tragedy if their golem-spirits were erased; to them, this was the equivalent of a cultivator losing his truesoul.

“Master, when can we leave?” the tall, skinny golem asked.

“Soon. I’m going to do an in-depth sweep of this place and take away all of the Emperor-class golems. After that, I’ll go with you,” Ning said with a laugh. “Ninedust and I already swept through all of the treasures in the ruins, including the various corpses. There probably isn’t much left.”

Last time, Ning and Ninedust had done a fast sweep of the area before leaving. This time, they were planning to do a more thorough inspection.

“Master, this warship was named Tigerhill. It was an extremely powerful weapon of war which the Sithe used in their conquests. However, the main systems of the warship have been completely destroyed, and many of its critical components have been taken away,” the axe-bearing golem said. “Although not many valuable treasures are left, based on what we know there should be one of exceeding importance.”

“Exceeding importance?” Ning’s eyes lit up. These four golems were responsible for guarding the restricted areas; they naturally knew quite a bit.

“Yes. Master, as you may know this place used to house over thirty thousand Sithe. There were many barriers protecting it, but the barriers stretched out to cover a great amount of area and were extremely strong. They had to have energy sources, right?” The tall, thin golem continued, “The energy source is located below the entire palace complex.”

Ning revealed a look of delight. "Lead the way!" Ning instructed.

"Yes." Golems were absolutely loyal and devoted to their masters. They previously were completely devoted to the Sithe. Now that Ning had bound them, they were completely devoted to Ning.

"Master, the energy sources for the barriers consisted of a total of eight 'sparrowfiend gems'. They are located in eight different parts of the palace complex. This place here is the very first one." The tall, skinny golem pointed to a tattered palace off in the distance. "If you dig through the ground, you should be able to find a sparrowfiend gem somewhere within a hundred kilometer radius."

"Ah." Ning nodded.

"Let me do the digging." The spear-wielding golem looked at Ning, who nodded. The spear-wielding golem immediately plunged his spear into the ground, breaking through the layers of stone and tearing through the ground. The palace had already been in very bad shape. Soon, an enormous crater had been dug in its foundation, revealing a sparrowfiend gem at the bottom.

The giant crater held a black altar which was covered by countless runes, and the runes all led to a completely blood-red gem. The vague outline of a bird could be seen flying within it.

"When Autarch Bolin wrecked this place, he destroyed all of the formations, making the energy sources irrelevant." Ning nodded slowly. "Right. Tell me more about the sparrowfiend gems. Are they very valuable?"

"Highly valuable," the spear-wielding golem said. "The Tigerhill was divided into a 'combat zone' and a 'habitation zone'. We are currently within the habitation zone, and it was powered by this sparrowfiend gem! The outer layer was the 'combat zone' and it was more important, meant for combating against opponents. Thus, it used the even more powerful 'dragonprime stones'. A single dragonprime stone is worth more than ten sparrowfiend gems, and the combat zone had a total of ten of them. They made the Tigerhill completely invulnerable, allowing it to easily travel between realmverses and slaughter countless foes."

"Dragonprime stones?" Ning's eyes lit up.

"I imagine the dragonprime stones were taken long ago. They are simply too obvious and eye-catching. Amongst the Sithe, a single dragonprime stone is enough to trade for a Black Emperor body," the spear-wielding golem said. "However, it is probably impossible for cultivators to unleash the true power of a dragonprime stone. All you can do is perhaps plant them into some of the Sithe warships and vessels which the Sithe left behind."

Ning nodded slowly. He couldn't help but ask, "Why are the Sithe so much more advanced than us cultivators in so many areas?"

"The Sithe had an extremely stable foundation. Artificing, construct-making, blacksmithing... they vastly surpassed the cultivator civilizations in all these areas. They created countless golems on our level! However, the 'Autarchs' of the cultivators were simply too powerful. Although the Sithe did have supreme powers who were capable of battling Autarchs, they were still weaker... and the cultivator civilizations continued to give birth to more and more experts. One batch would die, followed by the rise of another batch. If the war dragged on for long enough, the Sithe would invariably be the ones to lose."

The greataxe-wielding golem chuckled. "This is what we conjectured when we chatted amongst ourselves. To be honest, the Tigerhill was wrecked long ago by one of those Autarchs, and so we aren't sure why or how the Sithe ended up losing. All we know is that the Sithe feared the Autarchs very much, and they also feared how quickly the cultivator civilizations propagated."

Ning nodded. Every planet and star was capable of giving birth to extremely large numbers of cultivators. If one chose to transmit the best legacies and techniques to them while holding nothing back, it would definitely be possible to allow a large number of powerful cultivators to arise from each world.

Now that the cultivator civilizations had actually won, they became stingy and miserly in transmitting techniques to others! Acquiring supreme legacies was extremely difficult, which was why the rate at which powerful cultivators rose had slowed down dramatically compared to before.

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The barriers here had long ago been destroyed, making it quite easy for Ning to take away the sparrowfiend gems. Six of them were acquired in rapid order, with the seventh taking a bit more time. As for the eighth, the barriers protecting it were in fairly good shape, and they had the 'damage reflection' property. Ning had his most powerful servant, the Sithe Protector Whitethaw, personally attack the barriers. Whitethaw was sent flying back from the explosion, but had of course managed to endure the damage with ease.

"There we go." After six hours of hard work, all eight sparrowfiend gems were in Ning's hands. Ning revealed a look of delight. This was the greatest fortune he had acquired within the Stone Hellephant Wall. The eight sparrowfiend gems were probably close to a Black Emperor in value.

"An unexpected windfall." Ning was very happy. He then had his Sithe Protector and the four other golems to work together and quickly capture the various Emperor-class golems who were hiding throughout the runes. The Emperor-class golems were simply too weak. Ning didn't even want to bother with them himself... but he still cared about them.

After spending over half a month destroying quite a few barriers, Ning managed to capture a total of eighty-six Emperor-class golems. There were only six places within the ruins that he was unable to destroy, and the few remaining golems were all hiding within these final six places of refuge.

"Haha, what a fortune." Ning was jubilant. Virtually every single Sith ruin was a treasure trove. Ning's gains from this one were perhaps just a bit less than what Daoist Bluestone had gained from his, since there was no 'Black Emperor body' here. Yes, the sparrowfiend gems were quite valuable, but that was in the eyes of the Sithe. In the eyes of cultivators, Black Emperors were more valuable. Still... he had gained quite a bit.

"Mm. Now, it's time to head off to the Azureflower Estate. If I can gain another fortune from there, I might just be able to ask an Autarch to help out." Ning was filled with eagerness.

The Azureflower Estate was definitely another treasure trove. However, whether or not he would actually be able to take any treasures out of it was up to his own abilities. The natives of the three great clans had long ago discovered the Sithe ruins here, but they had been unable to take much from it. Ning

himself had only acquired these four Archon-level golems and the eight sparrowfiend gems because of his dramatic increase in power.

“Let’s go.” Ning once more silently departed from the Stone Hellephant Wall. It would be a very long time before he would ever return to this place. As for the internal struggles within this place... he would leave it to them to resolve.

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He tore through spacetime repeatedly as he headed back to the Three Realms.

Outside the Three Realms. The white-robed Ning and the black-robed Primaltwin Ning were facing each other. Ning waved his hand, tossing out a mirror. This was an estate-world treasure that held the four Archon-class golems as well as many Emperor-class golems and Sithe disks, as well as other treasures. Ning was leaving them here for the Three Realms. Ning gave the four Archon-class golems permission to wander through the Three Realms. If he was to perish, these four Archon-class golems would serve as a hidden trump card for the Three Realms.

The Three Realms held far too many friends and family who he cared about. His parents and his daughter were incredibly important to Ning. He naturally had to leave some treasures behind in the Three Realms to protect it. Only then would he feel confident in going out adventuring.

“The Azureflower Estate.” Ning stared off into the primordial chaos of the void, his eyes filled with the desire to do battle.

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 23: Returning to the Azureflower Estate**

The Azureflower Estate wasn’t that far away from the Three Realms. Given Ji Ning’s abilities to traverse spacetime, he was able to reach the region of pure emptiness that was outside the Azureflower Estate.

Rumble... an invisible wave of power was fluctuating and sweeping through this area, forcing even the prime essences of the universe to stay away. Ning couldn’t help but feel stunned once again when he beheld this sight. He had seen it before, and he was now much more powerful than before... but he still felt this was utterly inconceivable.

“To be able to permanently repel the prime essences of the Chaosverse...” Ning now was at a much higher level of understanding with regards to the Dao and was beginning to understand: “This sort of ability vastly surpasses anything a Hegemon could possibly accomplish. Most likely, not even Otherverse Lords are capable of it. Could it be that an Autarch created the Azureflower Estate? That means the origins of the Nine Chaos Seals are even more incredible than I believed.”

At the same time, Ning was puzzled. Early on, the Nine Chaos Seals had been tremendously useful to Ning. Now that he was a Daolord of the Fourth Step, his divine power and his Immortal energy had become even purer, as had his azureflower mist energy. However, at the highest levels of cultivation, cultivators primarily relied on their insights into the Dao. By now, the azureflower mist energy was of fairly negligible assistance to him.

So... why did the Autarch create a technique like this, then work to guide cultivators of the technique to this place?

Swoosh. Ning flew through the emptiness of the void at incredible speeds. He passed through it, entering the region of golden mist. Although he still saw deluxe hellgold on his way in, he was now in a much different place financially than before. He had already slaughtered quite a few powerful Emperors; the deluxe hellgold was of no interest to him anymore.

“Here we are.” Ning slowly decelerated before coming to a halt in front of the gates of the towering, ancient estate. The words ‘azure’ ‘flower’ continued to hang right above the gates to the Azureflower Estate, radiating an aura of beautiful sanctity.

“Here I am again.” Ning smiled as he advanced. Ruuuumble. The gates to the ancient estate once more opened by themselves as Ning advanced.

Ning strolled inside. He glanced at the three fruit trees within the estate, then waved his hand and caused his Protector golem, Whitethaw, to appear. Whitethaw’s massive body appeared right next to Ning. The golem called out respectfully, “Master.”

“Stay behind me.” Ning said rather seriously, “This place is probably filled with many dangers.” This was most likely a place which an Autarch had spent time and effort constructing, going so far as to capture a large number of Emperors and bring them here. Clearly, the creator of this place had put much more effort into the Azureflower Estate than Autarch Bolin had into the various beastworlds.

“Understood,” Whitethaw said respectfully.

Ning advanced with Whitethaw watching his back. The two quickly reached that bridge once again.

“Milord Emperors! Long time no see.” Ning smiled as he looked at the two gray-robed elders who were seated facing each other within the grasslands up ahead.

“Eh?” The two gray-robed figures turned to glance at Ning. The blood-eyed elder smirked: “Kid, you came back.”

“That was pretty fast. We barely had time to finish a few games of chess before you came back, my young friend.” The silver-eyed elder was quite courteous.

Ning was speechless. A few games of chess? Fine... for immortal Emperors who were trapped here for all eternity, perhaps he really hadn’t spent much time cultivating.

“The Azureflower Estate has continued to attract my interest. After cultivating for many years, I felt that I was perhaps strong enough to pass its trials, and so I came to give it another try,” Ning said.

“Judging from your aura... you haven’t completed the Daomerge and become an Emperor yet, have you?” the silver-eyed elder asked.

“I have not.” Ning shook his head. Eternal Emperors all had auras that were tinged with the hint of inextinguishable eternity.

“Ugh. I already told you last time, although a few extremely talented Daolords of the Fourth Step might be able to defeat the two of us, things will only become even more dangerous as you advance! If you aren’t careful, you will die. I really urge you to at least complete the Daomerge before you try your luck again.” The silver-eyed elder let out a sigh. “You are being far too rash.”

"I want to give it a try." Ning chuckled. "Maybe I'll succeed. If I don't, I'll come back later."

"Hmph. If you insist on dying... let me see just how strong you have become." The blood-eyed elder walked straight towards Ning as he was saying these words.

"Sure, let's give it a try." Ning walked towards him as well.

"Last time, you were completely unable to resist my power. Quite a few years have gone by since then. I hope I'll be pleasantly surprised by your improvements. Otherwise, this will be boring." A baleful look flickered in the old man's blood-red eyes.

The silver-eyed elder didn't try to stop him this time. As he saw it, Ning should've already learned just how powerful the two of them were from his first visit. Given that the kid was back, the kid was probably was confident in his chances. If the kid still ended up being killed, he'd have no one to blame save his own dumb self.

Ning walked past the bridge and onto the grasslands.

"Go." The blood-eyed elder waved his right sleeve, sending it sweeping through the skies and sending a surge of overwhelming power towards Ning.

Ning responded by casually waving his palm as well. Boom! Ning's palm struck out very casually, but it contained the dominance of his Omega Sword Dao – Heavenbreaker.

Both attacks were extremely dominating in nature, and they came together in a thunderous clash. The blood-eyed elder was instantly sent flying backwards like a streak of light, smashing hard against a distant mountain. The barrier protecting the mountain instantly flickered but was completely undamaged. The blood-eyed elder, however, was 'planted' into the barrier in an extremely ungainly manner. It took him a full second before he landed.

He stared at Ning in disbelief. "Y-you..."

"Ah, a golem body?" Ning nodded slightly. He didn't have any desire to kill these two Emperors at all; they were rather pitiful, after all, having been captured and imprisoned here for so long.

"You were able to reach such a level of power?" The silver-eyed woman walked over as well, stunned.

"I do alright." Ning nodded. These two guardians were significantly weaker than even Ninedust. Ning was able to effortlessly defeat them with just a few punches and kicks.

"You didn't use any treasures. You don't even have glove-type treasures on your hands!" The blood-eyed elder stared at Ning in disbelief. "You were able to crush me with ease using your palms alone. Not even the most powerful supreme Daolords are able to do such a thing. You should be the most powerful Daolord of the current era."

Ning nodded. "I am." But it wasn't just of the 'current era'; he was the most powerful Daolord to have ever existed.

"I'm completely convinced by your power." The blood-eyed elder pointed at the passageway behind him, then said coldly, "Go on inside. The estate is filled with even greater dangers. Beating me doesn't mean you'll necessarily survive them."

“Be careful, my young friend. If you feel that you cannot overcome your foes, you should immediately retreat and flee,” the silver-eyed elder said. “So long as you survive, you’ll have other chances in the future.”

“Understood.” Ning said, “Whitethaw, let’s go.”

“Yes, Master.” The Sithe Protector silently fell in line behind Ning. The blood-eyed elder and the silver-eyed elder watched as the two of them headed into the passageway.

“Do you think the kid will make it?” the blood-eyed elder said softly.

“He’s extraordinarily powerful, even amongst supreme Daolords,” the silver-eyed elder said. “It’ll be extremely hard for him to make it into the depths of the estate... but he should be able to keep himself alive.”

“Hard to say.” The blood-eyed elder smirked. “Overconfidence can easily lead to death.”

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As Ning walked along the passageway, he soon reached a point where he saw an azure stone plaza off in the distance... and in front of the plaza was a giant palace.

The plaza was covered with over a hundred figures who were broken up into groups of two or three. Some were seated, some were facing each other, some were drinking, some were chatting. When Ning and Whitethaw appeared, all of them turned to stare at him. The invisible aura of might emanating from them caused even Ning to tremble. He could instantly tell that these hundred-plus Emperors were all extraordinary figures.

Whoosh. A white-bearded elder suddenly appeared on the stairs before the plaza. The white-bearded elder was dressed in deep blue robes and emanated an aura of ice. He looked at Ning: “I am the spirit of this estate, and have been guarding it on Master’s orders.”

Ning was briefly startled. Still, almost all ‘major powers’, including both weaker ones like Emperor Waveshift as well as supreme ones like Autarch Bolin or the creator of the Azureflower Estate would generally leave behind estate-spirits. This was the best way to ensure that their goals and orders were followed.”

“This estate is protected by three deadly trials, each one deadlier than the last. The one you just passed on the outside was the simplest trial, the first trial,” the white-haired elder said. “If you can pass all three trials, you will encounter no further dangers.”

“According to what Master said, you’ll earn certain things each time you pass a trial.” The white-haired elder tossed out a jade-green leaf towards Ning. “This is a ‘Lifeblood’ Dao-seal; it can revive virtually all Daolords.”

Ning was startled. It seemed as though there were others besides Emperor Maniseal who were capable of creating these types of Dao-seals.

“However... Daolords of the Fourth Step who trained in one of the legendary Omega Daos have completely surpassed all other Daolords and are on a completely different level. A Samsara-class Dao-

seal of this kind is unable to revive them. They must use an Eternal-class 'Lifeblood' Dao-seal if they wish to be revived," the white-bearded elder said.

Ning narrowed his eyes. Omega Dao? The spirit of the Azureflower Estate actually knew of the existence of Omega Daos?

### The Desolate Era

#### **Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 24: Another Daolord**

"This 'Omega Dao'," Ji Ning began to say, but he was interrupted.

"Don't ask any questions. If you pass the second trial, you'll learn about it... and if you fail, you aren't worth of learning about it." The white-bearded elder remained as cold and distant as ever: "You are a Daolord. To pass the second trial, you need merely face and pass through ten of the weakest Emperors here. As long as you can make it to the palace gates up ahead, you'll have passed. Also... your golem is not permitted to interfere. If it does, it'll count as your loss."

Ning nodded slowly. "Understood."

The white-haired old man transformed into an illusory blur, flying across the entire plaza and landing in front of the gates of the palace. There, he watched what would unfold with calmness.

"So these are trials which an Autarch left behind for posterity, eh?" Ning was quite relaxed. It was much like the trials which he himself had set down for those who wished to acquire his legacy. Not just everyone was qualified to receive his techniques; they had to pass very stringent tests. The Autarch must've put quite a bit of effort into constructing this giant Azureflower Estate; it only made sense for him to put down a few trials as well.

Those who were too weak would die. Being able to survive and flee was also a form of strength... but only those who were able to truly pass the trials would earn the rewards which the master of the Azureflower Estate had left behind.

Whoosh. Ning stepped forward, moving up the stairs and towards the plaza with the muscular Whitethaw behind him. Ning instructed, "Whitethaw, you are not to intervene unless directly ordered to."

"Understood," Whitethaw said respectfully.

"So it is a Daolord..." The hundred-plus Emperors in the plaza were clearly a bit disappointed when they saw the white-robed youth stride towards them.

"A mere Daolord. Only ten of us are allowed to fight, and the weakest ten at that." An evil-looking Emperor who had azure eyebrows and emanated the strongest aura out of the group shook his head. "When will an Emperor come? That way, all of us would be allowed to have some fun."

"Booooring."

"We've been here forever, unable to leave this plaza."

“How long will it be before we are granted our release?” The Emperors chatted casually amongst themselves. They had once been filled with rage and venom, as they had been restricted to this plaza for tens of millions of chaos cycles by now... and it was possible that they would be for all of eternity. This sort of loneliness would drive even Eternal Emperors insane. However... time dulls away all things. By now, they were quite relaxed and simply waited silently.

Besides... the master of the Azureflower Estate did arrange for certain conditions by which they could be released.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! The other Emperors continued to chat while ten of their peers flew over at high speed, preventing Ning from advancing.

“Hey kid, don’t blame us if we end up killing you. Everything is as the master of the estate has ordained.” One of the Emperors was a skinny old man with cold eyes, and a deep green mist began to emanate from him as he spoke.

“It has been a long, long time since I’ve seen a Daolord. Let’s not be hasty, gentlemen. Let’s take the fight against this kid slowly. If we move too fast, it’ll be boring. We’ll want to enjoy killing him, slicing him apart one cut at a time. Oh my... I can hardly wait,” a youth with a ruddy face and long, blood-red hair said, his tongue forked like a snake’s.

“Let’s do it.”

“Don’t let him escape. Surround him.” The ten Emperors were all quite evil-looking, and they emanated murderous auras.

The white-robed Ning nodded slowly when he saw this. “Ah. I now understand why the master of the Azureflower Estate captured you and sentenced you here as punishment. If I was the master, I would’ve killed you long ago.”

“Hmph.”

“You? Kill us?”

“Such arrogance.” The ten Emperors were instantly enraged at being criticized by a Daolord in this fashion. They couldn’t help but feel both embarrassed and angered by his words.

“Spirit of the estate.” Ning glanced at the white-robed elder standing in front of the distant palace entrance, then called out: “Can I capture them?” If he was permitted to capture them, it would be up to him if he wanted to kill them or not.

The distant white-robed elder’s voice remained as cold as ever: “If you kill them, I’ll kill you!”

Ning blinked. Moments later, he understood. After the lord of the Azureflower Estate captured these Emperors, he had apparently ‘modified’ them in some way. They weren’t true cultivators any longer; they were more like golems! They had been placed here to test future trial-takers, and Ning was just one of them. If he captured the Emperors, how would those who came after him be tested?

“Haha... if that’s the case, I’ll just wrap it up quickly.” Ning stretched out his hands, causing two of the Darknorth swords to fly out of the sheath on his back and into them.

“Arrogant brat.” The ten Emperors instantly transformed into mist, light, flames, and other things as they started to surround Ning, wanting to ensure that he wouldn’t be able to escape.

Ning casually sauntered forwards, with Whitethaw behind him.

Boom. Boom. Boom. All sorts of various attacks filled the skies as they flew towards Ning. Ning could immediately tell that these ten Emperors were roughly at the supreme Daolord level! Ning couldn’t help but shake his head: “They really are the ten weakest Emperors.”

Ning’s twin swords began to move. Whap! Whap! Whap! Whap! Whap! Whap! The Northbow swords transformed into ferocious streams of water, striking back against the attacks like waves slapping against the shore. The streams of water struck straight upon the bodies of the Emperors, sending them flying backwards like swatted mosquitoes. Even though they had transformed into their invulnerable forms, Ning was able to beat them back into their original forms.

The difference in power was simply too great. Ning was able to crush even Archon Silksnow, who was in turn able to slaughter supreme Daolords with ease. One could imagine how puny these ten Emperors were compared to Ning.

“This Daolord... h-he...”

“Has he succeeded in his Daomerge? But he clearly doesn’t have that whiff of eternity about him.”

The many other Emperors who had been watching from afar were all stunned as well. A Daolord was able to crush ten Emperors like this? How?!

In truth, prior to the trip to Crimsonwave Temple, Ning would at most be able to fight them to a standstill. Now, however, Ning had made breakthroughs in his [Heartsword] art... but even more importantly, he had reached the fourth stage with his Omega Sword Dao. He truly was one of the most supreme powers of this realmverse, and was naturally able to dominate these common Emperors with ease.

The Emperors all stared, stupefied, at Ning as he casually strolled across the plaza and arrived at the entrance to the palace. As for Whitethaw, he continued to walk straight behind Ning with incomparable calmness.

Boom. The white-haired and elderly estate-spirit watched in shock as Ning stretched his hand out and pushed at the palace gates. With a deep booming sound, the giant palace gates swung open.

“You...?” The white-haired elder stared at Ning, rather puzzled.

“Estate-spirit.” Ning looked at the white-haired elder respectfully.

“A tri-force fusion technique?” the white-haired elder murmured softly.

Ning was startled for a moment before realizing that he was referring to the [Heartsword] art.

“Precisely.” Ning nodded.

The [Heartsword] art was a technique which perfectly merged heartforce, divine power, and Immortal energy together. In truth, even if Ning hadn’t made a breakthrough with his Omega Sword Dao, his mastery of the twelfth stance of the [Heartsword] art would’ve still put him on par with Archon

Silksnow. That by itself was enough to effortlessly sweep these Emperors aside. Now that he HAD broken through? He was probably invincible against anyone save for the Hegemons, and of course Daoist Bluestone.

“A tri-force fusion technique...” The white-robed elder’s gaze grew distant. “Heartforce is indeed incredible. Even though the technique which Master created is capable of transforming and merging all types of energy, heartforce is still special and unique. The legends say that if a heartworld can truly reach the apex of power, the treasures formed within it will become real and can be actually used. The heartworld shall become a real world that you can manipulate at will. If someone could reach that level, that person would become truly invincible.”

“The heartworld... a real world?” Ning deeply desired to reach that level, but he knew just how ridiculous and inconceivable it was. It meant that if he imagined a hundred realmships into existence within his heartworld, then a hundred real realmships would be formed. If he willed an army of Black Emperors into existence, all of them would be real as well.

The level of power that would represent...

Yes, from a theoretical standpoint once a heartworld reached the true apex of power, it was possible to manifest real objects within it... but no one had ever been able to accomplish such a thing. The cultivator civilizations had its Autarchs, but there had never been a Heartforce Autarch!

“For you to have mastered a tri-force fusion technique is a sign that you are quite talented.” The white-haired elder nodded slowly. “Since you have passed the second trial, take your second reward.” The old man tossed out a rolled-up jade scroll.

Ning immediately accepted it, then asked, “What is this?”

“You were asking about Omega Daos, yes?” The white-haired elder explained, “This jade scroll was left behind by a truly dazzling Daolord which my master once encountered. He was so unspeakably, monstrously talented that he was able to enhance his Dao of Fire to the absolute apex, and then train to become a Daolord of the Fourth Step with his Omega Fire Dao! Alas, the Daomerge for an Omega Dao is far, far too difficult, far more difficult than for those supreme Daolords who seek to become Hegemons.”

“In the end, that Daolord failed his Daomerge as well. After he failed his Daomerge but before he died, he ran into my master... and he passed down the secrets of his self-created Omega Fire Dao to my master,” the white-haired elder said.

## **[The Desolate Era](#)**

### **Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 25: Knockout**

Ji Ning felt a surge of excitement as he listened. His path was that of an Omega Dao as well, and he had also become a Daolord of the Fourth Step. The next step to take was that of the Daomerge. As Ning knew, for the Daomerge he would need to take every single insight he had ever gained into the first, second, third, and fourth stages of his Omega Sword Dao, and then completely transform them into a truly perfect Eternal Omega Sword Dao.

If he succeeded in the Daomerge, his Omega Sword Dao would become truly perfect to the point where it wouldn't be affected in the slightest by the passage of time. Only a Dao such as this was qualified to be called 'eternal'.

Thus, every single successful Daomerge would result in the new Emperor skyrocketing in power by two full levels! Second-tier Daolords would be catapulted to the Archon level of power, while supreme Daolords would rise straight to the Hegemon level of power!

There would be a similarly incredible rise in power for a successful Daomerge with the Omega Sword Dao... and the increase would be due to the power of a Dao that was truly eternal! Thus, what Ning needed to do was to create an Eternal Omega Sword Dao... and that was going to be indescribably difficult.

"That fellow Daoist died. Will I be able to succeed?" Ning asked himself. He wasn't sure of what the answer would be.

"Omega Daos are extraordinary and unfathomable. They are truly above all other Daos and are the ultimate Daos." The white-bearded elder looked at Ning. "You might not train in the Dao of Fire, but you can still study this Omega Dao. It might help inspire you and be of use to you, increasing your own chances at the Daomerge dramatically."

Ning clenched the jade scroll, sending his godsense into it. There were certain barriers within it, forcing him to swear a lifeblood oath not to transmit it to others in order to study it.

Ning immediately swore the oath. Instantly, a large amount of information flooded into his mind as the jade scroll in Ning's hands transformed into bits of dust.

It was unspeakably profound. This was the Dao of Fire, but visualized to the utmost apex. It included every single type of fire possible, including blazing flames, icy flames, negative-energy flames, explosive flames... all types of flames could be controlled by it.

The Daolord who created this 'Omega Fire Dao' was capable of releasing flames that were truly terrifying.

"He truly was the embodiment of fire, the master of all flames," Ning sighed in amazement. It made sense. When he created his Omega Sword Dao, there was an instant resonance with the prime essence of the sword. In that instant, he immediately understood that he was now the master of the Dao of the Sword. As for the deceased creator of the Omega Fire Dao, he was most likely the master of the Dao of Fire.

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When the white-haired elder saw Ning open his eyes, the elder said in a icy voice, "You have already passed the first two trials. Only one more remains before you, and if you can survive it you won't face any more danger. In addition... you will earn something which is far more valuable than even the Omega Dao you were just shown!"

"Far more valuable?" Ning's eyes lit up. Something that was far more valuable than an Omega Dao... what could it be? What had the master of the Azureflower Estate prepared?

“This reward will naturally be the most valuable thing within the entire estate. My master would’ve have wasted all this time and effort for just the Omega Dao of a single Daolord of the Fourth Step,” the white-haired elder said coldly. “However... not just anyone is worthy of the true treasure. You must pass the third trial first. If you die in the attempt, you can only blame yourself and your own uselessness. Alright. Time to go in.”

“Alright.” Ning nodded, then stepped into the palace.

From the outside, the palace had been blocked by an invisible screen of energy that prevented him from seeing anything inside it. As soon as he stepped inside, everything became clearly visible. He saw that the great palace had a total of sixteen giant golden pillars within it, with a royal throne located at the highest part of the palace.

Ning turned his gaze to glance at the two figures seated in the lotus position at the edges of the palace. One figure was a figure dressed in long violet robes and who emanated an aura of incredible power that was comparable to that of Hegemon Brightshore or Hegemon Windrain! The other had a significantly weaker aura and was dressed in black robes. He was thin and had long, slender eyes that were brimming with cold malice.

“Hm?” The two figures simultaneously opened their eyes.

“A Daolord?” The violet-robed man glanced sideways. “How boring. It is time for you to go to work, disciple.”

“Don’t worry, Master.” The skinny black-robed man narrowed his eyes as he looked at Ning, cold malice flashing within them. “I’ll definitely take ‘good care’ of this young Daolord.”

Ning frowned slightly. He could sense that the black-robed man was brimming with murderous intentions.

The white-haired old man had walked in alongside Ning. The old man now said in a cold voice, “You are a Daolord, and so your opponent shall be someone who has reached a level of power comparable to the Archon-level Eternal Emperors of your Flamedragon Realmverse! All you need to do is defeat him by knocking him out of the palace, and you’ll have succeeded.”

“Knock an Archon out of the palace?” Ning was rather surprised. This trial wasn’t too hard for him, but it was almost impossibly hard for a Daolord.

“Do you feel this is difficult?” The white-haired elder said coldly, “If you were an Emperor, you would have to defeat the Hegemon and knock the Hegemon out of the palace in order to win. These two, master and disciple, are limited in their movements because they aren’t able to leave the palace. If you can force them out, then the formations will activate and slay them.”

“So you are telling me that if I succeed in passing through the third stage, the guardian will definitely die.” Ning was secretly stunned at how ruthless the master of the Azureflower Estate was. If Ning was an Emperor, he would’ve had to defeat the Hegemon by knocking the Hegemon out of the palace? Not even a true Hegemon would necessarily be able to succeed! Only one of the more elite Hegemons would be able to accomplish it. The Flamedragon Realmverse only had three Hegemons to begin with!

As for a Daolord capable of knocking out an Archon of the Sacred Cities? That meant the Archon had to either train in an Omega Dao or have reached an extremely high level in a technique similar to the [Heartsword] art. Only then would they be capable of such ludicrous levels of power. How many monstrous Daolords of that level had the Flamedragon Realmverse ever even given birth to?

“This trial is ridiculous,” Ning muttered silently to himself.

“If you aren’t a truly peerless and dazzling figure, you are not worthy of challenging the third trial. Not even average Hegemons are worthy,” the white-haired elder said coldly. “Alright. Time to begin.”

“Heh heh heh...” The black-robed man slowly sauntered forwards, not disguising his murderous intent in the slightest as he let out an odd laugh. “Daolord boy, if you must blame someone, blame the master of this estate for his callousness. I once enjoyed a wonderful, carefree life roaming through the outside world, killing whoever I pleased. No one dared to stand in my way! Now, I’ve been forced to stay within this estate forever... but don’t worry. I won’t kill you too quickly. I’ll let you die a slow, agonizing death. I’ll take my time enjoying a delicate little morsel like yourself.” The black-robed man’s eyes were filled with excitement.

Ning stretched out both hands, causing two Northbow swords to fly out of the sheath and into his grasp. He was an incredibly talented Daolord who had reached the fourth stage of his Omega Sword Dao, and he also had his [Heartsword] art. Even if he had to fight the Hegemon, Ning was certain he would be able to leave this place safely.

“Kill.” The black-robed man made his move. Whoosh! A long black serpentine shadow appeared in the skies, moving with ghostly speed as it instantly charged towards Ning.

Boom! Ning casually tossed out one of his swords. Sword-light flew outwards like a surging tsunami, slamming into the black serpentine shadow with overwhelming and crushing power. The shadow was instantly destroyed, revealing the figure of the black-robed man within it. The man was wielding a long saber in a two-handed grip, and the blow smashed him into the ground with a loud boom.

The earth trembled violently. Only after a moment passed was the black-robed man able to rise to his feet.

“Another golem-body?” Ning shook his head. His opponent was no longer a true cultivator.

“Y-you...” The black-robed man stared at Ning in shock.

Boom! Boom! Ning continued to swing his Darknorth swords, sending one blow after another towards his opponent. His opponent wasn’t able to dodge the attacks at all and was sent flying repeatedly by Ning! After a mere five strikes, Ning was able to send his foe flying out of the palace gates.

“No...!” The black-robed man let out a terrified scream. The power of Ning’s strike was simply too great, and he was sent flying backwards while completely unable to control his body.

In the instant that he flew out of the palace gates, a blurry golden light suddenly appeared at the gates and brushed past his body. The black-robed man’s aura instantly vanished, his body separating into multiple different components that were whisked away by the golden light, which they vanished as well.

“He died.” The violet-robed Hegemon within the hall watched as his disciple died, a hint of sorrow in his eyes.

He had once been an exalted Hegemon, a man of great glory and honor. He had an entire host of Emperors serving him, and no one had ever dared to oppose him!

But then the master of the estate had shown up. The Hegemon had been captured with nothing more than the wave of a hand. It was as easy as capturing a little baby chicken! He and his disciple had then been transformed into golem-like creatures who would forever stay here and obey the orders they had been given. Now, his disciple had died... and even the final remnants of his soul and truesoul had vanished.

“When will it become my turn?” the violet-robed Hegemon mused. A fierce light flashed through his eyes. “I won’t make it easy. I’m a Hegemon, and I’ve been training here for many years. I’m much more powerful now than when I was first captured. And... the master of the estate promised that I would have a chance to regain my freedom in the future.” The violet-robed man looked at the distant white-robed Ning. “Given how powerful this Daolord is... perhaps he is the hope which was promised to all of us captured Emperors?”

Ning had easily passed through all three trials. This stunned the white-robed elder.

“I passed the third trial, right?” Ning glanced at the white-robed elder.

“You passed.” The white-robed elder nodded. “Follow me, then.”

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 26: As Vast as the Sea**

The white-haired elder led the way as Ji Ning and Whitethaw followed from behind.

“Put away your golem. There will no longer be any danger here,” the white-haired elder instructed.

“Yes, senior.” Ning waved his hand, putting away the Protector golem. This trip to the Azureflower Estate had been much smoother than he had anticipated... but when he thought about it, it made sense. The master of the estate had left behind two levels of challenges; one was meant for Daolords, the other was meant for Emperors. The Daolord-level trials had already been quite ridiculous; if Ning hadn’t mastered the [Heartsword] art, even the fourth stage of the Omega Sword Dao wouldn’t have been enough for him to win with ease.

The white-haired elder led the way until they reached a great palace. Boom! The palace walls parted before them, revealing a doorway. They entered through this side passageway and quickly reached a private, quiet hall.

“What is this place?” Ning looked about, rather stunned. This giant hall was filled with enormous bookshelves which leaned against the walls. Every single bookshelf was at least thirty kilometers long, and there were hundreds of layers for each one. Every single layer was filled with jade slips, and they truly were numerous beyond measure. Ning could see no end of them!

Ning was rather dazed. Just a cursory scan indicated that there had to be over a hundred billion scrolls here... and that was just a rough estimate! This was a staggering, unheard-of figure.

“These are all of the more powerful techniques which my master acquired after scouring virtually the entire Chaosverse.” The white-haired elder had a rather complex look in his eyes as he continued slowly, “It doesn’t just have cultivator techniques, it also has Sithe techniques. Master collected and modified them all, making them suitable for us cultivators to use.”

“In other words... this place holds all of the countless elite techniques which were created by the cultivator civilizations and the Sithe civilization.” The white-haired elder looked at Ning. “What you need to do... is to read through all of them.”

“All cultivator civilizations? The entire Sithe civilization?” No matter how steady Ning normally was, he couldn’t help but begin to tremble inside. This was simply inconceivable.

In his original planet of ‘Earth’ in the Three Realms, there was a saying: ‘After you read over ten thousand books, you can write like a god.’ The creation of every single technique represented the accumulated wisdom and insight of one particular cultivator! The reason why Ning was able to become a Daolord of the Fourth Step was in large part due to Ning having the chance to inspect the three hundred-plus Hegemonic legacies which Autarch Bolin had left behind within that special region. They had been incredibly important, as they had broadened Ning’s horizons and let him gain many new insights and epiphanies.

And now?

The fruits of all cultivator civilizations were before him. Even the techniques belonging to the Sithe had been modified and retrofitted so that cultivators could make use of them. Countless techniques were gathered here. Their value was truly incalculable! They would be of far more help to him in understanding the Dao than any other treasure. This library was far more valuable than the Voidsea Jadeseal had been; even a Hegemon would go crazy for a chance like this!

“He scoured virtually the entire Chaosverse for these techniques, and even overhauled the techniques of the Sithe civilization...” Ning murmured softly. “Senior, can you please tell me who the master of this estate was?”

“My master didn’t plan to accept any disciples,” the white-haired elder said. “This is nothing more than the inheritance he has entrusted to later generations. Since you have passed his trials, you are deserving of what is here.”

“Inheritance?” Ning narrowed his eyes.

“Your guess is correct. Master is dead.” The white-haired elder glanced at the countless jade scrolls. His face was still cold and calm, but his gaze was rather distant and his voice very soft.

“Dead?” Ning could hardly believe this. “H-he... did he die in battle against the Sithe?”

“Hmph. You overestimate their abilities.” The white-haired elder laughed coldly. “The cultivator civilizations ended up winning our great war against the Sithe! But even if we lost the battle, as an Autarch my master would never have died to them.”

“Then how is it that he died?” Ning truly couldn’t believe it. An Autarch, someone who stood at the very apex of all cultivator civilizations, had somehow died?

“It was a form of suicide.” The white-haired elder shook his head. “Enough questions.”

Ning was rather dazed. A form of suicide? Autarchs had to have incredible Dao-hearts; how could one possibly choose to commit suicide? But then, Ning quickly understood. A ‘form of suicide’... that meant it wasn’t true suicide! Otherwise, why would the estate-spirit add the qualifier ‘a form of’? However, since the estate-spirit didn’t wish to speak further, Ning no longer pursued this line of questioning.

“Senior, you tell this junior who the master of this estate was? Given the grace he has shown to me, I simply must know his name,” Ning said.

“My master’s Daoist title was simply ‘Awakener’. He was referred to as Autarch Awakener.” The white-robed elder’s eyes shone with light.

Ning immediately turned and knelt down towards the countless jade slips in front of him as though he was facing his master. “This junior is named Darknorth. Senior, although you are not my master in title, you are my master in practice! This junior shall forever remember the benevolence you have shown me.” Ning then kowtowed nine times solemnly, wishing to express the gratitude and excitement he felt. Ning then rose to his feet.

“You are quite conscientious.” The white-robed elder nodded slowly when he saw this. “The benevolence Master has shown you vastly surpasses that which most teachers show their students. Not even most of Master’s actual students were permitted to see this techniques; only two were granted access.”

“Mm.” Ning nodded and then asked curiously, “Are you saying that Sithe techniques are not appropriate for us cultivators to train in? They have to be retrofitted first?”

“There are certain fundamental differences between us and the Sithe,” the white-haired elder said. “We are simply completely different on the most basic of levels. They were a different type of lifeform, a very unique type of lifeform, and they had a civilization and culture which belonged to them and them alone! We are not able to use the majority of their techniques, with just a few minor tricks available to us.”

Ning nodded.

“Enough. Go ahead and read through these first,” the white-haired elder instructed. “Also – before doing that, go ahead and swear an oath that you will not transmit anything you see here.”

Ning nodded. The lord of the Azureflower Estate, Autarch Awakener, hadn’t even permitted most of his personal disciples to view this place. Ning was lucky to even have a chance to read in this place; how could he possibly be permitted to transmit these techniques as he pleased? It had taken even Autarch Awakener an incredible amount of blood, sweat, and effort to accumulate all these techniques.

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And so, Ning began a new life devoted to reading. He buried himself in the countless jade slips while surrounded by a field of accelerated time that was a hundred times faster than normal time. He memorized one jade slip after another.

This truly was a sea of techniques, and they came from different races, different realmverses, and different otherverses. They represented the accumulated wisdom of countless mighty cultivators, and Ning's horizons were truly broadened. In fact, he was beginning to rapidly gain tremendous amounts of insight into the other Daos he was fairly skilled in, such as the Dao of Water and the Dao of Lightning! He was even gaining more insights into the [Omega Sword Dao] and the [Heartsword] art, both of which had already reached incredible heights.

The reading alone was enough to help him upgrade his insights. This was because he was reading and absorbing the accumulated wisdom of countless cultivators.

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Ning began to feel himself change and transform as he subsumed himself within this sea of techniques. A new foundation was being established. Reading and memorizing all of these countless techniques was a way for him to dramatically expand his foundation of understanding! Right now, he had merely done some cursory reading; later on, he would train in each technique in detail. He would improve even more then! These countless techniques represented an inconceivable treasure in terms of cultivating the Dao. This was why Ning hadn't hesitated at all in kneeling down and kowtowing as though he was in front of his master. He truly felt grateful.

For the first time... Ning began to feel that he had a chance at succeeding in the Daomerge.

By now, Ning was incredibly powerful and was able to read incredibly fast. It took him merely 130 million years to completely read through everything once. But of course, if one factored in the usage of temporal acceleration then Ning had actually spent over 13 billion years reading.

"I'm done reading." Ning put down the final jade slip. His very aura itself had begun to change a bit. He had become more reserved and more ordinary-looking.

Over the course of reading for the past millions of years, Ning felt as though he had gained a picture of all cultivator civilizations as well as the entire Siche civilization. He had bathed in the accumulated wisdom of two entire civilizations, and he no longer felt the slightest bit of pride in himself. So what if he had developed an Omega Dao? What was so pride-worthy about that? He was nothing more than someone who, prior to becoming a Samsara Daolord, had a few special ideas and encountered enough fortunate experiences that he was able to embark upon the path of the Omega Dao.

The Hegemons weren't necessarily less talented than him, just not as lucky... and the likes of Emperor Heartsword, who had developed the [Heartsword] art, was also a freakishly talented figure.

The cultivator civilizations, as a whole, had far too many incredibly talented figures.

"Done reading?" The white-robed elder's voice rang out.

Ning raised his head to look at the elder, then nodded. "I'm done reading. I feel as though the pride I felt previously was absolutely laughable."

"In the great sea of the various cultivator civilizations, only Autarchs are truly supreme and transcendent. All others are quite common and ordinary." The white-robed elder waved a finger, causing countless streams of light to appear midair within the palace. The light surged forward and

opened a door which led to a hidden dimension... and from that hidden dimension flew out a series of jade slips as well as a single dazzling and eye-catching godsense crystal.

This godsense crystal was far more dazzling than any gemstone. It caused even Ning's heart to shudder.

"Here are eleven scrolls of Omega Daos as well as my master's own Dao," the white-haired elder said.

### The Desolate Era

#### **Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 27: The Second Palace**

Ji Ning was stunned. A godsense legacy... and ten scrolls filled with Omega Daos? The master of the Azureflower Estate, Autarch Awakener, didn't have a master-disciple relationship with Ning, but in truth he had done far more for Ning than any ordinary master would.

"These eleven scrolls of Omega Daos represent eleven absolutely dazzlingly Daolords," the white-haired elder said. "All of them trained to become Daolords of the Fourth Step... but unfortunately, they all failed in the Daomerge. Despite that they left behind their Daos to posterity. Factor in the first one you received earlier, and you have won for yourself a total of twelve Omega Dao scrolls. These are all of the Omega Dao techniques which my master has collected."

"They all failed in their Daomerge?" Ning felt a tremendous sense of pressure.

"If my guess is correct... your path should be that of the Omega Dao as well." The white-haired elder looked at Ning, who nodded. Given how easily Ning had knocked the Archon-level guardian out of the palace, the white-haired elder had quickly come to this conclusion.

"The Daomerge for any Omega Dao is extremely, extremely difficult," the white-haired elder said.

"Anyone who succeeds in the Daomerge for an Omega Dao would gain inconceivable power, after all. It only makes sense that its Daomerge is incredibly difficult."

Ning nodded in understanding. Samsara Daolords all chose different Daos. It was much like constructing a building. Ordinary Daolords who walked ordinary Daos merely had to build a thatched cottage! Even if they succeeded in the Daomerge, they would always remain within that cottage. They would be correspondingly weak.

The Omega Dao, however, required the construction of a giant palace that was tens of thousands of meters tall! That meant it needed a far more stable foundation... and even if the cultivator failed the Daomerge, he would still be able to easily dominate those weaker Emperors.

To become a Daolord of the Fourth Step meant that all of the basic preparations had been completed. One could attempt the Daomerge at any time. If you failed the Daomerge, your palace would begin to crumble. If you succeeded, it would be completed and eternal.

But of course, this was just a metaphor. To master an Eternal Omega Sword Dao was far more complex than creating any so-called palace.

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Ning fully mastered all eleven scrolls of the Omega Dao, then accepted the crystal of godsense.

Whoosh. The godsense surged into his body, causing an awesome scene to appear within his mind.

A graceful youth dressed in a white robe with blue trims appeared in Ning's mind. The youth looked ordinary at first, but the more one stared at him the more one would feel that he was deadly attractive. After becoming an Autarch, every single inch of his body had become naturally filled with the unspeakable aroma of the Dao! This sort of Dao-aroma would naturally generate feelings of irresistible attraction to weaker cultivators.

The graceful youth was standing within an ordinary-looking study, teaching a group of children. Ning had become one of the children as well, and he listened obediently as the young Awakener taught him.

Soon, the image changed to become that of an army camp. A military officer was drilling his soldiers with the spear. The military officer was the graceful youth, while Ning had become one of the soldiers.

Then, the scene transformed to become a barbarian tribe. The witch-doctor who led this tribe was teaching the young tribesmen, with Ning one of the tribesmen and the graceful youth the witch-doctor.

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One scene after another played out. They all seemed ordinary, but they carried an ineffable, indescribable aura to them. Time flowed on for what felt like a trillion years. Ning started as a mortal, became a cultivator, and now was a Hegemon.

The graceful youth stood there in the void, a group of cultivators standing behind him. All of their auras were at the Hegemonic level, with Ning amongst them.

Whoosh. The graceful youth waved his sleeves, sending an ordinary-looking gust of wind towards Ning and the other cultivators. However the power of this gentle wind suddenly skyrocketed to become a billion times more powerful. The wind instantly reached an absolutely inconceivable level of power, instantly annihilating Ning and the other cultivators. However, Ning and the others then reappeared once more.

"This is my Dao. All of you have seen what there is to see. You may leave, now. Shoo." The graceful youth smiled as he waved gently at the group.

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Ning suddenly came back to his senses.

"You woke up?" The white-haired elder looked at Ning.

"I'm up," Ning said. "I feel as though a trillion years have gone by... but I can sense from the local spacetime that only a day has actually gone past."

Ning felt indescribable emotions in his heart. In the process of accepting the legacy, he had been 'trained' from a child to the point of becoming a Hegemon. Autarch Awakener had indeed displayed his Dao... but he had done so through countless demonstrations over the course of what felt like trillions of years. Ning felt a strong sense of attachment to him, as though the Autarch truly was his master and elder. When he thought of how Autarch Awakener had already perished, Ning felt a sense of sorrow in his heart.

"You've already viewed everything there is to view in the first palace. You can now enter the second palace, which is the final palace," the white-haired elder said.

“The second palace?” Ning was startled. The first palace already contained the countless techniques which belonged to the cultivator civilizations, and even included countless retrofitted Sithe techniques. It even held Omega Daos and Autarch Awakener’s own Dao! What could the second palace possibly hold?

“Follow me.” The white-haired elder walked forwards.

“Yes.” Ning followed from behind. They walked to the end of this palace hall, where a passageway appeared in the walls. They entered the passageway, arriving at a second hall.

Ning could see that the second hall was clearly much smaller, roughly three hundred meters in size! It was laid out in accordance with the principles of the Eight Trigrams, and the four walls were filled with bookshelves and jade scrolls. However, the jade scrolls here numbered in the tens of thousands at most. There truly were far fewer here than in the previous hall.

“Are there even better techniques here?” Ning was puzzled.

“You’ve already seen all of the techniques of two different types of civilizations. What ‘better techniques’ are you expecting?” The white-haired elder gave Ning a glance.

“Then these jade scrolls...?” Ning stared at the surrounding area.

“You’ll know soon enough.” The white-haired elder pointed at the very center of the second hall, at the center of the Eight Trigrams. As he pointed, the ground in the center began to bulge upwards, transforming into a stone dais that was shaped like the Eight Trigrams and clearly meant for use as a meditation mat. The stone dais was black with a few specks of white light glowing on its surface. “Sit there.”

Ning didn’t hesitate. Given how might Autarch Awakener was and how powerful the wards within the Azureflower Estate were, it would be easy for the estate-spirit to kill him. Hell, even Hegemons would be slain with ease. Ning didn’t worry about any tricks or traps at all.

Ning walked over, then sat down in the lotus position atop the stone dais.

Whoosh. A bone-chilling cold instantly pervaded his entire body. Ning shivered. He could sense that the speed at which his truesoul ‘thought’ had just skyrocketed. He was now able to think unfathomably faster than before.

“My master spent untold amounts of effort to construct this Azureflower Estate... and its heart is this stone dais,” the white-haired elder said as he pointed at the stone dais. “The countless formations in this estate have pooled their power within it, ensuring that it has an absolutely incredible supportive effect! Sitting on it is akin to being in a prajna-state of constant epiphany.”

Ning nodded. When he sat atop this stone dais, the effect was indeed much stronger than that of the Stone Censer of Reunion. Ning couldn’t help but lower his head to look at the stone dais. This was simply too incredible and marvelous. With this stone dais, he would be able to cultivate the Dao much more quickly than before. Most likely, even his chances at the Daomerge would be improved by a bit.

“My master originally constructed this stone dais for himself. He spent his time cultivating atop it, and he paid an absolutely astronomical price to create it. Now, he has left it to those who are linked to this

place by karma and destiny.” The white-haired elder watched as Ning excitedly lowered his head and gently stroked the stone dais, then continued; “Now that you have passed the trials, you can come use this stone dais for as long as you are alive. I suspect that it is highly unlikely a second destined person will make it here in the next 108,000 chaos cycles.”

Ning nodded excitedly. This was definitely a truly supreme and peerless treasure.

“Calm down first. Once you’ve completely calmed down, I’ll talk to you about something else,” the white-haired elder said.

“Alright.” Ning could sense that his heart was still trembling. He had first viewed the countless techniques belonging to two different types of civilizations, then discovered this stone dais which vastly surpassed the Stone Censer of Reunion. Ning naturally was in a state of shock!

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A long while later, Ning finally began to calm down. He looked at the white-haired elder, his heart tranquil.

“Now that you are calmer, I’ll explain.” The white-robed elder said, “The reason why my master left behind so many arrangements and even permitted you to view all of these techniques... is because of a final, dying wish he had.”

“A final wish?” Ning was stunned.

“Yes.” The white-robed elder nodded. “You should have already trained in the ‘Ninespace’ technique, yes?”

“The ‘Ninespace’ technique?” Ning was startled.

“Those Nine Chaos Seals,” the white-haired elder explained. “My master created the Nine Chaos Seals. They allow you to establish a brand new space within your sea of consciousness where an azure flower will bloom. This is the ‘ninespace’ region. It can convert Immortal energy, divine power, heartforce, and all other types of energy into a single mist-like form of energy. Of all the techniques which my master created in the countless years after he reached Autarchy, this is his proudest... but also his greatest regret. Even when he died, he still felt regret over this technique.”

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 36: Daolord of the Fourth Step Chapter 28: Creating Ten Techniques**

“His greatest regret?” Ji Ning was rather puzzled. The Nine Chaos Seals were indeed quite marvelous. They were capable of transforming his heartforce, his divine power, his Immortal energy, and even the chaos energy of the outside world. It made the energy inside his body far more pure, and was extremely nourishing to the soul and truesoul. Wasn’t it perfect?

“Yes... his greatest regret. Master had always felt regret over this technique and was unhappy with it,” the white-haired elder said with a nod. “The ‘Ninespace’ technique has many inherent flaws. For example, one can only master it before reaching the World level! Otherwise, there will be no way to

establish the ninespace region within the sea of consciousness. For another example, there's no way the mist-energy can leave the body."

Ning nodded. This was true, and the reason why in the past he had always relied on close combat. However, the more powerful one became, the more important one's mastery over the Dao would be. By now, the additional strength granted to him by the azureflower mist energy was negligible.

"But these are all small flaws. If Master spent a bit more effort, he would be able to perfect them," the white-haired elder said. "The fatal flaw to this technique... is that the ninespace region is at most able to convert the power of Samsara Daolords! The divine power, heartforce, and Immortal energy of Eternal Emperors cannot be converted at all."

Ning was stunned. "Eternal-level energies cannot be converted?"

"Right. Thus, this technique is only useful to cultivators below the Eternal Emperor level." The white-haired elder shook his head and sighed. "My master's original plan was to create a total of twelve of those chaos seals! Not only would this technique be able to convert the energies of Eternal Emperors... it would even be able to convert the energies of Autarchs! Only then would this technique be considered perfect. If it could convert an Autarch's energy, it would be of huge benefit to even the Autarchs!"

Ning could only nod. He didn't really understand what Autarchs were truly capable of, but being able to convert their energies had to be quite helpful.

"The reason why my master created this technique was because the Sithe race relied upon a source of energy that was very pure and similar to this mist energy," the white-haired elder said. "Every member of the Sithe race, from the weakest to the strongest, all used something akin to your mist-energy."

"Ah?!" Ning was stunned. "They don't use divine power or Immortal energy?"

"They do not." The white-haired elder shook his head. "Their energy source can be used the same way as divine power or Immortal energy is used, but is even more powerful. Why would they need divine power or Immortal energy?"

Ning was truly stunned now. It seemed as though the Sithe truly were fundamentally different from cultivators; even their techniques were completely different! Perhaps there were just a few simple techniques like the [Daoheart] or the [Vitalis] arts which both sides could use. This was the reason why Emperor Waveshift had moved Crimsonwave Temple to his home without destroying the [Daoheart] or [Vitalis] techniques.

"To create an entirely new system of cultivation is unspeakably difficult. Master labored by himself for untold aeons to find a way to merge divine power, Immortal energy, heartforce, and all other types of energy into this mist energy," the white-haired elder said. "This was Master's greatest goal, and he poured all of his effort into it."

"He scoured the cultivator civilizations for techniques, and even retrofitted countless Sithe techniques for us to use... but his true goal was still to create the Nine Chaos Seals." The white-haired elder looked at Ning. "Master is dead now, and his dying regret was this technique. Thus, he hopes that his

successors will be able to create a tenth chaos seal... and perhaps help him realize his hypothesized eleventh and twelfth chaos seals.”

Ning nodded slowly. He couldn't help but ask, “If even the Autarch failed, how could we successors possibly succeed?”

“Do not underestimate any cultivator. Master was able to become an Autarch due to his talent, but also due to the countless strokes of good fortune he encountered. You juniors aren't necessarily less talented than my master... and in fact, you yourself were able to develop an Omega Sword Dao at the Samsara Daolord level. When my master was a Samsara Daolord, he wasn't even close to being a match for you,” the white-haired elder said. “There are some things which you can do which my master might not be able to.”

Ning was enlightened. Indeed, every single extremely talented cultivator had their own experiences and insights, and they would create techniques with those different thoughts in mind. Autarch Awakener had failed, but that didn't mean that all cultivators would fail.

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“Master once lived here for many years, coming up with all sorts of techniques.” The white-haired elder pointed at the stacks of jade scrolls. “These are the various cultivation techniques which Master collected. They include many techniques meant for mortals. These are meant for ‘Foundation’, ‘Golden Core’, and ‘Nascent Soul’ cultivators... those over there are meant for the ‘Yin God’, ‘Thunder Tribulation’, and ‘Yang God’ cultivators... and those are meant for ‘Core Formation’, ‘Nine Cycles’, and ‘Truth’ level cultivators. All sorts of cultivation techniques are here, and they represent different paths of cultivation. However, everything eventually points towards the path of divine power and Immortal energy.”

“Master's original plan was to create a completely new system of cultivation from scratch, but it was simply too difficult. Thus, in the end he developed the Nine Chaos Seals instead. These jade scrolls include many of Master's thoughts about creating new techniques as well as other avenues he had considered.”

Ning stared at the tens of thousands of jade scrolls on the bookshelves around him. He couldn't help but imagine how Autarch Awakener had once sat on the stone dais, meditating on how to create better techniques.

He was an exalted Autarch... and his dying regret was this technique? Ning couldn't help but sigh emotion. However, it made sense. As an Autarch, Awakener had been completely and truly invincible. He was able to create even alternate universes with ease. Autarch Bolin had created the Aeonian race! As for Autarch Awakener, he had poured his efforts into creating a technique that could convert Autarch-level energies. Alas, the Autarchs had to be incredibly lonely; to be invincible truly did mean to be lonely.

“As a Daolord who was able to pass the trials, you are a truly dazzling figure amongst your peers.” The white-haired elder looked at Ning. “I hope you can help my master accomplish his greatest dream.”

“I won't ask much of you. If you can create a tenth chaos seal, that'll be enough,” the white-haired elder said.

Ning nodded. Ning was in a state of constant epiphany thanks to being seated on the state dais, and countless insights were flashing through his mind. However, the more he thought about the Nine Chaos Seals, the more unfathomable and marvelous he found it to be. Ning couldn't help but feel a sense of true veneration. Anyone capable of creating such a technique was truly inconceivable... how was he supposed to make a further improvement to it?

Ning pondered there for many hours, then finally spoke: "It's too hard."

"Haha, of course it is hard! Master spent countless hours working on it to no avail. How could it be so easily accomplished?" The white-haired elder continued, "That is why master left a treasure behind to help you."

Ning listened attentively.

"However... prior to me giving it to you, you must create ten different techniques!" the white-haired elder said. "As you are a Daolord... the complexity and profundity of every single technique must reach the Archon level."

"Ten different techniques, each of which must be at the Archon level?!" Ning was flabbergasted.

"Right!" The white-haired elder nodded. "As a Daolord, if you can create ten different Archon-level techniques, it will be considered proof that you are quite talented when it comes to creating new techniques. In that case, I can give you the other treasure which Master left behind, and it will be of great use to you."

"I need to create ten techniques for just one treasure?" Ning felt as though Autarch Awakener's requirements were far too high. "But creating a tenth chaos seal to add onto the original Nine Chaos Seals will be of no use to me." Ning shook his head.

The tenth chaos seal would allow Eternal Emperors to convert their energies... but the greatest problem facing Ning right now was the Daomerge!

"This treasure is an extremely valuable one. It is of great use to cultivators, especially those facing the Daomerge like yourself." The white-haired elder added mysteriously, "Even the Autarch was extremely reluctant to part with it, which is why he insisted that you create ten techniques to prove your worth. Only then will he give you the treasure. Otherwise, it would be wasted on you. My master isn't going to waste his resources like that."

"It is of great use to those facing the Daomerge?" Ning's eyes lit up.

"Right." The white-haired elder laughed. He knew that this was what intrigued Daolords the most. Every single Daolord was unable to resist the allure of something which would aid them in the Daomerge.

"It is ranked number one in the entire Chaosverse with regards to help cultivators cultivate... and that naturally extends to the Daomerge as well," the white-haired elder said.

"It is ranked number one? What about the Voidsea Jadeseal?" Ning asked.

"I've heard of those things. They can only be created by Emperors who are extremely talented in the Dao of Numerancy, but they are of no use to cultivators like yourself, because you train in the Omega Sword Dao. Right?" The white-haired man continued, "No number of Voidsea Jadeseals would be of as

much use to you as this treasure. However, you have to first prove yourself in terms of your skill in creating techniques before I'll give it to you."

"Ten techniques, all Archon-level?" Ning nodded. "Fine, then. I'll create ten techniques."

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And so, Ning began to create new techniques all by his lonesome within the Azureflower Estate just outside the Three Realms.

He had already reached the fourth stage with his [Omega Sword Dao], and so it counted as his first Archon-level technique.

His [Heartforce Eradicator] technique was also extremely powerful and at the Archon level in might, but its underlying mysteries were based on the Omega Sword Dao and so it did not count. The [Dreamstar] art, however, was a type of illusory art which was merely at the supreme Daolord level. It was far too weak; it didn't count.

Thus... at present Ning had only created a single Archon-level technique, the [Omega Sword Dao]. He needed to create nine more before he would be acknowledged as a gifted technique-creator by the spirit of the estate.

Luckily, Ning had been given the chance to see countless techniques which had been created by the cultivators as well as the Sithe, and was seated atop that stone dais. He was constantly in a prajna-state, and so he began to focus on his meditations. His first goal was to perfect his [Dreamstar] art, as it had already reached the supreme Daolord level. He only needed to upgrade it by one full level and it would be at the Archon level of power.