

Desolate 1381

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Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 12: Grand Dimensional Formation

Ji Ning waved a finger from afar. Rumble... Ning's Sword Dao Domain actually forcibly excavated the entire prison beneath the palace, causing it fly outwards before settling upon the ground with a boom. The prison cages all shattered apart, revealing the imprisoned Daolords who were inside, all of whom looked to be in terrible shape.

The largest cell had been used to imprison a black-haired man who had a single horn on his head. His hair was tousled, and his entire body was covered with a spiderweb of countless scars.

The black-haired man raised his head and stared towards Ning. His gaze was cold and resolute, as though nothing could shake his will at all.

"Eh?" A puzzled look appeared in his eyes. "The Paragon of Pills? Hegemon Tia?" the black-haired man said in a low, hoarse voice. He recognized these two 'madwomen' who often visited the Sithelands.

"Brother Flameleft?" Hegemon Tia was startled.

"Flameleft, you are still alive?!" The Paragon of Pills was shocked as well.

Ning glanced at the mechanisms and barriers used to chain the black-haired man. He immediately sent out streaks of sword-light that quickly shattered them to bits. With those barriers gone, Hegemon Flameleft regained his power and the wounds on his body quickly vanished. Black robes appeared over his body, and he turned to stare at Ning in a rather puzzled manner.

He could sense that this white-robed Daolord in front of him was incredibly terrifying; the sword-light the Daolord had created was capable of slaying him with ease. And yet, the man was clearly just a Daolord who had failed the Daomerge!

"Hegemon Flameleft, this is Daolord Darknorth," Lord Annihilation said hurriedly. "We all owe our very lives to Daolord Darknorth. He is so strong that he treats with Autarchs as equals; not even the Sithe Exalts can compare to him in power."

Hegemon Flameleft instantly realized just how incredibly powerful Daolord Darknorth was.

"Flameleft thanks you, Daolord, for saving my life." Hegemon Flameleft hurriedly bowed respectfully, a grateful look in his eyes. "Flameleft shall never forget the grace you have shown me today."

No one would ever know how much torment and misery he had suffered. On multiple occasions, he had very nearly broken down. All the others who had been captured had committed suicide early on. Those who didn't commit suicide in time would see their divine power and Immortal energy sealed away, making future suicide impossible! They were imprisoned and suffered countless torments that were truly indescribable.

Suicide was no longer an option, and they had only two options before them. The first was to submit and become a puppet. The second was to continue resisting. In the end, the only one who managed to continue resisting was Flameleft.

The Autarchs who had seen this in the past actually drew from it, using it as an inspiration for their idea of torturing Sithe Exalts in the hopes that they would finally give up and allow their truesouls and souls to be infiltrated. That way, once the Sithe Exalts died, their truesoul fragments would be absorbed and swallowed by Ning's Chaosverse.

The Sithe Exalts had nearly been driven mad from the torture, but they clearly were still capable of enduring it.

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"Flameleft, were any of your weapons stolen by the Sithe? I already killed the Sithe who ran this place and have all of his treasures," Ning said. He felt a great deal of admiration for Hegemon Flameleft; the man had been able to endure for so very long, even though there was no visible hope whatsoever! This was no easy feat.

"I didn't have many powerful weapons," Hegemon Flameleft said. "The only good weapon I had was that axe I always used."

Ning immediately waved his hand, causing a series of axes to appear before him. There were six in total, and one of them voluntarily flew over to Hegemon Flameleft. Hegemon Flameleft excitedly grasped the axe. The axe itself was shivering!

"It wasn't easy for you to stay alive," Ning said with a laugh. "Stay safe and avoid the Sithelands unless you have a compelling reason to be here."

"Understood." Hegemon Flameleft was the type of person who always repaid his debts to others. Ning had saved his life, and so he privately swore that he would definitely do everything he could to repay Ning.

"This bracelet is an interesting Sithe trinket. It won't make you much stronger, but it'll be useful to you whenever you need to flee." Ning waved his hand, tossing out a Sithe bracelet. "Don't be shy and just take it. I feel quite a bit of admiration for you, to tell you the truth."

Hegemon Flameleft hesitated slightly.

"Brother Flameleft, just accept it," Hegemon Tia said, as did the Paragon of Pills. Both of them knew that Daolord Darknorth had completely surpassed all other cultivators and was virtually a peer of the Autarchs. Most Sithe artifacts were truly useless to him, while the Three Realms only needed some of the more important ones.

Besides... if Ning really did need Sithe weapons, he could go to any of the ruins and acquire a mountain of them.

"Thank you, Daolord." Flameleft wasn't the wishy-washy type, and so he offered a simple thanks while firmly engraving Ning's kindness into his heart.

"It's time for us to leave." Ning glanced at the surrounding area. Daoguard Towers were absolute nightmares for other cultivators, but they wouldn't be that bad for him if it wasn't for the fact that his truesoul was constantly crumbling. He had been forced to attack several times here, resulting in his lifespan lessening by quite a bit.

Whoosh. Ning and the others immediately soared into the skies, flying into the endless black mist outside the lonely dimensional islands. After flying for a short period of time, they flew out of it and reached the empty void outside of it.

Ding!

An extremely pleasing sound suddenly spread out from very away in spacetime. Ning's face hardened slightly as he swept the area with his gaze. Ever since he had mastered the Space Sword Dao, his attunement towards space had become extremely acute. He saw that far off in the distant, there was a total of nine 'corners' which held enormous hidden regions within them. Now, all nine corners had suddenly begun to emanate dazzling light.

"What's wrong, Darknorth?" The Paragon of Pills, Azurefiend, and the others were all puzzled.

"Let's get out of here right away!" Just as the words were leaving Ning's lips, space began to twist around them.

Whoosh! The nine distant 'specks' of light resonated together to generate a grand dimensional formation that instantly swept across the region Ning was in, forming a black hole that sucked all of them inside.

A heartbeat later, everything grew calm again. Aside from the fact that Ning's group had just vanished, everything seemed completely ordinary and unperturbed.

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Ning's group reappeared within a blurry region filled by clouds and mist.

"Where are we?" the Paragon of Pills said as they all scanned the region.

"My godsense has been suppressed. I'm unable to see anything at all," Lord Annihilation said hurriedly.

Ning scanned the area silently. His face was even more solemn than it had been during their battles at the Daoguard Tower.

"What a terrifying formation, and what a terrifying level of mastery over the Dao of Space!" Ning murmured softly. Just now, he had been able to witness with great clarity how they had been forcibly teleported into this place. Those nine incomparably distant and vast dimensions had joined together into an enormous formation of dazzling profundity. This was a level of mastery over space which left Ning breathless. Nobody in their entire Chaosverse was capable of such a thing!

"Darknorth, where are we?" the Paragon of Pills asked.

"Still in Sithe territory," Ning said heavily. "But this place is probably a hundred times deadlier than the Daoguard Tower we were in." Although they had arrived just a short while ago, the hints which Ning saw allowed him to quickly understand how dangerous a situation they were in.

“Autarch Titanos. Autarch Ekong...” Ning immediately began to reach out through the message-talismans to all six Autarchs.

“Darknorth.”

“What’s wrong, Darknorth?”

The Autarchs scattered throughout the Chaosverse all immediately responded to Ning, including Autarch Mogg who was responsible for standing watch over the Sithelands. This was the very first time Ning had ever used the message-talisman to contact them.

“There is something I need some assistance with,” Ning sent through the talisman. “I am in the Sithelands and broke through a Daoguard Tower to save some cultivators, but just as I was about to leave I was forcibly teleported elsewhere by a formation of incredible power. This formation was established by linking together nine enormous dimensions and was incredibly complex; I believe it has surpassed the limits of what cultivators in our Chaosverse can accomplish. My companions and I are now trapped here, and we are afraid to recklessly move around.”

“Darknorth, stay right where you are.”

“Stay there and don’t move.” The Autarchs quickly began to send their replies. In dangerous places, the more you moved around the quicker you would die.

“Don’t worry. I’m not going anywhere. I could sense danger as soon as I arrived. If I tried to escape on my own, I’d probably end up dying here. I don’t really care about my own life, as my truesoul is already breaking down, but someone extremely important to me is here as well as a few other cultivators,” Ning sent. He truly didn’t wish for the Paragon of Pills to die.

“Our avatars are all standing watch over the Sithelands,” Autarch Titanos said. “I’ll have my avatar meet up with Mogg’s and we’ll work together on this.”

Autarchs had incredibly powerful avatars, as they were generally outfitted with many mighty weapons. Most Autarch avatars had nearly 80% of the true body’s power!

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Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 13: The Hidden Dimension

Although the Sithe heartlands had been completely sealed off, they continued to represent a disaster waiting to happen to the cultivator civilizations! Thus, Autarch Mogg eternally stood watch over this place, as did his avatar and the avatars of all five other Autarchs.

Riiiiip! Space twisted, resulting in a dazzling tunnel of light appearing. Two figures emerged shoulder-to-shoulder from this tunnel of light, with one being the bald red-robed avatar of Autarch Titanos, and the other being a Tall, skinny, azure-robed man who had some scales on his cheeks. The second man was Autarch Mogg, and his eyes were flecked with azure light.

The two stepped out of the tunnel of light and entered normal space. “Darknorth, we’ve already arrived. Let Mogg and I investigate this place first.” Autarch Titanos glanced at the distant region, filled with a billowing black fog which surrounded many pocket dimensions that floated in the air. This was the place where the Paragon of Pills had been trapped previously.

“Alright.” Ji Ning waited from the separate dimension he had been teleported to. Now that the two Autarchs had arrived, he felt a sense of hope.

The reason these two had arrived was because of the specific Daos they followed. Autarch Mogg walked the path of the Space Daobirth Essence and was the Autarch with the greatest amount of control over space. This was why he was responsible for standing guard over the Sithelands; if anything happened, he would be able to sense it thanks to his dimensional mastery.

As for Autarch Titanos, his path was that of the Karma Daobirth Essence, an even more incredible Dao! He had met Ning twice, and as a result the two were connected by karma. It was possible that he would be able to sense Ning’s location thanks to the karma which bound them together.

The avatars of Autarch Mogg and Autarch Titanos scanned the area vigilantly. “Mogg, what do you think?” Autarch Titanos asked.

“Wait a moment,” Autarch Mogg said, his azure eyes scanning the void around them. Although the grand dimensional formation was now dormant, there were still some traces of its previous activation which allowed Autarch Mogg to calculate some of the secrets behind it.

Space trembled and rippled before his gaze. Suddenly, he stared off into the distance, then turned to look at several other locations as well. Frowning, he said, “Darknorth was right. This formation was activated from nine separate locations, each of which is incredibly far away. This formation is marvelously intricate, and its usage of dimensional mastery far surpasses my own.”

“I cannot find the dimension Darknorth and his team have been teleported to.” Autarch Mogg shook his head. “What about you, Titanos?”

“Darknorth’s too far away. I can’t find him via just karma alone.” Autarch Titanos frowned as well.

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Clouds lazily drifted nearby. Ning’s group remained atop the clouds, not daring to move about rashly.

“Darknorth, we’re unable to find the exact place you have been trapped,” Autarch Titanos replied. “Our only option is to have your Primaltwin come over here as well. Your Primaltwin should be able to sense your true body, allowing it to find you.”

“Alright.” Ning nodded.

“Mogg will head straight to the Flamedragon Realmverse and bring your Primaltwin over here,” Autarch Titanos stated. “The place you have been imprisoned in is most likely an extremely important Sith nexus point. Given that we didn’t even know it existed, it has to be an incredibly dangerous place to be in. Don’t move about rashly; just stay there and wait for us.”

“Don’t worry, I’m not so rash as to run around wildly,” Ning sent back. The two sides then broke off the connection.

Ning was starting to feel rather grim. Autarch Titanos was skilled in karma, while Autarch Mogg was skilled in space, yet neither was able to locate him. This meant the formation which teleported him here was truly incredible!

“How did it go, Darknorth?” The Paragon of Pills looked at Ning.

“Don’t worry, everything will be fine. We’ll wait right here. The Autarchs are already on their way, but the place we’re in is fairly stable. It’ll probably take them a bit of time,” Ning said.

Hegemon Tia, Hegemon Flameleft, and the others were all secretly astonished. Daolord Darknorth truly was incredible; as soon as he was trapped here, Autarchs hastened over to help him out. The words ‘the Autarchs are already on their way’ clearly indicated that more than one Autarch had come. Since when were Autarchs so amenable to helping out ordinary cultivators?!

“Why did the Sithe establish this secret location?” Ning glanced at the surrounding area. Thanks to his incredible insight, he was able to vaguely see a vast sea off in the distance. He was quite curious as to what this realm contained, but he knew that if he indulged it too much it would be the death of him. He couldn’t be rash; it was best to wait for the Autarchs to come.

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It took Autarch Mogg a mere month to find Ning’s black-robed Primaltwin, then bring it all the way over to the Sithelands.

The black-robed Primaltwin Ning was currently standing next to Autarch Mogg and Autarch Titanos in the air.

“My true body and the other cultivators were teleported away from that location right there.” The black-robed Ning pointed to an area of space, then pointed towards nine different directions. “The nine different sources of that dimensional formation came from those nine directions. All of them were located extremely far away.”

“That’s exactly what I sensed as well.” Autarch Mogg nodded. He had been in a rather contemplative state ever since he had discovered the dimensional formation. Clearly, he had been pondering over this formation.

“Darknorth, where is your true body?” Autarch Titanos asked.

“I can sense its location.” Ning nodded. “I’d like to ask you to help me lead the way, Autarch Mogg.”

Autarch Mogg led the way in carving through space, while Ning’s Primaltwin guided him in his path. After spending the time needed to boil a kettle of tea, they had traversed the equivalent of five or six realmverses.

“Halt!”

They had reached a region of empty darkness which held nothing at all. The black-robed Ning stood there in the void, slowly moving forwards and warping through ten billion kilometers of space with each step he took.

Forward. Back. Up. Down. Ning seemed to be walking in circles, while the avatars of Autarch Mogg and Autarch Titanos watched from afar.

“Now that’s odd.” The black-robed Ning scanned the area. “Autarch Mogg, Autarch Titanos, I can clearly sense that my true body is within a hundred billion kilometers of us! And yet, I’ve discovered that no

matter where I go, I cannot move any closer to it. Just now, I even tried to enter other dimensional continuums but still remained unable to move closer to my true body.”

“A hundred billion kilometers?” Autarch Titanos glanced at Autarch Mogg. “Mogg, what do you think?”

A hundred billion kilometers was a very short amount of distance to figures like Autarchs and Ning; a single step through spacetime was more than enough to traverse such a distance. And yet, Ning’s Primaltwin was able to sense his true body’s location but was completely unable to move any closer to it.

“There is an enormous hidden dimension here.” Autarch Mogg scanned the area, his eyes shooting out rays of blurry azure light which caused space to twist and distort. He said calmly, “This gigantic dimension is extremely well-made and perfectly separated from the outside world. No matter what you try, you won’t be able to move a single step closer to this dimension.”

It was similar to mortals walking on Ning’s old world of ‘Earth’. No matter how much time they spent walking on Earth’s surface, they would never be able to move any closer to Earth’s core. By the same principle, Ning was completely unable to move closer to this hidden region.

“It is absolutely perfect. Although I can vaguely sense that it is here, I can’t find any flaws in its creation at all which would allow me to lock onto it,” Autarch Mogg said. “If the teleportation formation was to activate again and bring another outsider here, I would be able to detect its location during the teleportation process and then open a dimensional tunnel to it. Right now, though, it is completely hidden and sealed away from us. There’s nothing I can do.”

“I have to somehow activate it a second time?” The black-robed Ning felt a bit frustrated.

“This dimensional tunnel has completely blocked off karma itself. I can’t locate Darknorth’s true body through karma either.” Autarch Titanos looked at Ning. “Darknorth, I’m ashamed to say this, but neither of us will be able to solve this problem in a short amount of time. I’ll have Ekong and the others come test it out as well. Perhaps one of them will succeed.”

“It’ll be fine even if you cannot. I might be trapped inside, but not just anyone can bring harm to me,” the black-robed Ning said. “I’ll figure something out.”

“Be careful.” Autarch Titanos and Autarch Mogg felt rather guilty. They knew that if even the two of them were helpless, it was unlikely the other four would succeed; Autarch Skyfeeder was skilled in the Dao of Time, Autarch Ekong was skilled in the Dao of Destruction, Autarch Bolin was skilled in the Dao of the Claw, and Autarch Stonerule was skilled in the Dao of Illusions.

“The reason my true body entered the Sithelands was to save someone; the Paragon of Pills,” Ning said. “The Mistress wishes to revive her three brothers, one of whom is a Hegemon of the Dao of the Sword.”

“Oh, the Paragon of Pills? I know of her.” Autarch Titanos nodded. “She sought me out, and I told her to come back after she had a thousand realmships worth of treasure.”

Ning said, “Autarch Titanos, I’d like to ask you to help the Mistress complete this dream of hers.”

“A minor matter,” Autarch Titanos said. “But the otherverse she resides in was created by Autarch Skyfeeder. I’ll have her handle this personally. It’ll be much easier for her to keep that otherverse safe while reversing spacetime to revive those three.”

This task was indescribably difficult for Hegemons, but to Autarchs it was nothing more than a bit of extra effort.

“Darknorth, you have to be careful inside there,” Autarch Mogg said solemnly. “We originally thought that we had taken full control over the Sithelands’s perimeter, sealing away the few places we didn’t breach... but clearly, we were wrong. There are hidden areas we were not aware of! I imagine that the Sithe have been watching us in secret, biding their time.”

“Don’t worry. Even if a Sithe Exalt comes, I’ll kill him with a blow from my sword,” Ning said with a smile.

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Within that blurry, cloud-filled region. The white-robed Ning said to the Paragon of Pills, “Mistress, I’ve already spoken to the Autarchs. Autarch Skyfeeder will personally revive your three brothers.”

Tears appeared in the Paragon’s eyes, and her entire body began to tremble. Finally, two tears fell down... but a smile was on her face.

This solitary, glacially cold woman was actually, finally smiling. Her smile was radiant and beautiful, and even Ning was rather stunned by it. This was beauty that stemmed from the depths of a soul, beauty and joy which was truly infectious.

“Thank you, Darknorth.” The Paragon of Pills looked at Ning.

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Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 14: The Island Battle

Many people knew of the ‘Mad Paragon of Pills’, including Azurefiend, Hegemon Tia, Hegemon Flameleft, and Lord Annihilation. They all knew how frenzied she could be in the pursuit of her dream... and now, it was finally going to be realized. They could imagine the emotional upheaval she felt! This was a happier moment for her than succeeding in the Daomerge had been. The joy she felt surpassed even life and death!

“Congratulations, Paragon of Pills!” Lord Annihilation said with a laugh.

“Congratulations, congratulations.” Azurefiend chortled as well.

Hegemon Tia smiled as she looked at them, but a hint of sorrow flickered in her eyes. The Paragon’s brothers were about to come back to life, but her beloved, the one who she viewed as more important than life itself? It was completely impossible for that person to be brought back to life. Grief had killed her heart long ago, and the only reason she hadn’t killed herself was because she had promised to keep living. Ever since that day, however, she had no longer truly cared about life, and thus she had dived into one dangerous location after another, earning the nickname of ‘Mad Hegemon Tia’ in the rest of the Chaosverse.

"I'm feeling a bit excited." The tears quickly dried on the Paragon of Pills' face, and she smiled brightly. "I was so worried. I feel much better now that I know Autarch Skyfeeder has agreed."

"Haha, Mistress, once we manage to leave this secret dimension, Autarch Skyfeeder will go with you to the otherverse and reverse spacetime to revive your three brothers," Ning said.

"Once we leave?" The Paragon suddenly frowned. "Darknorth, didn't you say this place is incredibly dangerous? Not even the Autarchs will be able to enter here."

Ning nodded. "Don't worry. I'll do everything in my power to get you out of here, Mistress."

"No, that's not what I meant. I trust you. But, it's not guaranteed that we'll be able to escape this place," the Paragon said. "If I die here, my avatar will die immediately as well. I'll never be able to see the three of them again. Even though I know Autarch Skyfeeder will still reverse spacetime to revive the three of them, if I'm not able to see it in person... I really can't accept this."

"I understand." Ning nodded. "Then what are you suggesting, Mistress?"

"My avatar is alongside Tia and Annihilation's avatars. I can give you the location. I'd like to ask Autarch Skyfeeder to go find my avatar, then take it with her when she revives my three brothers. Is that acceptable?" the Paragon asked.

"Might as well." Ning didn't refuse, because he himself wasn't completely confident that they'd be able to escape this place. He had been forced to use his own sword-arts multiple times in the Daoguard Tower area, and they were now in a place that was so mysterious the Autarchs couldn't even locate it. This was definitely a far more dangerous place than the first Daoguard Tower.

Ning immediately sent a message to Autarch Skyfeeder, asking for her help. She agreed, her true body exiting the Quintessence. However, the Chaosverse was so very large that it would take a bit of time for her to go find the Paragon of Pills.

"Let's scout the surrounding area for now, but make sure to be careful. Let's not take any risks just yet. We'll save that for after your three brothers are revived," Ning said with a laugh. The Paragon of Pills, Hegemon Tia, and the others all acknowledged.

Whoosh. Ning flew into the skies by himself, quickly reaching an altitude of over a hundred million kilometers.

"Eh?" The skies above him were like an enormous azure bowl. Ning frowned when he stared into them, and he released his Sword Dao Domain to apply some pressure to the heavens. Alas, the heavens were incomparably resilient, and they actually pushed back and down against Ning.

"It really is quite stable. It seems there is no chance at all that I might be able to tear through this place through raw force." Ning quickly came to this determination. As soon as he had arrived here, he had suspected that this might be the case. This was because even the 'Dimensional Hallway Chains' formed by a single Daoguard Tower had been incredibly stable. This place was clearly much more dangerous; there was no way he would be able to break through this place with ease. Indeed, his test confirmed his suspicions.

Whoosh. Ning flew back down, descending to rejoin Azurefiend, the Paragon of Pills, Hegemon Tia, and the others.

“What should we do, Daolord?” Lord Annihilation asked.

“There’s no way to break through via brute force,” Ning said with a chuckle. “We’ll need to find some weaknesses in this dimension and then break through via them. For such a large dimension to be so stable means that it has to have an internal energy source of some kind or a formation keeping it together. We’ll be able to escape by destroying either of them.

“I can vaguely sense some living creatures off in the distance.” Ning pointed towards the horizon ahead of them. “Very weak creatures. Let’s go take a look.”

“Very weak?” Azurefiend was startled. “How could a terrifying place like this have weak creatures within it?”

“But they really do seem to be extremely weak. I could probably wipe them out by breathing on them,” Ning said.

Since he had already promised that they wouldn’t do anything dangerous before reviving the Paragon of Pills’ brothers, Ning was going to play it safe for now. Given his current level of insight into the Dao, he was able to sense and avoid danger while seeking out good fortune! However, the central controls or other critical points in a hidden realm like this would generally be extremely dangerous, and so there was no way to ‘avoid danger’ here.

Sometimes, you knew the road ahead of you was dangerous but you still had to take it, because only then would you have a chance at survival!

Whoosh. The group quickly flew into the air. Below them was a vast sea of water that seemed to be truly boundless and without end.

“Right here!” Ning quickly came to a halt and stared downwards. Beneath him was an ‘island’ that was tens of millions of kilometers in size. Actually, in most places it would be described as a ‘continent’, but this dimension and the sea it held was so incredibly vast that this island was nothing more than a tiny little speck. It wouldn’t be wrong for major powers like Ning to refer to it as an ‘island’.

This island had countless living beings thriving within it. Ning stared downwards, his gaze quickly locking onto the most powerful being in this entire island.

Within a wilderness region, three humanoids were battling against a vilefiend who was dressed in long black robes. He was fairly handsome and exuded an aura of charisma, but in battle he was indescribably ferocious and savage.

“You humans have killed me many times, but you’ll never be able to kill me permanently. I’ll come back to life time and time again! Ahaha! I can fail any number of times, but you cannot fail even once... because if you do, I’ll butcher every living person on this entire continent. Ahahaha! Want to know a little secret? I’ve actually already done it on five different occasions in history!” The vilefiend’s voice was sharp and shrill. “This will be my sixth time. If you want to survive, you should bow down to me. I need a few lackies, after all. I don’t like you, but you are fairly strong.”

“Forget about it! This continent belongs to us Sithe! We would never allow a vilefiend like yourself to run rampant here!” The leader of the three was a six-armed man who was furiously attacking with six giant warhammers. Alas, the vilefiend was far too fast and nimble; if it wasn’t for the other two party members, the leader would’ve been defeated long ago.

The second member of the party was a red-haired man who wielded a warblade and whose entire body was bathed in flames. He howled furiously, “The valiant men of the Sithe shall never succumb to a vilefiend like yourself!”

The final member of the party was a gray-robed woman, and she had an icy look on her face as she controlled her magic treasures to attack from afar. She said in a frozen voice, “We Sithe would rather all die in battle than submit to a vilefiend like yourself.”

Ning, the Paragon of Pills, Azurefiend, and the rest all watched from high up in the skies, rather shocked by all of this.

“The ‘valiant men of the Sithe’?” Ning blinked. “Why does that phrase feel so... odd?”

“The ‘Sithe would rather all die in battle than submit to a vilefiend’?” Azurefiend mumbled to himself, “That’s a pretty determined statement! I had no idea the Sithe were so intrepid.”

The three humanoids below them were merely of the Elder God/Ancestral Immortal level, while the vilefiend was an extremely weak member of the vilefiend race. There was an enormous degree of difference between it and the vilefiends Ning encountered near the Daoguard Tower.

This was nothing more than a battle at the Elder God level. To the likes of Ning, the Paragon of Pills, Azurefiend, Lord Annihilation, Hegemon Flameleft, or Hegemon Tia, these four were all very puny! And yet, they were the most powerful beings on this island. Ning was telling the truth earlier when he said that they were ‘very weak’.

“Haha!” Lord Annihilation laughed as well. “To us cultivators as a whole, the Sithe are a calamity, a nightmare, a blight on existence! The Sithe, however, also have weak members of the race who are akin to our mortals. Perhaps they find pride in being Sithe.”

“They call themselves Sithe, but they aren’t actually true Sithe,” Ning said.

“They aren’t true Sithe?” Everyone present stared at Ning, puzzled.

“Master, how is it that you know this?” Azurefiend asked.

Ning didn’t explain any further, because this involved many hidden secrets that would only cause Azurefiend and the others to feel unnecessary consternation.

If they were true Sithe, they would be rejected by all the prime essences of the Chaosverse, making it impossible for them to use the power of the Dao! However, all three of the humans below them were infusing the Dao into each and every strike. They weren’t rejected by the prime essences!

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Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 15: Filthy

“Did you hear that? That little vilefiend just said he’s wiped out all life on this island several times,” Azurefiend said.

“Unsurprising,” Ji Ning replied. “This hidden dimension is within the Sithelands, which means that vilefiends can arise here! Although they are fairly weak without the power of a Daoguard Tower behind them, they are still enough to be absolute catastrophes for islands like this. In addition, vilefiends have essence springs located in other places. I can kill them with my sword and then locate and destroy their essence springs via karma, but the living beings on this island can only use all their strength to fight and kill the vilefiend time and time again without being able to truly exterminate it. Given enough time, the vilefiend will rise to power once more and then cause yet another calamity to descend upon this island.”

The Paragon of Pills sighed. “Vilefiends are nothing to us, but they represent apocalypse to the countless beings on this island.”

Hegemon Tia said, “Perhaps this is a method the Sithe use to train and temper the members of their race.”

“...Yes, that’s extremely possible.” Ning’s eyes lit up. Applying pressure via vilefiends could result in more powerful experts arising more frequently.

As they spoke, Ning and the others descended onto the island.

“Attack!”

“Let’s launch an all-out assault!” The three humans were beginning to unleash their desperation attacks.

“Hahaha... desperation attacks? I’ll give you one final blow and annihilate any hope that you might still harbor. I’m looking forward to those looks of despair on your face, the despair that stems from the very depths of your soul... I can’t help but feel excited when I see those looks!” The vilefiend was actually shaking from anticipation.

Suddenly... slash! A streak of sword-light sliced through the vilefiend.

The vilefiend’s face still had that look of twisted joy on it, but a heartbeat later it completely disintegrated into dust. Ning’s sword followed the karma lines attaching it to its essence spring, destroying that as well. From this day forth, the vilefiend which had troubled this island and its many living beings for countless generations was no more.

“Helping you kill that vilefiend is a form of recompense for rifling through your memories.” Ning began to search through the memories of those three ‘Sithe’ humans. The fact that their attacks were infused with the power of the Dao meant that they were also natives of this Chaosverse, and so Ning treated them as humans rather than as Sithe. This was why he wished to ‘repay’ them for what he was doing.

“Master, now that you’ve killed that vilefiend, this island won’t suffer any more attacks. Doesn’t that mean that the tempering trial the Sithe set up is over?” Azurefiend asked.

“I don’t give a shit,” Ning said casually.

Azurefiend blinked. The Paragon of Pills, Hegemon Tia, Hegemon Flameleft, and Lord Annihilation all stared at Ning in shock. ‘I don’t give a shit’... how could words like this have come from the mouth of the peerlessly dazzling ‘Daolord Darknorth’?

There were many Emperors and Hegemons with foul dispositions and even fouler language. However, to the people present, Darknorth was a person of incomparably exalted stature, someone who was very nearly a peer of the Autarchs. They couldn't help but feel a bit uncomfortable when they heard Ning say this.

In truth, Ning had a completely perfect Dao-heart. He'd say whatever he felt without needing to disguise it.

"Um. So what have you discovered?" the Paragon of Pills asked.

"They are just Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. They know very little... but their memories do contain information regarding a legendary and 'invincible' figure who controls all sixty-three islands in this vast territory. That person is known to them as Archfiend Huabo, and he is so 'unfathomably powerful' that he has never been defeated and can wipe out an entire island with a wave of his hand." Ning snickered. "Their memories indicate that Archfiend Huabo should know more about this place than them."

Ning and the others left, and as they did the three humans regained consciousness.

"What just happened?"

"What's going on?"

"Where's the vilefiend?" All three of them were completely puzzled. When Ning had rifled through their memories, it hadn't had a negative impact on them at all. It was like a brief moment of unconsciousness.

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Archfiend Huabo was the ruler of sixty-three islands, and in truth he was a Daolord of the Fourth Step. In this era and amongst these weak cultivators, he truly was 'invincible'! But to Ning and his team? A Daolord of the Fourth Step was still extremely weak, so weak that he could be exterminated with just a breath!

Archfiend Huabo was seated on his royal throne. Below him was a large number of beautiful women who were dancing for him, while at each side of the hall there were many chained beings who were being tortured and tormented.

He had an extremely strange personality and temperament. He was the undisputed hegemon of these sixty-three islands, and countless living beings had been tortured to death by him. He delighted in torture, in hearing their final screams and cries. This was what made him smile, and was the reason why he was known as the 'Archfiend'.

A smile on his face, he watched the beautiful women dance while listening to the viperous curses and blubbering wails of his prisoners.

"Those fools. All of them ran off to the Sacred Realm, and for what? The Sacred Realm has many powerful experts there; we'd be nothing more than the crust on their boots," Archfiend Huabo mused. "Staying behind is a much better decision. I'm virtually invincible here and can do whatever I want. Isn't that wonderful? As for the Daomerge... hmph! Did they really think they would succeed in the

Daomerge just because major powers in the Sacred Realm will provide them guidance? I hear that their success rates remain pitifully low.”

“Staying behind is definitely the better choice, ehehe... tomorrow, I’ll go capture a few more people. The ones in the prison have almost all died out by now.” Archfiend Huabo was in a superb mood. As for the beautiful dancers, all of them were quivering in fear, even if none of them dared to reveal it. They did their best to please the almighty Archfiend, for fear of being tortured to death as well.

Suddenly, a total of six people walked into the hall. The dance came to a halt, and the smile on Archfiend Huabo’s face suddenly froze. Even the steam coming from the cup of mulled wine by his side froze in midair. Time itself seemed to stop.

The six figures walking in were Ji Ning, the Paragon of Pills, Azurefiend, Hegemon Tia, Hegemon Flameleft, and Lord Annihilation.

Ning’s Sword Dao Domain had sealed down spacetime itself, causing time to freeze completely. The dancers and the Archfiend would have no recollection at all of what happened in this moment.

“Let’s take a look at their memories.” Ning was able to easily rifle through this Daolord’s memories. He finished after a few moments, then fell completely silent.

“How does it look?” The others all looked at Ning.

“This is going to be troublesome,” Ning said, then chuckled. “But we knew that from the beginning. Simply put, this Daolord’s memories indicate that this hidden dimension has a total of six ‘realms’ where mortals live, as well as an exalted ‘Sacred Realm’ and an evil, desolate ‘Purgatory’.”

“Together, the six mortal worlds, the Sacred Realm, and Purgatory form this entire hidden dimension,” Ning said. “At least, that’s what he believes and his memories indicate.”

“The six mortal realms are all extremely vast and are filled with countless mortals and many cultivators. However, only cultivators who become Samsara Daolords are qualified to enter the Sacred Realm! Of course, there are many Samsara Daolords who choose to stay behind in the six mortal realms instead, but if they DO succeed in the Daomerge and become Eternal Emperors, they are required to enter the Sacred Realm,” Ning said. “If they do not, then major powers shall descend from the Sacred Realm to capture and then punish them.”

The Paragon of Pills frowned: “It seems as though the ‘Sacred Realm’ is where all the major powers of this hidden dimension are gathered. What of this ‘Purgatory’, then?”

“The Purgatory is the place where extremely evil people and people who are being punished by the major powers shall be exiled to! That place is both dangerous and desolate,” Ning said. “My guess is that the most important parts of this dimension reside within the ‘Sacred Realm’!”

The most powerful people present in the six mortal realms were Daolords of the Fourth Step. The Sacred Realm was where the true major powers had gathered, which meant that there was a 99% chance that the core control mechanisms of this hidden dimension were located there as well.

“Are the countless living beings of this dimension truly Sithe progeny? And what is the history of this place?” Hegemon Flameleft asked.

“That’s not information a Daolord of the Fourth Step like him would know,” Ning said with a chuckle. “What we need to do is to head into the Sacred Realm!”

The Sacred Realm... it was undoubtedly filled with many major powers and terrifying Sithe traps. Ning wouldn’t be surprised if it had ten Daoguard Towers within it! Once they headed off to the Sacred Realm, a war would probably break out.

“How can we get there?” Azurefiend asked.

“Through the ‘Realmgate’,” Ning said. “However, now is not yet the time. Let’s wait for the Mistress’ three brothers to be revived before we head off to the Realmgate and enter the Sacred Realm.”

The Paragon of Pills smiled.

“Let’s go.” Ning glanced at Archfiend Huabo, who was still seated on his throne with a frozen grin on his face, then waved a finger. A streak of sword-light shot out, passing through the Archfiend’s skull and destroying his soul and truesoul. From this day forth, Archfiend Huabo, who had been the hegemon of these sixty-three islands for countless years, died as a result of people who literally came out of nowhere. Even as he died, he had no idea what was happening or who was killing him.

“M-master... you already looked through his memories. Why’d you kill him?” Azurefiend stared.

“It was precisely because I looked through his memories that I killed him.” Ning shook his head and muttered, “Absolutely filthy. I really couldn’t help myself.”

Ning’s group quietly slipped away, leaving behind a palace in a state of chaos.

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Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 16: Spacetime Reversal Resurrection

Roughly five months after Ji Ning’s group had first been sent into this hidden dimension, Autarch Skyfeeder brought the avatars of the Paragon of Pills and Lord Annihilation to the otherverse they resided in. It was time to begin the process of reversing spacetime and reviving those three Emperors.

Lord Annihilation’s otherverse. The Archaeus Region. The Prime Reaches of the Genesis Lands.

This was a place filled with corpses, all of whom had failed in the struggle over control of this otherverse.

The gentle-eyed and slightly plump Autarch Skyfeeder glanced at the various Emperor-class corpses within the Prime Reaches as the avatars of the Paragon and Lord Annihilation stood respectfully to one side.

“Looks like this was quite a bitter battle,” Autarch Skyfeeder said. “This is an otherverse which I created extremely, extremely early on. I didn’t put it within the Eight Domains, which is why only a few Hegemons took part in this struggle.”

The Blazesun Domain and the rest of the Eight Domains had so many experts present that the members of most squads were usually at the Hegemonic level. Every so often, you would also see an Otherverse

Lord or someone in control of a powerful Sithe weapon. Thus, when two competing teams found an otherverse to fight over, the battle would involve ten or so Hegemons!

However, the Prime Reaches here only held three Hegemonic corpses, as well as quite a few ordinary Eternal Emperors. It was indeed a bitter battle, but the power of the combatants involved was somewhat lower than what would be seen in the Eight Domains.

“Otherverses are incredibly rare outside the Eight Domains,” the avatar of the Paragon of Pills said softly. “The appearance of this otherverse caused everyone to go wild. The four Hegemons who were the first to arrived each brought subordinates and were willing to risk everything for the sake of this otherverse. A great battle broke out, and in the end Hegemon Dustfall was the one who won. My three brothers covered me, letting me escape, but the ones who were left behind were all suppressed and bound by the power of this otherverse, which now had a master. Nothing awaited them save death, and they knew it. Hegemon Dustfall was kind enough to allow each of the Emperors a chance to leave behind a legacy, and he also let their corpses remain intact.”

An Otherverse Lord who was inside of his otherverse would be dramatically more powerful than when he was outside in the ‘normal’ world. The otherverse was his territory, and the overwhelming power of the otherverse ensured that he himself would also be incredibly strong! This was why the Lonely King instantly became famous after chasing someone into an otherverse, then destroying it.

As for Hegemons? When directly suppressed by the power of an otherverse, they wouldn’t even be able to move a finger!

“However, shortly after Dustfall acquired this otherverse, he died while adventuring in a dangerous place. You ended up lucking out, Annihilation.” The Paragon of Pills glanced at Lord Annihilation.

“It was just a matter of speed, but I admit that my luck wasn’t bad.” Lord Annihilation smiled.

“I’m going to begin now,” Autarch Skyfeeder said. “Just stand there and watch.”

“Understood.” The avatars of Lord Annihilation and the Paragon of Pills both nodded respectfully, with a look of excitement appeared in the eyes of the latter.

Rumble...

Autarch Skyfeeder stared towards the Sword Hegemon, still leaning against his enormous dark-blue greatsword. Behind him was the white-robed man who had three swords on his back as well as the azure-armored man who had planted nine blood-colored swords into the ground before him. Time quickly began to slow, stop, and then reverse in the area around them.

Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh. Countless images went past, including the images of Ning’s arrival within this region. Just a short while later, it had reversed all the way to the earliest and most ancient days of this otherverse. This was when the three had fallen in battle.

“My beloved friends all died in this battle. There is no way I will pardon you or release you.” In the temporally inverted images before them, they were able to see a valiant old man dressed in silvery-white armor who stood high up on a mountain. “However... I don’t blame you for doing what you did. All of us were trying to take this otherverse. I simply was the one to win. I’ll give you all some time to make

your final preparations; make sure you don't waste this time. I'll also set down barriers to ensure that your corpses will not be disturbed in the many eons to come."

None of the Hegemons or Emperors tried to argue with him. This truly had been a bitter battle with many deaths; it was already quite magnanimous that the victor was giving them time to pass down legacies for themselves.

"Big brother... second brother... we were so close! I still can't believe this," said the azure-armored man who had planted those nine blood-colored swords in the earth before him.

"It doesn't matter how close we were. We lost. At least we three brothers will be able to die together." The white-robed man had a smile on his face. Clearly, he had already accepted his fate.

"This was all my fault." The muscular greatsword-bearing Hegemon let out a sigh, but his eyes were quite peaceful as well.

When the Paragon of Pills saw and heard this, her eyes turned moist. She tightly clenched her hands together, continuing to watch.

"Freeze!" Autarch Skyfeeder stared at the image before them, causing time to freeze before her. In this frozen moment, the three of them were still alive.

"Spacetime, reverse. Truesouls, return!" Autarch Skyfeeder turned quite solemn as well. The truesoul fragments of this Hegemon, along with the truesoul fragments of the other two Emperors behind him, had all been swallowed by the prime essences of this otherverse and hidden at its very core. They had become one with the otherverse itself! What she was doing right now was akin to tearing out part of a stone tower's foundation; if not done correctly, it was quite possible that the tower itself would crumble.

It was easy to swallow something and digest it, but very hard to drag it back out. Not even Lord Annihilation, the master of this otherverse, would be able to accomplish it.

Thankfully, Autarch Skyfeeder had been the person who created this otherverse. Even if she did wreck it, she would be able to repair it. Right now, all she needed to do was to keep it stable.

"Gather!" Autarch Skyfeeder barked out a second time. This time, countless truesoul fragments began to fly out from the deepest part of the Prime Reaches, then levitate into the air. The Prime Reaches was the location where the prime essences of this Otherverse were located.

Visually, the truesoul fragments looked like tiny little motes of light. These countless little motes of light all flew towards the three standing Emperors. As more light appeared and as spacetime continued to advance, the bodies of the three formerly-illusory figures quickly began to solidify.

Rumble... the earth throughout the Prime Reaches began to shudder. In fact, the entire massive otherverse began to tremble slightly. Lord Annihilation turned pale as he continued to watch nervously. This was his otherverse; if it collapsed, he would be doomed. But all he could do was look at Autarch Skyfeeder, not daring to make a sound.

Autarch Skyfeeder herself remained quite calm.

Big brother! The Paragon of Pills watched this all excitedly.

The three figures grew increasingly solid as more and more light poured into them, and their auras became increasingly real as well. A hint of light appeared within their eyes, a light which represented life and sentience.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Finally, all three auras completely stabilized, and a look of shock appeared in the eyes of the Hegemon and his two brothers. Alive! They were alive again!

“Big brother. Second brother. Third brother.” Overwhelmed with excitement, the Paragon of Pills charged straight towards them.

Autarch Skyfeeder had made use of their three undamaged corpses to bring them fully back to life. If their bodies were gone, she still would've been able to revive them, but it would've taken more effort; recreating a Hegemonic body was no easy feat, after all.

“Little sister.” The greatsword-bearing man looked at the Paragon of Pills, then at his two nearby brothers. “Second brother. Third brother.”

The Paragon of Pills wrapped her arms tightly around the muscular man. She had endured many, many things after her three brothers had died.

“Little sister.” The muscular man hugged the Paragon of Pills back, a complex look on his face. They weren't true siblings, they just referred to each other that way as a term of endearment. In truth, they were lovers.

“Haha, we've come back to life! Hahaha, we've all come back to life!” The azure-armored man was the most excited of the three.

“Big brother. Third brother. Little sister,” the white-robed man sent mentally to them, his gaze focused on the distant Autarch Skyfeeder, “It was the Autarch who brought us back to life, right?”

He was the calmest of the three who had just been brought back to life. The Paragon of Pills quickly came back to her senses. She hurriedly turned and bowed gratefully towards Autarch Skyfeeder, “Thank you, Autarch, for saving my three brothers.”

“Thank you, Autarch, for saving our lives,” the Hegemon and his two Emperors said.

“Impressive. You were actually able to convince an Autarch to come rescue the three of us... and it looks as though you yourself have become a Hegemon, little sister,” the azure-armored man sent mentally.

Autarch Skyfeeder said with a calm smile on her face, “I came at Darknorth's request. Of course I took it seriously! Alright, now that this matter is finished, it is time for me to go.”

“Safe travels, Autarch.” Lord Annihilation let out a sigh of relief. Autarchs truly were impressive; his otherverse had been barely affected by this process.

“Safe travels, Autarch.” The Paragon of Pills and the others all bowed respectfully once more. Autarch Skyfeeder took a single step, then disappeared into the void.

“Haha, congratulations, my friends!” Lord Annihilation smiled as he bowed towards the three brothers. “I imagine there are many things the Paragon of Pills wishes to talk to you about. I won't bother you any

further. When you are free, you must come and be my guests at the Church of Annihilation.” Lord Annihilation’s avatar then took a step away, disappearing into the void as well.

“Little sister, you truly are incredible.” The azure-armored man was still extremely excited.

As for the muscular man, he continued to hold the Paragon of Pills’ hand in an affectionate display of love.

“Little sister, the Autarch said that she came on the request of ‘Darknorth’? Who is this ‘Darknorth’? He must be a major power. Is he an Autarch as well?” the white-robed man asked.

“Right. Based on what I know, it is almost impossible to convince an Autarch to help revive a Hegemon.” The muscular man couldn’t help but ask as well: “Who exactly is this ‘Darknorth’ fellow? He was able to have an Autarch carry out tasks for him... and apparently, didn’t even come in person?”

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Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 17: Assaulting the Realmgate

If you were going to ask someone to help you out with something, you would at least show up yourself, right? This was doubly true when you were asking an Autarch to help out. How much face were the Autarchs giving this ‘Darknorth’ fellow, for them to show up even when he himself did not?

“Haha.” The Paragon of Pills laughed. “Darknorth is a Daolord, a Daolord who has failed the Daomerge... but he is extremely close to the Autarchs in actual power.”

“What?!” The three were astonished and unable to believe this. A Daolord who had failed the Daomerge? They felt no regard at all for people like that... but one who was close to the Autarchs in power? They couldn’t even imagine how this was possible.

“Hegemons are nothing more than ants to him. He doesn’t even need to strike them in order to kill them! Only someone like the Lonely King of the Icepeak Army is worthy of him attacking, but he only needed to strike a single time to slay the Lonely King,” the Paragon of Pills said. “He is on extremely good terms with the Autarchs, and he was the one who convinced Autarch Skyfeeder to come here.”

Her three ‘brothers’ were truly flabbergasted by this. This Darknorth was truly an incredible figure!

“In fact... big brother,” the Paragon of Pills said with a chortle, “He’s actually one of your honorary disciples.”

“What? Mine?” The muscular man stared at her, his eyes popping wide. “My honorary disciple?”

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The hidden dimension.

Ever since Ji Ning and the others had discovered that this dimension was divided up into six mortal realms, a ‘Sacred Realm’, and a ‘Purgatory’, they had begun to relax and wander through the mortal realms. The plan was to wait until the Paragon of Pills’ three brothers were revived before risking entry into the Realmgate.

“Congratulations, Paragon of Pills.”

“Congratulations, Mistress.” Ji Ning, Azurefiend, Tia, Flameleft, and Annihilation all offered their congratulations. They even prepared congratulatory gifts.

All of them could clearly sense how the Paragon of Pills’ aura had changed. In the past, she had seemed so solitary, cold, and remote. Now, it was like winter had left and spring had come. She had an uncontrollable smile on her face, and her joy was absolutely infectious.

“Now that I’ve met them again, I truly have no regrets left.” The Paragon looked at Ning. “Darknorth, I have to thank you for everything.”

“If it wasn’t for the insights I gained in the Archaeus Region and the help you provided, Mistress, I might not necessarily have been able to embark upon the path of the Omega Dao,” Ning said. “I wouldn’t have reached my current level of power either.”

If he was allowed to choose again between success in the Daomerge and becoming a Hegemon (via fused Supreme Daos) or failure in the Daomerge but mastering the Eternal Omega Dao, he would probably still choose the latter.

Why? Because... if even the Autarchs were unable to revive Yu Wei, the Omega Dao was the only chance he had! Even though he failed, he would still be an incandescently dazzling figure for over ten thousand chaos cycles. As far as Ning was concerned, this was superior to an eternity of mediocrity.

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The Paragon of Pills had no further regrets in life. Now, she was able to face all dangers with complete calmness and equanimity, meeting even death with a smile on her face. Ning, however, was even more determined to ensure the Paragon’s safety! She had just reunited with her beloved brothers; if she was to die here, wouldn’t that be a truly painful farewell?

Once Hegemons died, it would be virtually impossible to bring them back to life. Her big brother had only been revived because he had died within an otherverse. If the Paragon of Pills died here, there would be no way she could be brought back.

Whoosh! They soared through the air and quickly reached the location of the Realmgate.

“This here is the Realmgate.” They had spent several months scanning through the memories of many different Daolords. As a result, they were able to recognize it right away.

“Master, we were teleported directly into this dimension. I imagine the true ruler of this dimension was made aware of our appearance long ago,” Azurefiend said. “Prior to this, we were in the mortal realm. There’s nothing in the mortal realm which can pose a threat to us, and so the controller of this dimension was unable to touch us from afar, nor would he dare to actually attack you directly. But once we go through the Realmgate and reach the Sacred Realm, things will be different. We’ll be surrounded by danger.”

“Agreed.” Ning nodded. He had long ago prepared for the likelihood that the master of this place was aware of his presence.

“Travelling to the Sacred Realm is our only hope,” the Paragon of Pills said. “Darknorth, you are so very strong that the Sithe experts hiding in this place would never dare to challenge you to a fair fight. That’s

why they haven't attacked yet! Our records indicate that when Daolords dare to disobey orders from the Sacred Realm, powerful experts will descend to seize and punish them. This means it is possible for Sithe experts to descend upon this place... but they have not! Why? Because they fear you, Darknorth. But you failed your Daomerge, which means that you will eventually die from your truesoul crumbling away. Once that happens, the Sithe will probably attack and kill the rest of us."

"I'm not willing to spend the rest of my life in these mortal realms either," Ning said with a chuckle. In a fair fight, not even Sithe Exalts were a match for him. Even if four or five Exalts attacked him, given his speed and agility, if he focused on dodging then they wouldn't even be able to touch his clothes. The difference in ability between them was enormous!

But if their opponents were aided by Daoguard Towers? That would make this extremely difficult.

"Let's advance via realmship," Ning said as he produced his realmship. All six of them entered the realmship. They did this not because they needed it to travel, but because they wanted to benefit from the extra layer of protection it provided. Realmships were extremely sturdy, after all; breaching them was no easy task.

The Realmgate was a hundred thousand kilometers high and utterly massive. It emanated dazzling light and was shaped like a giant door, and around it space was twisted and distorted into multiple folds.

Swoosh. Ning and the others flew forwards via realmship, protected and surrounded by Ning's Sword Dao Domain. As they moved closer to the gate, they could sense that the twisted dimensional folds were impeding their advance. To Ning, however, they were like nothing more than a spring breeze, incapable of barring his path in the slightest.

"We're heading in. Be careful, everyone." Ning could sense his subconscious warning him of danger, but there was nothing he could do. This was their only chance to escape and survive this place. Delay and buy time? There was no way he could out-delay the Sithe.

The realmship finally flew into the iridescent Realmgate. It quickly made its way completely inside the gate, only to see an extremely stable tunnel which was formed through many layers of folded dimensional space.

Whoosh. The realmship flew through this stable dimensional tunnel at high speeds. Given Ning's current level of power, he was able to see past all obstacles and make out the awesome aura of the world off in the distance... the 'Sacred Realm'. The aura of the Sacred Realm was noticeably vaster and more powerful, and it held far more experts as well.

Crack! Crack! Crack! Suddenly, the formerly-stable tunnel began to shatter apart as two strange triangular weapons appeared in the sides of the dimensional folds off in the distance. Two more appeared within the sides of the dimensional tunnel behind Ning as well. It was their appearance which caused the dimensional tunnel to begin to crack.

"Not good." Ning's face tightened. He didn't hesitate at all, immediately expanding his Sword Dao Domain dramatically in size, causing a large amount of sword-light to appear and furiously assault the four triangular weapons.

The four triangular weapons all had sharp edges which shot out rays of light. These rays of light were extremely thin and allowed them to easily tear through space. There was no way Ning's Sword Dao Domain could resist the four streaks of light; each streak of light represented an enormous amount of energy and power, and all four of them shot out to Ning's realmship.

"What a terrifying weapon." Ning immediately willed the realmship to move in an erratic pattern as it flowed through the crumbling and chaotic tunnel, moving from one position to another. The realmship itself was like a sword which was being used to display a truly marvelous sword-art.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! All four rays of light shot past the realmship, not able to touch it at all. "Thank goodness I mastered the Space Sword Dao." Ning let out a sigh of relief.

They were within a dimensional tunnel; as the tunnel crumbled, space here became increasingly chaotic. Those four triangular weapons had just launched attacks with extremely thin dimensional blades, and by all rights it should've been nearly impossible for someone to dodge them unharmed in such a chaotic environment. Ning, however, had achieved just that thanks to his Space Sword Dao.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Those four triangular weapons suddenly expanded dramatically in size as they charged towards Ning's realmship. Ning could sense the enormous threat they posed. As for Azurefiend, the Paragon of Pills, and the others within the realmship, they could do nothing save watch. They wouldn't even be able to react in time against attacks of this level!

"Get in here." Ning instantly emerged from the realmship, then drew it back into his estate-world. There was no way he could simply rely on the realmship to deal with those triangular weapons.

Snick. Ning drew a Northbow sword from the sheath on his back. "Hm. I can't let them get close to me. They seem to possess the ability to self-detonate." At Ning's current level, he was able to vaguely see what some future possibilities would be. Thus, Ning suddenly tossed his sword out.

Whoosh! Ning tossed the sword out like a whip, sending a gentle stream of sword-light sweeping out like a beautiful creek. The water glowed in a dazzling manner as it lashed through the air, gently rapping against the surface of one of the triangular weapons. That triangular weapon couldn't help but be nudged off-course to one side, clashing against one of the other triangular weapons.

"No more playing around." Ning glanced at the nearly-collapsed dimensional tunnel around him. Ahead of them was the end of the tunnel and the Sacred Realm. He immediately used his sword-arts to forcibly charge through all opposition and make it outside.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 18: Dimensional Seams

"Seal!" A cold voice suddenly rang out from the Sacred Realm in front of them. A streak of light shot out from the Sacred Realm, forming a membrane in front of it that denied entry. A moment later, the four triangular weapons surrounding Ji Ning suddenly unleashed a blast of utterly terrifying power.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The four triangular weapons released all of the power held within them in a final explosion, blasting apart and sending shrapnel in every direction and creating a zone of death around them! There was no way one could avoid this zone attack, as the entire area was filled with explosive waves of power. Even the Blazesun Ruler would've been reduced to dust if enveloped by such powerful explosions.

"They actually detonated such incredibly valuable treasures?" Ning held a single Northbow sword at the ready. Swoosh! He suddenly sent out a swirl of sword-light that chopped through the space surrounding him like tofu, causing it to ripple and form into a dimensional barrier which surrounded and protected him.

"Time to go." Ning wasn't going to just stand there like a fool. Swish! Using his Dao of Space, Ning transformed himself into a dimensional shard that fled off into the distance! When any of the explosive power struck him, the dimensional barrier surrounding Ning would simply deflect it with a slight ripple. This level of power might be able to easily breach the defenses of a Sithe Exalt or the Blazesun Ruler, but the defensive power of Ning's Space Sword Dao was far too great.

However... given enough time, the power would still be depleted and exhausted.

Rumble... the dimensional tunnel had been completely disintegrated, while the four terrifying triangular weapons had exploded apart into countless little shards. Ning rapidly flew away from this region, ensuring that the detonations were unable to harm him in the slightest.

A short while later, Ning came to a halt. Northbow sword in hand and Sword Dao Domain surrounding him, Ning scanned the nearby area.

"So this is the seam between the eight realms, eh?" Ning mused to himself. Now that the dimensional tunnel had been destroyed, Ning was trapped within the seam between the realms. Space was incredibly chaotic and twisted here, but given Ning's level of mastery he wasn't impeded by it at all.

Whoosh. Ning used his Sword Dao Domain to separate the surrounding dangers from himself, then quickly advanced towards the front. A short while later, he saw an enormous membrane. Behind it, he could vaguely make out a vast world filled with incredible amounts of power.

"The Sacred Realm." Ning immediately knew that the world beyond the membrane had to be the 'Sacred Realm', but the dimensional membrane was incredibly tough; Ning didn't even need to test it with his Sword Dao Domain to know that there was no chance of using it to punch through.

"Even the membranes surrounding the six mortal realms of this hidden dimension were incredibly tough and durable. If I couldn't break through them, I have no chance at all at this one around the Sacred Realm," Ning mused. "The six mortal realms, the Sacred Realm, and Purgatory have all been completely sealed off. Does that mean I've been trapped here permanently?"

"No, that can't be right. The Sithe wouldn't do such a thing." Ning quickly came to this realization. If the Sithe had merely wanted to trap him, they could've simply sealed off the Realmgate and kept Ning permanently trapped within the ordinary realm he was in.

"Let's go check out the other places." Ning flew through the vast realm-seam, moving towards some of the other realms.

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The Sacred Realm.

This was the supreme world which was used to control this hidden dimension. Many powerful Sithe were located here, and at the center of this world was a trio of towering mountains. Each mountain had a pagoda at the peak, and each pagoda was exactly twelve stories tall! They all emanated auras of dazzling light that caused spacetime to ripple and twist within the area of their illumination.

These were the three Elder Palaces which the most mysterious and most exalted denizens of the Sacred Realm dwelt. However, the auras of two Elder Palaces were rather dim and weak; only one of them continued to radiate an aura of incandescent splendor.

Within the brightest Elder Palace. A large group of experts were standing within it, staring through the palace gates to the world outside. At their head stood a youth dressed in deep blue robes. His hair was deep blue while his face was grim and cold. He held his hands behind his back, standing ramrod-straight and emanating an awesome aura.

“We failed.” The blue-haired youth frowned. “It really is hard to get rid of someone in control of an Eternal Omega Dao.”

“Exalt.” Some of the Hegemons and Emperors standing behind him had undergone the Ritual Sacrificium, and one of the Hegemons spoke out: “Exalt, where did this white-robed Daolord come from? We detonated four Calamity-class weapons but still were unable to do anything to him.”

“Enough.” The blue-haired youth waved his hand, then turned to stare at the Hegemons and Emperors behind him. He said in a calm voice, “We failed our first attempt, which means it is now up to Purgatory to act! If Purgatory succeeds, this matter shall be at an end. If Purgatory fails, we’ll have no choice but to draw him into the Sacred Realm and resolve this through battle!”

“Master, why? He’s a Daolord who failed the Daomerge. His truesoul is crumbling away! So long as we keep him completely sealed within these eight realms and ensure that he is trapped within the realm-seam, he’ll die of natural causes,” a red-robed youth said.

“If he really did die of natural causes, that would be an absolute waste.” The blue-haired youth shook his head. “I’m not going to explain any further. We have to do everything in our power to kill him, even if it costs us our very lives! No price is too great to pay if it means killing him. This is our responsibility as Sithe.”

“Understood,” the red-robed youth said.

“Send word to Purgatory,” the blue-haired youth said. “Once the white-robed Daolord reaches Purgatory, Purgatory is to send all of the exiles against him. If they can kill the white-robed Daolord, they’ll not only be allowed to come back to the Sacred Realm, they’ll also be heavily rewarded. As for the person who actually managed to kill the Daolord... I’ll give him control over one of the two Elder Halls.”

“Control over an Elder Hall?”

“T-that’s not appropriate.”

“How can an exile be worthy of controlling an Elder Hall?” Everyone in the hall began to speak out in shock.

The blue-haired youth swept them with his icy gaze, quickly silencing them all. He explained calmly, “Tell them that the white-robed Daolord is incredibly powerful; their only option is to kill him through exhaustion and attrition. They also need to remember to keep the Soul-Eating Mantra active at all times! They need to make sure that they swallow all of the truesoul fragments that are breaking off of him.”

Exalts were not to be questioned or challenged. Long ago, this hidden dimension actually had a total of three Exalts. Later on, this dimension had sent out a grand army to take part in the war, with two of the Exalts personally leading that army. This Exalt had been left behind to guard the hidden dimension... but alas, those two departed Exalts had never returned.

The blue-haired youth turned and departed. With his departure, the Hegemons and Emperors left in the hall quickly scattered as well.

After leaving the hall, two Sithe Hegemons began to quietly whisper amongst themselves while they walked out side-by-side. “This is a Daolord in control of an Eternal Omega Dao. If we can somehow kill him, we’ll be given unimaginable rewards.” These two Hegemons were extremely excited. “This is doubly true for the Exalt. Even if he dies, once his truesoul returns home, he’ll be rewarded by being brought back to life via spacetime reversal. No wonder the Exalt is so excited over this.”

Reviving an Exalt was incredibly difficult, but the Sithe Lord of Chaos was capable of it. However, this would cause a degree of injury to the prime essences of that Chaosverse; generally speaking, a Lord of Chaos would be unwilling to make that sort of sacrifice.

However... if one accomplished great deeds, one had to be rewarded for it! Killing someone who was in control of an Eternal Omega Dao was viewed as a slightly greater deed than even killing an Autarch would be! If they were successful, then the Exalt would not only be brought back to life, he would be given many gifts as well. It truly would be a case of him rising to preeminence.

“Unfortunately, that Daolord is terrifyingly strong. Otherwise, we’d charge out and kill him ourselves.”

“Yes, he’s absolutely terrifying. Not even the Exalt dares to challenge him. He’s in control of an Eternal Omega Dao, and this is his Chaosverse. With the support of the Dao, he’s virtually invincible.”

“Thankfully, his truesoul is crumbling away! The more he fights, the faster the truesoul will break apart. That’s why the exiles in Purgatory have a chance.”

“However, the Exalt was quite odd about this. Why did he say that the person who killed the white-robed Daolord would be allowed to take control over an Elder Hall? Many of the exiles were local natives. Is he really going to let a local take control over an Elder Hall? They might be our progeny, but they were born in this Chaosverse, not our own; that makes them native to this Chaosverse, and they are born with power over the Dao. If we let one of them take control over an Elder Hall, that person might become a source of trouble.”

“Don’t worry, our progeny swore long ago not to betray us. And... in the end, they are our children. They share our blood. Why would they view us as enemies?”

“They are still natives; they aren’t true Sithe like us. They belong to this Chaosverse, while we belong to a different one. In the end, this is an insurmountable difference.”

“But we Sithe gave birth to them!”

“Enough, enough. Let’s not argue about this.” These two Hegemons were not native to this hidden dimension. Rather, they had invaded this Chaosverse alongside the grand Sithe army.

Clearly, the true Sithe viewed the ‘Sithe progeny’ in this hidden dimension as being different from them.

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Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 19: Inside Purgatory

Purgatory. Many exiled major powers were here, many of whom were Hegemons or Emperors. Although there were many Daolords who would be exiled here, the vast majority of them would fail the Daomerge and die! They might be Sithe progeny, but they were born within this Chaosverse and thus incapable training in true Sithe techniques. The Sithe, in turn, were unable to create a set of perfect training techniques that was suited to this Chaosverse. They were diametrically incompatible with it, after all. They would constantly be suppressed and weakened by the local prime essences, making it hard for them to comprehend the Dao here.

All the Sithe could do was bestow some local cultivator techniques to their Sithe progeny while giving them some advice and guidance.

The skies were dark and gloomy, with some fiery red light off in the horizons. A total of three figures were standing within a wilderness area.

“Haha, our chance has come!” The leader of the three was a black-robed man who had a large amount of grass covering his head, and his ‘beard’ was formed from grass as well. His eyes were dark, green, and grim. “The Exalt has bestowed powerful treasures upon us. If we can kill that white-robed Daolord, we’ll skyrocket in status and even be able to control one of the Elder Halls.”

“Big brother... it is clear from the many gifts the Exalt has offered that he truly wishes to kill that white-robed Daolord. But why, then, would he rather give us so many treasures and so many benefits rather than do it himself? None of those fools in the Sacred Realm wish to take part either! There’s only one possible answer to this – the white-robed Daolord is so terrifyingly strong that even Exalts fear him and are unable to beat him.” An ugly old lady said in a hoarse voice, “We need to treat this white-robed Daolord as we would an Exalt, or perhaps someone even more terrifying than an Exalt.”

“Second sister, you speak sense,” the chubby man by her side said immediately.

“Of course I know how terrifying he has to be... but in the end, he’s still failed the Daomerge. We have a chance! Come, let us first go find that white-robed Daolord,” the black-robed man said with a growl.

“I’ve had enough of life in Purgatory anyhow. I’d rather die fighting for this opportunity.”

“Agreed.” Both his companions turned solemn as well. Life in Purgatory truly was a living hell. There was little life here, and it was a dry, desolate place. The environment was extremely inhospitable, forcing even Hegemons to tread carefully. Worse, even if you stayed in one place and didn’t move, some danger would usually descend out of nowhere. Every day spent here was a day spent in fear. This was a miserable life indeed.

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Ji Ning continued to fly through the realm-seam, inspecting everything in his path as he flew past the eight realms. Six mortal realms, the Sacred Realm, and Purgatory – by now, Ning had located all of them. However, all seven of the other realms were completely locked; only the gates to Purgatory remained open to him. There was no way to enter the others at all!

“So they left just one door open to me?” Ning chuckled after a moment. “It seems the controllers of this hidden dimension have set up a few traps for me. Fine, fine. I’ll go play with you.”

Swoosh. Ning flew over to the Purgatory Realmgate, then gave it a glance. Ning was rather surprised: “No living beings are around it?” There was no way his senses could be off; clearly, there really were no living beings next to the Realmgate at all. What he didn’t realize was that everyone who had been driven into Purgatory was an exile; they were all extremely crafty and selfish. No one wished to be the first to attack, and so they all hid far away, using various scrying methods to watch the action at the Realmgate.

Completely unmolested, Ning slipped through the Realmgate and arrived at the vast world of Purgatory behind it.

“What an impressive ‘Purgatory’ this world truly is!” The white-robed Ning descended upon the dark, foul-looking earth. The world around him was covered in darkness, with some flames flickering far off in the distance that were blindingly bright. Around him were many howling tornados that quickly appeared and then dissipated, while space and time were rippling behind him.

“It really is quite chaotic here. This ‘Purgatory’ is filled with countless natural calamities. Even Hegemons would have to tread carefully here, while Daolords are constantly at risk of imminent death.” Ning chuckled. “But it’s better than the realm-seam, at least.” The realm-seam was even more chaotic, to the point where there was nothing stable there at all. At least this place had an environment.

Flames illuminating the distant horizons... this did make for an eerily beautiful sight. The destructive tornados that constantly swept through this place did as well. As for the evil miasmatic aura of this place that give birth to vilefiends? It was nothing but a bit of amusement to Ning.

“Now this place is rather intriguing. I’m almost finished merging the Dao of Wind into my Eternal Omega Sword Dao. I might as well train here for a time.” Although Ning was surrounded by danger, he remained completely relaxed. He immediately sat down in the lotus position.

The white-robed Ning sat down there on the foul ground, his Sword Dao Domain covering the entire area around him, preventing the various types of natural dangers from moving close to him. The place where Ning sat had become sacred grounds, untouched by the filth of Purgatory.

Whoosh. The wind blew past Ning jubilantly, occasionally revealing a few sparks of sword-light which gathered together, eventually transforming back into wind once more.

Ning had reached the Hegemonic level in the Dao of Wind long ago. Now, what he needed to do was to infuse it into his Sword Dao and create his Wind Sword Dao!

Time passed, one day after another.

“What’s going on?”

“Why has that Daolord sat down without even moving an inch?” The exiles who were scrying this place from afar were all puzzled.

“I have to say, that Daolord is pretty powerful. He didn’t have to do anything; his domain alone was able to block out all the local dangers. The chaotic environment of Purgatory is absolutely nothing to him.”

“He’s probably trying to buy time.”

“If he wants to drag this out, I’m more than happy to oblige. I’ve already been trapped here for over eight million chaos cycles. Let’s see who can last longer! I have plenty of patience.”

“Yes, let’s wait.” The exiled powers were all waiting for the right moment to attack.

The years continued to flow on. In the blink of an eye, over half a million years had gone by. All of the exiled powers continued to wait patiently for a good opportunity. Although they all had powerful Sith weapons and were confident in their abilities, life in Purgatory had long ago ensured that they had become slippery and crafty.

The local environment here was bizarre but beautiful in a twisted way, and the flames flickering off in the distance caused Ning’s face to flicker with reflected light. Suddenly, Ning’s lips curved upwards slightly, and he slowly opened his eyes. A smiling look was in his gaze.

Ning took a sudden, deep breath, causing the wind streams around him to begin to howl.

“GRAAAAAH!” Suddenly, Ning seemed to let out an enormous roar.

In truth, this was nothing more than a single deep breath, but the breath was so ferocious that it generated a terrifying howling sound which shook the earth. It sounded like the bellowing of a thousand terrifying beasts, and it unleashed countless twisting tornados that were formed from countless streaks of sword-light. The howling wind was like the waves of the ocean, crashing out every which way.

The howling wind shattered everything in its path like a giant shockwave, crushing mountains to dust and shattering even the distant flames. The wind wave spread out with terrifying speed, moving so fast that even Sith Exalts would be caught offguard by it.

This was Ning’s Wind Sword Dao! The terrifying gust of wind caused even spacetime to shudder.

“Flee!”

“Run away!”

Ning’s breath was actually aimed at the five Emperors who were located closest to him. They were hundreds of billions of kilometers away from him, but it wasn’t enough. The Dao of Wind was a fast Dao to begin with, and the Wind Sword Dao in the form of a howling tempest moved with indescribable speed. Hundreds of billions of kilometers was nothing to it! Although those five Emperors frantically sought to flee, spacetime was suppressed here. There was no way to warp through spacetime, and so they could do nothing save just watch as the terrifying wind howled through the heavens and moved towards them with incomprehensible speed. There was nowhere for them to hide at all.

“Ahhhh!”

“Attack!”

“Impossible.”

“Go all-out against him!” The five Emperors felt a sense of despair. Some attempted to use Sithe weapons to fight back, but wind by its very nature is a formless thing. The attacks of the Sithe weapons flew straight through the wind, completely incapable of affecting the wind at all.

The wind swept through the lands like a giant broom, wiping out everything in its path. Those five Emperors were instantly ground to dust, with just a few of their top treasures and Sithe weapons managing to survive.

An area of over three trillion kilometers to Ning’s left had been completely swept clean in a fan-shaped manner. The entire world seemed to have become incredibly, perfectly flat.

The other exiles who were watching this from afar were all scared out of their minds. “He did that with just a shout? H-how powerful is he?!” The exiles were starting to tremble with fear.

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Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 20: Broken One By One

What they didn’t know was that Ji Ning didn’t actually ‘shout’. He had just mastered his Wind Sword Dao, and had given it a little test by blowing some air out of his lungs, but the air had quickly moved at such incredible speeds that all of the exiles were absolutely stunned and terrified by it.

“He’s terrifying.”

“He was able to slay Hegemons with ease from a distant of hundreds of billions of kilometers. He truly is unfathomably powerful. All the Hegemons and Emperors in Purgatory combined might stand a chance, but if we were to fight separately we would be defeated one-by-one.”

“Join forces. Our only chance is to join forces.” The exiles were all extraordinarily talented figures; they instantly knew what they had to do. But... it was already too late!

“Now that I have mastered the Wind Sword Dao, it is time to make my move. I certainly can’t win a war of attrition against them.” Ning rose to his feet, taking a single step forwards and warping forwards to the location where the five slain Hegemons had been at. He waved his hand, collecting all of the fallen treasures and Sithe weapons. These were all fine treasures that he could either leave to the Three Realms or gift to his disciples and friends.

Next, Ning took another step forwards and reappeared next to a lake which was hundreds of billions of kilometers.

Two Emperors were by the lakeside, carefully scrying the area where Ning had been just a moment ago. Suddenly, a dimensional ripple appeared next to them, followed by a white-robed Daolord appearing from it. His appearance terrified the two Emperors so much that their legs went soft. “How is this possible? How did he find us? We set up formations early on to track from very far away if anyone moves close to us. It didn’t look like the Daolord made any preparations either. How did he do this?!”

They couldn't understand it at all. In truth, this enormous hidden dimension did put Ning under quite a bit of pressure. Godsense was blocked out; his only choice was to use his eyes. However, his vision was also impaired by many types of invisible energy, limiting the distance at which he could see.

"I spent half a million years training next to the Realmgate mastering the Wind Sword Dao, just for this moment," Ning mused.

If he remained far away from his enemies and was unable to locate them, he would end up in a passive situation where he could only endure attacks from them. This was why he chose to sit down and master his Wind Sword Dao. Ning had previously spent three thousand chaos cycles training in various Daos; if he had chosen to focus on the Wind Sword Dao, he would've completed it long ago. However, he had not; he had let things happen normally, preferring to spend more of his time on the more-difficult Space Sword Dao. There was no need to focus that much on a fairly simple Sword Dao.

In Purgatory, he was completely unable to locate any of his foes, and so he chose to focus on the Wind Sword Dao. The wind was something without form or shape, but it blew across the entire world. Thanks to the Wind Sword Dao, Ning was able to ride the wind with his senses and accurately locate every single one of the Hegemons and Emperors! He might not be able to see them with the naked eye, but he could sense them with the wind!

"Flee!" The terrified Emperors hurriedly sought to flee, but Ning glared at them. His gaze seemed to solidify and transform into two streams of wind. At first, the wind seemed quite gentle, but when it blew past the two Emperors it transformed into a raging gale. The two Emperors tried to flee, but the gale was composed of countless tiny streaks of sword-light that effortlessly ground them into dust.

"Next." Ning didn't even waste time on picking up their treasures. Instead, he immediately warped through space towards the next squad of enemies.

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If Ning wanted to actually use some of his energy, he could actually use a Northbow sword to pierce through spacetime and slay them from afar. However, that took up too much of his power. He wasn't willing to resort to this. If he wanted to kill them while conserving his energy, he had to kill them at close range.

This was because this hidden dimension had a suppressive effect on his Sword Dao Domain, preventing it from expanding to its usual size. When Ning had used his Wind Sword Dao to form a Sword Dao Domain that used a howling wind to assault his foes, he had only been able to strike from a distance of a few hundreds of billions of kilometers. At this distance, Ning was able to use his Wind Sword Dao to suppress spacetime and prevent his foes from fleeing.

The problem was, there were other foes who were trillions of kilometers away. Some were even more distant! Ning was unable to suppress spacetime at such a great distance! When his enemies saw him attacking, they would be able to escape via blinking away. That's why he had to get close to them, then attack!

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"The white-robed Daolord is attacking us!"

“He’s warping through space to attack us. Hurry up and join forces! If we stay separated like this, we’re all going to die.” The exiles were absolutely terrified by now.

Whoosh. Ning appeared before yet another squad. This squad had a total of three Emperors. When they saw the white-robed Daolord appear, their hearts were filled with terror. They didn’t hesitate at all, immediately unleashing their most powerful Sithe weapons to battle against Ning. They knew that escape was completely impossible; they had no chance of successfully fleeing at all.

Two of the Emperors each wielded a strange scepter which glowed with a blurry light that swept out to cover Ning. Not even Ning’s Sword Dao Domain was able to block this blurry light, as it was formless and incorporeal. It completely covered Ning.

The third Emperor wielded a long spear. He suddenly threw it forwards, sending it howling through the air like a stream of light that shot through the Sword Dao Domain and stabbed at Ning.

“What a powerful illusion! My Dao-heart is perfect and I have reached a high level of mastery over illusions, but I was still slightly affected by it. It seems I need to upgrade my Dao of Illusions to Hegemony as soon as possible. When I ran into that Sithe Exalt Dauber, I was slightly affected by him as well.” Ning couldn’t help but sigh. The Sithe truly had reached incomprehensible heights in every single Dao.

Although Ning was slightly affected by the illusions, his remained extremely clear-minded and his will was resolute. As for the powerful long spear shooting towards him? Ning simply stood there, not even moving. He took control over his Sword Dao Domain, transforming countless streams of sword-light into streams of water and gusts of wind that blasted at the long spear. Although the spear was able to tear through the obstruction of the sword-light, its trajectory was slightly changed.

Given the distances at which they were fighting, even the tiniest of adjustments would result in a wide miss. By the time the long spear flew past Ning, it missed by over thirty meters.

“If many of them attacked me at the same time with a variety of attacks, I might be in a bit of trouble. Just three of them? Nothing to fear at all.” As Ning dealt with the enemy attacks, he launched attacks of his own as well. He sent a howling wind towards his foes, and by the time he dodged the long spear his wind had already ground those three Emperors into dust.

Only then did Ning reach out to grab the now-ownerless long spear. “Next.” Ning immediately warped through space, moving towards the next squad.

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The Sacred Realm. The iridescent Elder Hall. The blue-haired youth and his two disciples were standing before a giant illusory image which was currently displaying the scene of Ning slaying the exiles. As the controller of this entire hidden dimension who was also responsible for keeping an eye on the outside world, he had the complete ability to watch over everything which happened within this dimension. Every action Ning took was witnessed by him.

“Those fools.” The blue-haired youth’s face tightened, and he focused his gaze on the image as he sent his godsense out of the Elder Hall and into Purgatory. “Spacetime, freeze!” The blue-haired youth immediately suppressed spacetime, seeking to block Ning’s advance.

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After Ning warped forwards to kill two different squads in Purgatory, the Exalt in the Sacred Realm was finally incited to action, suppressing spacetime in the region around Ning. The exiles, however, did not suffer from spacetime suppression. Thus, they were able to quickly warp through space to join together, while Ning was noticeably slowed down.

“I haven’t even picked up any treasures yet. The major power behind this hidden dimension has already chosen to suppress spacetime around me, eh?” Ning chuckled. “But do you think suppressing spacetime will be enough to bar my path?”

Whoosh. Ning once more tore a forcible hole through the void before him, creating a rippling spatial tunnel which sent him hurtling more than six hundred billion kilometers away.

This was the power of his Space Sword Dao! Compared to the might of his Space Sword Dao, even the Autarchs who didn’t specialize the Dao of Space such as Autarch Titanos or Autarch Ekong were slightly inferior when it came to tearing through space. The Sithe Exalt was using the power of the Elder Hall to suppress spacetime around him, but Ning conserved his energy and used just the power of the Dao itself to tear through the frozen spacetime and teleport a fairly short distance!

After teleporting more than six hundred billion kilometers, he was already outside the region of suppressed spacetime. As a result, he was able to quickly teleport towards yet another squad, which he dispatched with ease.

This sight truly shocked the Exalt in control of the Sacred Realm. “I knew that I wouldn’t be able stop him if he went all-out... but he was actually able to warp through spacetime just by using the power of his Sword Dao Domain?” The Sithe Exalt was scarcely able to believe it. “He’s already completely surpassed me in terms of mastery over the Dao of Space? But his Dao is that of the sword... how could he have reached such heights in the Dao of Space as well?”

He didn’t want to believe it, but the display before him was showing him images of Ning dealing with one squad after another. The various squads of Emperors began to flee frantically, and slowly some were beginning to finally join forces together.

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Book 41: The Daoguard Tower Chapter 21: Thirty-Six Stone Pillars

“Master, what should we do?”

“If we let things continue like this, the Hegemons and Emperors in Purgatory will be so terrified and ineffective that half of them will be massacred before they manage to join forces!” The two disciples next to the Exalt were all rather anxious.

The blue-haired youth calmed down again. He stared at the images within the illusory ‘painting’ and said in a cold voice, “You underestimate the exiles. They might be useless in all other respects, but one thing they are good at is staying alive. That white-robed Daolord will at most be able to wipe out 30% of the Hegemons and Emperors. By then, the rest will have banded together. I’ve bestowed two precious Apocalypse-class treasures to Purgatory. I wouldn’t be surprised if the Daolord died there.”

“Alright.” The two disciples next to him nodded in agreement. Apocalypse-class treasures were the most powerful treasures the hidden dimension had at its disposal, aside from Daoguard Towers. Previously, they had used four triangular Calamity-class treasures against Ning; those were a bit weaker, but they were also easier to control. Apocalypse-class treasures were much more complicated to control.

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The skies were dark. Flames continued to blaze at the ends of Purgatory, and spacetime remained completely suppressed. Ning tore through spacetime, repeatedly blinking forwards and slaying the Hegemons and Emperors at high speed. However, this process took time. The Hegemons and Emperors who were not destroyed during Ning’s first wave of assaults were quickly fleeing towards each other and banding together.

A short while later.

“They fled quite fast.” The white-robed Ning stood at the peak of a tall mountain. He swept the land with his gaze. Although he wasn’t able to see anything, he was able to rely on the wind to determine that the remaining Hegemons and Emperors had already banded together into two large squads. They had begun to activate the power of their Sithe weapons and had set up many traps as they awaited Ning’s arrival.

“These two groups will be a bit hard to deal with.” Ning could sense how dangerous these two groups would be, and so he chuckled: “Time to go pick up those treasures first.”

Whoosh. Ning leisurely warped through space, going to the places where he had previously slain Hegemons and Emperors, then picking up their fallen Sithe treasures.

“What’s that terrifying Daolord up to?”

“Has he come yet?”

“Not yet.”

“I found him!” The exiles all had their own special techniques, and some were actually able to monitor all of Ning’s actions thanks to aid from the Sacred Realm. “He’s... actually looting our treasures?”

The exiles were all rather speechless as they watched Ning leisurely saunter from place to place, picking up all of the treasures. He hadn’t done so earlier, as the battles had been very fast and he didn’t want to waste the time. The surviving exiles had all been focused on running for their lives, and they similarly didn’t stop to pick up treasures.

“Nineteen Sithe treasures, each with their own marvelous properties. All of them are quite strong, and some are really powerful.” Ning couldn’t help but grin. The Sithe had naturally prepared many powerful weapons to use against him.

After picking up all the weapons, Ning gracefully warped through space to arrive before the first squad of Hegemons and Emperors.

“Only two squads are left in all of Purgatory, but each squad has a large number of Hegemons and Emperors as well as special weapons. They are actually quite dangerous.” Ning stared towards the

desolate wilderness before him, which held an enormous dark-red castle that looked almost like some sort of monstrosity.

The castle had a total of nine towers, and a total of thirty-six strange stone pillars were scattered around it within an area of roughly 1.8 billion kilometers. These stone pillars all had different weapons hovering above them.

“Come over!”

“Come and die!” There were twenty-plus Hegemons and Emperors within the castle, and they all stared murder towards Ning.

This castle was an enormous fort that was meant for war. Thirty-six Emperors were needed to unleash its full power. Although there weren’t enough Emperors present, many had avatars who could help out, and so they were still able to make full use of this castle’s power.

“Hm. Now how should I deal with this castle...” Ning stared at the castle from afar, not daring to move too close to it. He could sense that if he moved within ten billion kilometers of the castle, he would suffer a terrifying attack.

“I wonder what type of attack this castle can unleash. Those thirty-six stone pillars seem to be quite dangerous as well,” Ning mused. He currently had no information at all regarding what type of attacks those castles could unleash; if he wanted to know, he’d have to go test it out. Once he did, however, he might fall to their fury.

“Ahahaha... you there! White-robed Daolord! Aren’t you supposed to be a real badass? Why aren’t you moving?” A loud, mocking, angry shout rang out from within the castle, spreading out tens of billions of kilometers and shaking the world beyond it.

“I’m thinking, I’m thinking! I’m trying to decide how I should deal with this castle of yours,” Ning replied with a laugh.

Ning continued to scrutinize the castle as he spoke. He could sense that an invisible field of energy was surrounding the castle up to a distance of ten billion kilometers. Spacetime was completely suppressed within this region, and those thirty-six stone pillars were rippling with power as well.

“You can stare at this castle for ten or a hundred chaos cycles, but you still won’t be able to see the mysteries which my castle contains,” the angry voice replied. “Just keep watching!”

Ning was neither irritated nor impatient by this response. As for the other squad of Hegemons and Emperors, they watched from afar without moving towards him.

Both Apocalypse-class treasures needed a large number of Hegemons and Emperors working together to control them. There was no real way for them to work together; it was better for them to fight against Ning individually.

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Ning spent over half a month analyzing the castle and ruminating over the mysterious runes covering the stone pillars. He also carefully attuned himself to the various auras and ripples emanating from the castle. Finally, he was able to come to a simple, preliminary conclusion.

“This castle’s attacks should be of the area-attack variety, while the thirty-six stone pillars will all focus their attacks on me, trying to make it impossible for me to dodge.” Ning nodded to himself. “The Sithe have probably come to a rough estimation of my power and abilities. This castle might actually be a perfect counter for me.”

Ning was extremely fast, but the Sithe Exalt had specifically chosen this castle to counter Ning’s speed.

“Even so, I really don’t have any other choices. I have to advance and break through all obstacles.” For Ning to die was one thing, as his truesoul was already disintegrating. Dying here, however, meant that the Paragon of Pills wouldn’t be able to escape either. Ning was unwilling to see this.

Time to go all out and destroy everything in his path!

Whoosh. Ning suddenly moved, transforming into a streak of light that shot towards the distant castle. He soon entered the range of ten billion kilometers.

“Attack!” The Hegemon inside the ugly castle immediately issued the attack order, and the nine castle towers lit up simultaneously, shooting out nine semi-translucent beams of light that cut through space. The nine beams of light shot out at nine of the stone pillars, then turned and also shot through other stone pillars. The beams of light continued to pass through the various pillars, quickly forming an enormous spiderweb of light. As this happened, the weapons above the thirty-six stone pillars slowly began to build up power.

Ning watched silently as he approached the castle. Six billion kilometers. Five billion kilometers. Four billion kilometers. Three billion kilometers...

Right as Ning moved within three billion kilometers of the castle, some sort of mechanism seemed to be activated.

Hiss! The top of a stone pillar shot out a ray of deep azure light that transformed into an enormous azure serpent which was three hundred thousand meters long. The serpent immediately flew towards Ning.

Crackle! The top of a second stone pillar manifested a giant eyeball with a strange vertical pupil. The vertical pupil shot out a streak of blood-colored light towards Ning.

All sorts of attacks filled the air, including attacks of bone-chilling cold, a miasmatic black mist, a vast and evil palm, and layers of folded spacetime waves. These attacks shot out at Ning from every direction, clearly seeking to surround and submerge Ning, giving him no chance to escape as they sought to annihilate him.

Ning immediately understood what a deadly situation he had just stepped into.

Powerful Sithe weapons were able to attack at incredible speeds. When he was attacked by the Daoguard Tower which had trapped the Paragon of Pills, he had actually been forced to use his own energy to utilize evasion-arts to dodge! In terms of raw speed, these attacks were actually even faster than Ning’s own speed. Dodging just one of them would require energy. Dodging thirty-six attacks of incredible accuracy and which were all coordinated with each other? How hard would that be?

As for destroying the attacks with raw force? If he tried to do so, his own speed would be affected and he would suffer one attack after another. Ning wouldn't dare to use his own body to resist all these attacks. He would have to rely on his sword-arts, which meant he would have to strike out dozens of times. If even the outer perimeter forced him to strike this many times... this single castle alone would be enough to exhaust him to death.

"Wind! Lightning!" Ning raised his two arms, pulling out a pair of Northbow swords from the sheath on his back. He now had a Northbow sword in each hand, and he sent out two streaks of sword-light at the same time, employing his Wind Sword Dao and his Lightning Sword Dao.

Boom! Boom! Ning's speed suddenly skyrocketed while two streaks of light appeared behind him. The first streak of light crackled like lightning, while the second was as ghostly as the wind. They seemed to form a pair of wings, with one being of lightning and the second being of wind.

Ning had gained certain insights when he had mastered the Wind Sword Dao. The Five Elements were all able to work together as they were part of a set, and the Wind Sword Dao and the Lightning Sword Dao were also able to work together. The wind and the lightning worked in concert, propelling Ning to the maximum level of speed he was currently capable of.