

Desolate 1461

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Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 12: A Murderous Voice

Oftentimes, the simpler something was the fewer flaws it had. One of the simplest measures was to just construct a dimensional cage to imprison someone, one which was so stable and tough that there was no way to break through it.

However, simplicity carried its own stringent requirements. Ji Ning and the Autarchs were so overwhelmingly powerful and had such limitless reserves of energy that no mere dimensional cage could possibly withstand their assaults! The eight revolutions formation went about it in another way. It generated multiple worlds, each of which Ning was able to break through fairly quickly... but the worlds continued to be generated one after another!

“All of these worlds are extremely stable. Maintaining this sort of world can’t be easy,” Ning mused. “And there can’t really be an endless amount of worlds!”

“Break!” Ning once more rose to his feet in three-headed, six-armed form. He transformed into a dazzling streak of sword-light which slammed against the dimensional membrane. After the time needed to boil a kettle of tea the dimensional membrane was hacked open, revealing a freezing world of ice. Ice filled the entire world, making up its continents, mountains, and valleys.

Ning stepped through the dimensional rift and into this frozen world.

“It doesn’t really matter which direction the tear is created in; the end result will still be a new world. Given how stable these worlds are, there can’t be that many of them... and yet they continue to loop in on themselves in an endless cycle. The only way this is possible is if these eight worlds are actually moving to line up in front of me! That way, no matter where I go I’ll see an endless procession of worlds before me.”

By now, Ning had a rough idea as to how this eight cycles formation had to work. It consisted of several dozen or several hundred worlds that were perhaps arranged into a spherical shape! Ning was located at the very center of this sphere, so no matter where he went he would enter a new world. Once he did so, the other worlds would relocate themselves to keep him at their center.

No matter where he went, he would remain trapped in the ‘center’ of the formation. He’d never be able to make it out!

This was his current theory. Perhaps it wasn’t perfect, but he felt confident that this was more-or-less how it worked. However, this theory just made Ning feel even more worried, precisely because of how simple it was. The simpler something was, the fewer flaws it would have.

“Its only real flaw is that these worlds have to constantly move and shift around as I do. If they didn’t, then I would eventually be able to advance beyond the scope of the formation. This moving process has to take time. It takes me the time needed to boil a kettle of tea in order to break through a world, and that’s more than enough for them to readjust themselves,” Ning mused. “If I could break through the worlds over ten times faster... perhaps it wouldn’t be enough time for the worlds to relocate themselves perfectly, resulting in some openings that I can exploit.”

Based on his current level of understanding, he knew that using force to breach this formation was completely hopeless. The eight formations formation would continuously rearrange its internal configuration with each world he escaped. Power wouldn't work... what he needed was speed! He needed to move fast enough that the formation wouldn't be able to reconfigure in time, resulting in flaws being revealed.

"This is my only option." Ning could come up with no ideas save for this one. "But how am I supposed to break through these worlds faster?"

Two options came to mind. The first was to somehow make himself become more powerful. For example, if he managed to reach a greater level of understanding with regards to the Dao of Spacetime, he would be able to quickly and more easily breach those dimensional walls. Alternately, if he managed to create the Oblivion Sword Dao then he could use its all-encompassing destructive force to devour everything in his path. Ning had the feeling that once he created it, he would become much more powerful, and he could use that power to more quickly breach those dimensional barriers.

However, improving his personal strength was an extremely difficult goal. He had already devised the Spacetime Sword Dao. Ning had no idea how he was supposed to upgrade it any further.

The concept of 'Oblivion', he had only gained after scrying the secrets of the sphere of annihilation. This was a form of power that was capable of destroying an entire Chaosverse. Iyerre had found this mysterious item from within the Infinite Void, and in all his countless aeons of existence he had never found a second such item. Ning's avatar remained trapped within the Annihilation Hive, and it had never stopped analyzing this technique.

The second option was to find flaws in the dimensional membranes before him. If he could find some flaws, he would be able to break through them much faster with much less effort.

"I've been constantly training in the Oblivion Sword Dao. There's no way to rush it." Ning inspected the area around him. "My only choice is to find flaws within these dimensional constructs."

Whoosh. Whoosh. His sword-light became watery, flowing across the dimensional membrane and causing it to first shudder, then crack.

Ning stared at the cracks, watching them quickly heal. "These dimensions were created based on the secrets of spacetime. Every single part of the dimensional membrane seems to be identical. There don't seem to be any flaws."

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As Ning remained trapped within the eight revolutions formation, the war outside began to pick up the pace. Autarch Skyfeeder's avatar ended up being tricked while hunting down Sithe and was trapped within a temple, as was Autarch Bolin's avatar.

Autarch Stonerule's avatar was more formidable. He was a wary man and a mastery of illusions. When the Sithe temple appeared, they discovered that they had trapped nothing more than a mere projection... and now that the temple had revealed itself, Autarch Stonerule immediately set down a grand formation around the temple, securely sealing it away and ensuring that it was unable to escape.

For now the clashes remained fairly low-level, as Autarchs could replace lost avatars with slightly weaker ones. In the end, the real focus of the war remained on Emperor Darknorth.

If Emperor Darknorth died, the Annihilation Hive would no longer be checked. It would continue to furiously devour the energies of the Chaosverse. The only other person who understood how the reverse-vortex formation worked was Autarch Titanos, whose avatar had already been destroyed. His new avatar wasn't strong enough to keep the Annihilation Hive in check. Titanos would have to go in person if he wanted to stop the thing!

Darknorth was the strongest member of the seven cultivator leaders, while Titanos was the second-strongest. If the former was slain while the latter was tied down, they would have all-but lost the war.

"If we can kill Darknorth, we'll have won." Iyerre viewed killing Ning as a mission of critical importance. As far as he was concerned, Ning was a greater risk than all six of the other Autarchs combined.

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On the sixty-ninth day of Ning's capture.

In recent days Ning would only occasionally break through to a new world, then spend most of his time strolling about before beginning to meditate.

"Ah. So is that how it works?" Ning opened his eyes, his gaze as deep and fathomless as the starry skies themselves. Countless stars seemed to be swimming through his eyes. This was a sign that he had reached a truly incredible level in the Dao of Numerancy.

Suddenly, Ning's body rapidly increased in size. Boom! He transformed into a towering three-headed, six-armed giant who wielded all six of the Northbow swords. He strode across the land, his six swords also increasing in size as he used them to deliver repeated chops of sword-light against the dimensional membrane all around him.

When Ning's swords moved, multiple sword-shadows appeared around them. There were chops, stabs, thwacks... all sorts of attacks filled the area around him.

"What's going on?"

"Something's wrong with that world. It's destabilizing!" The Sithe Exalts responsible for maintaining the eight revolutions formation were quickly shocked. They had only grown more confident in their formation as they had watched Ning fail to make any progress. They had allowed themselves to relax... but now, all of them were shocked! This was because the world Ning was in had begun to shudder, almost as though the entire world was unable to remain stable and was at the verge of collapse.

"I can't send in additional energy!" the black-haired Sithe Exalt called out in shock. "We're blocked from sending our energy into any part of the dimensional membrane of that world. Something's disrupting the conduits! The lack of energy is causing the dimensional membrane to be unable to repair itself. He's going to break through much faster than before!"

"How is this possible? How did he do this?!" The Sithe Exalts were frantic. Previously, Ning needed the amount of time for boiling a kettle of tea in order to break through a dimensional membrane. This was because each time he assaulted the dimensional membrane, the formation would quickly send in more

energy to reinforce it. This was why even after he did manage to tear a rift open, the rift would quickly close after just three seconds.

But now, the dimensional membrane was no longer being resupplied with energy. That made the destruction process much faster.

It didn't make sense. The energy transfer was an invisible, formless process which saw energy be directed straight into the membrane itself. By all rights, there should be no way to stop such a thing. However, to a person who had reached a sufficiently high level of insights all things were possible, be it creation or destruction. Ning had spent many days in accelerated meditation, figuring out a way to accomplish this by joining together his Numerancy Sword Dao, Spacetime Sword Dao, Light Sword Dao, and Dark Sword Dao.

Boom! Three gaping holes appeared in different parts of the world Ning was trapped in. Ning glanced through the holes, only to see three completely different worlds. He smiled.

"Dimensions, revolve!" a strange, murderous voice suddenly rang out.

Suddenly, Ning saw the three different worlds outside the rifts begin to spin away. The world he was in became completely detached from them... and slowly, Ning began to see the fourth and fifth worlds which were revolving around him.

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Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 13: Fatal Trap (1)

"Not good." A terrifying sense of danger instantly flooded Ji Ning's mind. "They can no longer hold me, so they are going to try and kill me instead?"

These temples were all manned by Sithe Exalts. They could be used to trap, but they could also be used to kill! Autarch Titanos' avatar and Autarch Ekong had to work together to survive the one they were in, with Titanos eventually losing his avatar in order for Ekong to escape. These temples were not easy to deal with!

Ning had the vague feeling that staying within this world would be even more dangerous, and so he immediately transformed into a streak of light and shot outwards.

Whoosh! As soon as he exited the world, his face paled. In the past a new world would greet him once he exited the previous one, but this time was different. This time, he was within an empty region which had many enormous pocket dimensions. Above him, below him, to his left, to his right... the entire area was filled with those spinning worlds. Ning was able to see over twenty of the things. They all circled around him, with him being at the very center.

"It really is as I had predicted. These worlds are all mobile, which is why I would always enter a new one after breaking through the old one." Ning became all the more certain of his hypothesis when he saw this. "Now that I'm breaking through the worlds much more quickly, they aren't able to keep up and so they've chosen to discard the useless trappings entirely."

"Emperor Darknorth!" a cold voice rang out.

“Are you absolutely sure that I’m Darknorth?” Ning replied, relaxed. His body was glowing with such radiance that the Sithe Exalts were only able to see a glowing figure and were unable to make out his features.

“I can’t imagine anyone save you, Emperor Darknorth, who would be able to so quickly understand and deconstruct the eight revolutions formation,” the cold voice replied. “The eight revolutions formation isn’t just meant for trapping people, it’s also filled with many killer mechanisms! Emperor Darknorth, our original plan was simply to trap you. However, you are forcing our hand. We’ll have to kill you now,” a second deep voice boomed out.

“Hah!” Ning stared at the many worlds revolving around him, then let out a loud laugh. “What a joke! If you were able to kill me, you would’ve done so long ago. In the end, this is my homeland. We cultivators are far more powerful than you in our own Chaosverse. Kill me? Even if you have the assistance of this temple, I’ll wager you aren’t sure of your chances!”

The faces of the eight Sithe Exalt stiffened slightly. It was true. They had to admit that they weren’t 100% sure they could kill Darknorth. Not even Iyerre was confident that they could accomplish this, which was why he had merely ordered them to trap Ning and tie him down. If they could keep Ning trapped until Iyerre arrived, their chances of victory would increase to 100%! Alas, there was nothing the Sithe Exalts could do. Now that Ning had already worked out how the eight revolutions formation operated, he would probably be able to escape within an hour if left to his own devices!

Thus, they had chosen to transform the ‘eight revolutions formation’ from a trapping formation to a killing formation.

All of the temples had terrifying offensive powers built into them. The same was true for the Eight Revolutions Spacetime Temple!

“Hopefully, we can kill him. Even if we cannot, we can still use ‘annihilation mode’ to buy ourselves some more time.”

“It’s already been sixty-nine days. If we can buy another ten-plus days, we’ll have accomplished something great.”

“He’s forcing us to do this. Attack!”

“Attack!” The eight Sithe Exalts immediately activated the offensive functions in the eight revolutions formation.

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“Eh?” Ning’s face hardened as he stood there in the empty void, staring at the vast worlds which were spinning around him. He could clearly sense that each of the giant worlds were accumulating and preparing to unleash a terrifying amount of power. Freezing energies, flaming energies, watery energies, vital energies, metallic energies... all types of energies were beginning to pour out of the many worlds.

The different types of energy were beginning to build together, and in the end they resolved into eight different types of energy which materialized in the forms of titanic dragons. The vast energy dragons all looked completely different, but they were all around ten million kilometers long and a million kilometers wide. Each energy dragon contained enough power to cause even Ning to feel a sense of

shock. These things were definitely on the Autarch level... and in fact, they significantly surpassed Ning in raw might.

However, Ning was able to remain quite calm. These were nothing more than formation constructs which did not possess true sentience. They knew nothing of the Dao.

The eight enormous dragons slowly began to 'swim' through the air towards Ning, their ponderous bodies blocking out everything in Ning's vision.

"Hm." Ning maintained his three-headed, six-armed form and warily waited for them with his six Northbow swords at the ready.

Finally, all of them joined together to form a series of loops. Some of them formed the 'inner loops', while others formed the 'outer loops'. A dragon that seemed to be formed from stone energies was the first to move towards Ning, and when it did Ning finally struck.

"Break!" Faced with the durable-looking stone dragon, Ning immediately used the Five Elements Sword Dao. In truth, all eight energy dragons were based upon the energies of the Five Elements, and so the Five Elements Sword Dao was the most suitable response for all of them.

Ning's sword-light was filled with vitality. It drilled hard against the stone dragon, exploding with dazzling light as it sought to tear through it.

The Five Elements Sword Dao truly was a strong counter for this stone dragon, but Ning's full-force strike was only able to just barely shatter the stone dragon apart. Moments later, the other energy dragons began to swarm towards him while the stone dragon began to reform from its shattered parts.

Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh. The eight energy dragons continuously coiled around Ning in layers. Ning destroyed one after another, but new ones were continuously formed.

"How long is this going to take?" Ning was growing anxious. "Why is it that I feel escape is even more difficult than it was earlier."

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The eight Sithe Exalts continued to maintain careful control over the formation, not daring to relax in the slightest.

"Using the formation like this is consuming far too much energy. It is depleting energy many times faster than 'trap mode' did. We won't be able to last too long," the black-haired Sithe exalts said worriedly.

"We have to. Even if it costs us every last scrap of energy, we have to last until almighty Iyerre arrives."

"Hold on for as long as you can."

The eight revolutions formation had many different mechanisms within it. 'Trap mode' was just the start, ensuring that any foe would find it difficult to escape. Next would come a terrifying number of attacks! However, the Sithe Exalts weren't confident in being able to actually kill Ning with those attacks, and so they continued to pour all of their efforts into simply trapping Ning and keeping him tied down. So long as Ning didn't escape, they would have 'won'... but this process would consume an enormous amount of energy, especially with Ning launching so many attacks against them.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The three-headed, six-armed Ning continuously assaulted the energy dragons using his Five Elements Sword Dao. He didn't pause for even a second, because he already discovered a flaw in the formation. "These dragons are formed from energy and given physical heft, making breaking them difficult. Without a doubt, maintaining them takes up an absolutely shocking amount of energy at all times. If I furiously attack, their energy expenditures will be insane!"

"I refuse to believe they'll be able to sustain such high levels of energy expenditure for too long. That's the weak spot of this formation – its energy consumption. Break!" Ning didn't worry about his own energy running dry. He was an Omega Emperor in his own Chaosverse; he had an endless supply of energy from the Chaosverse itself.

Boom! Boom! Boom! He destroyed yet another dragon, and once again a new dragon came in its stead. The eight energy dragons continued to coil around him and suppress him, preventing him from escaping but paying an enormous cost in energy to accomplish this.

After six full days of this war of attrition, the Sithe Exalts were finally unable to maintain it any longer.

"If this continues, in just one day our Eight Revolutions Spacetime Palace will collapse under its own weight due to lack of energy." The female Sithe Exalt said hurriedly, "Even if we can manage to last for an extra day, it won't be enough time. Iyerre won't be able to make it."

"Damn this Emperor Darknorth. He's been attacking nonstop this entire time. If he took a slight break, we wouldn't have it this rough. By all rights, we've prepared such a powerful energy wellspring that it should be more than strong enough to last us until almighty Iyerre arrives, but Emperor Darknorth won't stop his crazed attacks!"

"Well, we ARE trying to kill him. You didn't really expect him to just stand there and wait for death, did he?"

"Enough. Let's attack. Cancel 'trap mode' and activate the 'annihilation mode'! Annihilation mode has much more powerful attacks. Emperor Darknorth might be an incredible genius, but he still might very well die to it."

"We're out of other options."

The Sithe Exalts had been trying to buy enough time for Iyerre to arrive, since that would guarantee them victory. Alas, they no longer had enough time. Their only choice was to fully activate 'annihilation mode', with the original 'trap mode' having been nothing more than the first phase of the formation.

"Materialize!" The eight Sithe Exalts simultaneously began to activate their respective parts of the formation.

Rumble... the energy dragons that had been coiling around Ning suddenly began to roil about in midair, tangling around each other as all of them simultaneously shot towards Ning. Even the enormous linked worlds off in the distance began to move once more, causing Ning's face to change.

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Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 14: Fatal Trap (part 2)

The 'trap mode' had worked in a gradual function by pressuring Ji Ning and slowing him down. Each time he destroyed one of the eight energy dragons, it would quickly reform and go after him again. The overall tempo of the battle was fairly slow... but now, everything suddenly sped up.

The eight energy dragons began to simultaneously coil around Ning in a ferocious fashion. Ning knew just how terrifyingly strong these dragons were. If he wasn't able to withstand their attacks, he would probably be ground to dust! Even his truesoul would be ground apart by them.

"Break!" Ning chose to discard all defenses and instead use his sword-arts to charge straight towards the ice dragon which was closest to him.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Sword-light flashed like the spokes of a giant windmill, instantly landing multiple consecutive cuts upon the frozen dragon's body and chopping deep into it. Ning seized this opportunity to burrow all the way inside the dragon.

Bang! All the other energy dragons collided into each other, not even touching Ning who was now inside the ice dragon.

"Whew." Ning let out a sigh of relief. "There's no way for me to block all eight of those dragons head-on at once, but by hiding inside one of them I was able to sidestep the problem."

Whoosh. The ice dragon Ning was inside of quickly began to crumble and break apart, taking away Ning's 'hiding spot'. A moment later, a new ice dragon began to reform at the outer perimeter of this region.

As soon as Ning revealed himself, all of the dragons once more swept towards him.

"Break!" Ning's sword-light flashed with incomparable sharpness and severity, tearing through the body of the water dragon and allowing him to dodge inside!

No matter what dragon he faced, he was able to find the perfect sword-art to counter it. He would burrow deep inside an energy dragon's body, using it to avoid the many other attacks!

"Hmph. I wonder how long you'll be able to keep playing like this." Ning wasn't worried at all, continuing to dive into the bodies of the energy dragons to avoid their combined attacks. "This increased tempo means that the energy dragons are breaking apart ten times faster than they were in the past, with the overall formation expending far more energy than merely ten times that of before! How long could they possibly sustain this?" Generally speaking, when accelerating the attacks of a formation like this, the energy expenditure would skyrocket an astronomical amount.

Ning's guess was spot-on. After just one hour, the Sithe Exalts were no longer able to maintain this tempo of battle.

"We aren't able to kill him. Emperor Darknorth is just too strong; he can almost instantly tear through one of our formation-dragons."

"Our energy reserves just don't last long enough. Let's go to the final formation, the 'eight revolutions annihilator' formation.

"I hope the 'eight revolutions annihilator' is able to kill him.

“It definitely will kill him. The eight revolutions annihilator is so powerful that it should definitely be mighty enough take his life.”

The Sithe Exalts were all desperate for victory. The eight revolutions annihilator formation was the final and most powerful offensive technique the temple possessed. If even this failed, then Ning would be able to break the formation and escape shortly afterwards, which meant that they would have failed in their mission!

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As Ning was busy blocking those frenzied attacks, the eight energy dragons suddenly skyrocketed in power once more. They blasted out countless streams of power in every direction, aiming them at the giant worlds which were constantly shifting position in the perimeter around Ning. The worlds of water, freezing ice, blazing fire, stone, and more began to link together in an intricate and marvelous manner, forming a single complete whole.

Above Ning, the many worlds had come together to form something which looked like an enormous Eight Trigrams shape. Below him, the many worlds had come together to form something similar.

The two sets of Eight Trigrams were rapidly crashing down towards Ning, who was trapped between them. It was like the lower set was a grindstone, while the upper set was a millstone!

All of the worlds surrounding Ning had been completely joined together, giving him no chance to escape at all. As for the energy dragons, their energies had been completely merged into this formation as well.

“Not good!” This was a straightforward crushing attack, spread across such a vast area that Ning wasn’t able to dodge it at all. His only choice was to meet it head-on. Ning knew that the most critical moment had come, and he readied his six Northbow swords while maintaining his three-headed, six-armed mode.

This all took time to describe, but in truth it took less than a heartbeat for these worlds to come crashing down towards Ning. They moved at an absolutely astonishing speed!

Clang! Ning used his own sword-arts to defend. Three of the Northbow swords executed the Numerancy Sword Dao. The Numerancy Sword Dao was so incomparably intricate that it could truly be described as peerless amongst all divination Daos! This formation-attack he was facing was divided into two parts, and Ning wanted to attempt to redirect some of their power against each other. Thus, he used the Numerancy Sword Dao to do just that, lessening some of the pressure off him.

His fourth Northbow sword, he used to execute the Spacetime Sword Dao in generating a spacetime membrane which covered him. He was now within an independent spacetime continuum which would easily deflect many attacks.

As for his final two swords, he used them to execute the Five Elements Sword Dao. They embodied the gentleness of water, the weightiness of the earth, the vital energy of wood...

The two Eight Trigrams formations continued to come crashing down towards each other. Iyerre had called this ‘annihilation mode’, and it used eight different sources of power to create a single source of overwhelming power.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Ning began to fight back against the two Eight Trigrams crashing towards him. He once more was like Pangu cleaving apart Heaven from Earth, using all six of his Northbow swords to resist the crushing pressure of this formation! However, Ning quickly sensed that yet another source of mighty power was crushing towards him. This caught Ning off-guard, and he hurriedly moved to block this one as well. And yet, moments later another source of power was crashing against him...

The Eight Trigrams were crashing towards him but were also swiveling, which generated a strange type of power that clashed against Ning, making it even harder for him to defend.

Bang! After defending against the fifth surge of power, Ning could feel his entire body trembling. Some blood came spewing out from his mouth.

“Not good.” Ning knew that his body was starting to break down under the stress. It was formed from the power of mana and was as strong as any Universe treasure, but it still wasn’t able to take this level of pressure.

Ning instantly transformed his body into a form of blurry sword-light. This was his invulnerable swordform!

Autarch Ekong, when faced with grave danger, had been forced to use his own invulnerable form. Now, Ning was forced to do the same. His body was no longer corporeal, making it incredibly resistant to any attacks. As the master of the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, Ning was most skilled in the invulnerable swordform. His body was now formed from countless streaks of sword-light which dispersed the crushing power pressing against him.

Even though he was now incorporeal, his six arms continued to wield the Northbow swords in fighting back against the attacks crashing against him.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Three more surges of power came crashing against him. This power, the power of the ‘eight revolutions’, came in a total of eight waves. Ning’s blurry body of sword-light was able to deflect the majority of it, with the remaining power within the limits of what he could tolerate. However, his energy was now being depleted at such a rapid pace that for the first time in many years, Ning began to feel as though he wasn’t able to keep it up for much longer. During his previous fights, he had been able to instantly replenish as much as he used up. He had never felt as though he didn’t have enough energy!

This was simply because the amount of energy he was using to restore and repair his body was simply too enormous.

After all eight ‘waves’ of destructive energy were finished, the attacks paused for a brief moment before launching yet another eight waves... but that brief pause was enough for Ning to completely recover all of his energy.

“Hah! This formation of yours is useless against me.” Ning roared with laughter.

After he endured just three more cycles of annihilation mode... boom! The dimensional membrane pressing down on Ning from above in the form of the Eight Trigrams suddenly collapsed. It was unable to endure it any longer!

It must be remembered that the 'crushing' process was carried out by the dimensional membranes of the various worlds. The dimensional membranes were very tough, with Ning needing to attack for the time needed to boil a kettle of tea in order to destroy them, but the power of the 'annihilation mode' simply placed too much strain upon them, far more strain than Ning himself had to endure. Ning had been focusing on defending and redirecting its power away while using his invulnerable swordform to absorb the rest.

The great pressure needed to destroy Ning caused the dimensional membranes to be put under such great stress that they collapsed after a short period of time.

This could technically be considered a flaw, but it wasn't really. This was because if three consecutive attack cycles of the 'eight revolutions annihilation' was insufficient to kill an opponent, it meant that the formation itself just wasn't strong enough. It had failed.

As soon as the formation above him shattered, Ning immediately charged upwards to escape. "Break!" Ning immediately used his sword-arts to slash upwards. He had long ago discovered where the weak points in the dimensional membranes were, and just six seconds later he exploded past them. The various worlds outside were still trying to rearrange themselves; clearly, they hadn't formed a perfect seal yet.

Swoosh! Ning transformed into a streak of light, shooting through the seams that still existed between the moving worlds.

"Stop him!"

"Quick!"

"We've already converted all of the worlds into 'annihilation mode'. It'll take time for us to switch back into 'trap mode'. We won't make it!" The Sithe Exalts were panicking.

Ji Ning was simply too fast. He wasn't going to just stand there as a fool and wait for them to reform the 'trap mode' and imprison him once more... and in truth, given his power he would be able to break through in just an hour.

The 'annihilation mode' had been very dangerous, but after breaching through two worlds Ning was on the road to escape.

Boom! After blasting through one final dimensional membrane, the entire world seemed to change before him. He had already reached the outsides of that vast temple, and he could even see the endless Great Dark outside as well.

He had escaped.

Swoosh! Ning transformed into a streak of light, soaring into the skies. He immediately saw the Sithe Exalts seated atop those distant stone pillars, their faces filled with looks of terror.

"None of you will escape!" Ning's murderous voice boomed throughout every inch of the temple.

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Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 15: Extermination

The Sithe Exalts could sense Ji Ning's murderous intentions. None of them hesitated as they all immediately transformed into streaks of light, charging inside the formation. The difference in power between them and Ning was simply too great. They had no chance at all of winning a frontal clash; their only chance was to hide within the formation!

"Heartworld projection, descend! Sword Dao domain, manifest!" Ning instantly used all of his most powerful domain-type techniques, sending both his heartworld projection and his sword domain crashing down upon them. The Sithe Exalts felt as though they were swimming through molasses as their flying speeds dropped dramatically. They were very close to the formation and should've been able to enter it in the blink of an eye, but they were now moving a thousand times slower than before.

"Hurry up and run! Hurry!" the Sithe Exalts continued to do their best to escape.

"Good luck, everyone. There's no way he can kill all eight of us at once." The Sithe Exalts were quickly able to judge the situation. The eight of them were scattered in eight different directions around the vast temple! They were all physically flying towards the center of the temple because spacetime in the area had been suppressed, making warping through it impossible. Ning was very fast, but the eight Sithe Exalts were all very close to the formation. They'd be able to enter it soon, and Ning wouldn't be able to kill all of them before the rest made it inside.

"Die." Ning instantly charged towards the closest Sithe Exalt, a female whose eyes were filled with terror.

"Don't kill me!" the female Exalt screamed, her voice filled with a strange cadence that tried to seep into Ning's soul and truesoul. This was an illusory technique!

"Playing around with illusions in front of me?" Ning smiled coldly. When he had been in the failed Daomerge state, his cracked truesoul might've been weak enough to partially succumb to such a technique... but now that he had succeeded? His truesoul was far more powerful than ever before, and he had also gained a high level of mastery over the Dao of Illusions. How could this Sithe Exalt possibly shake him?

"Die." Sword-light howled past him in the form of countless dimensional blades. Ning knew that these Sithe Exalts all had such powerful bodies that one or two blows probably wouldn't be enough to kill him, and so he unleashed all six Northbow swords in a windmill of rapidfire attacks. Given Ning's power, twenty strikes was all that was needed to completely annihilate her! Ning then began to fly towards the other Sithe Exalt close by.

"N-no..." The fiery-armored Sithe Exalt had a look of despair and resentment in his eyes as he stared at the eight revolutions formation in front of him. It was just inches away, but Darknorth's terrifying domain pressed down upon him with such might that he was only able to fly very, very slowly.

Ning, in contrast, was able to fly at maximum speed. He arrived in just a moment, and his terrifying sword-light descended as well. Once again the most terrifying offensive Dao in all the Chaosverse, the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, revealed its deadly brilliance. Strengthened by Ning's perfect mana, it had only become even more powerful than the past. This Sithe Exalt was tougher than the previous one, but it still only took Ning a total of twenty-six strikes to slay him.

Ning turned his gaze towards a bald and muscular Sithe Exalt off in the distance. That Sithe Exalt instantly started to panic. "Run, everyone! Run!"

Whoosh! Ning quickly sped towards the man. Slash! His sword-light hammered the Sithe Exalt from afar, and the heavily-wounded Exalt just barely survived it and charged into the formation. By now, the other five had all entered the formation as well.

"Thank goodness we made it inside." The six lucky survivors all felt a sense of fear wrack their hearts. The Exalts glanced at each other, their eyes filled with joy at having survived. That had been utterly terrifying! They were supposed to be Autarchs, but here in this Chaosverse they had been weakened so dramatically that they were at most comparable to the Blazesun Ruler in power. This was the natural disadvantage all invaders faced – they would be suppressed and prevented from using even a wisp of the Dao's power.

"He won't be able to break through the formation so easily. We're safe inside here."

"For now, we're saved."

"We did our best, but we weren't able to carry out Iyerre's orders," the Sithe Exalts said to each other.

"Look over there!" the black-haired Sithe Exalt suddenly cried out fearfully.

Two of them had perished, but the six of them were still more-or-less in control over the entire temple and were able to keep the eight revolutions formation active. Their control over the formation allowed them to clearly see what was happening outside... and they saw Ning transform to become absolutely towering in size, on par with the entire temple itself.

The titanic Ning was now far larger than many chaos planets. He was in three-headed, six-armed form, and his six Northbow swords had increased in size to match.

"DIE!" the titanic Ning roared furiously, sending his six gargantuan Northbow swords descending like the punishment of the heavens towards the formation protecting the temple.

After being lucky enough to escape once, Ning wasn't going to be so foolish as to dive back inside! However, he wasn't going to let the Sithe off either.

As far as the other Autarchs, Autarch Titanos had been forced to sacrifice an avatar to allow Autarch Ekong to escape, and Ekong himself suffered heavy injuries; he was in no condition to keep tussling against the Sithe Exalts. Autarch Stonerule had merely used his avatar to set up a few formations to seal that temple away, making it impossible for them to escape. Autarch Stonerule didn't dare to use his avatar to actually enter the temple and fight them there.

Ning was the only exception. He had enough power to continue fighting against and killing these Sithe Exalts! This was because he was actually capable of defeating even the most powerful formations they had thrown at him.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Ning sent the six colossal Northbow swords crashing down with all his power. The outermost dimension protecting the eight revolutions formation was destroyed in just three seconds, but the formation quickly began to regenerate and rebuild the destroyed dimension.

“Not good. He already knows how to solve the eight revolutions formation, and there are only six of us left. It’s hard for just six of us to keep the entire thing active. The formation is going to be much less stable than before!”

“Hold on for as long as we can!”

“Keep it stable, men!”

“The eight revolutions formation has many different worlds within it. It will take him time to destroy them one-by-one, while the six of us can continue to remake new ones. After attacking for a while, Emperor Darknorth will probably give up.” The Sithe Exalts clung onto this faint hope as they struggled to defend.

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There was no way Ning would spare them. He continued to use all of his power to furiously assail the formation with his six Northbow swords, destroying one world after another. New worlds were quickly reborn, but this was costing the Sithe an enormous amount of energy!

A short while later, a figure flew over towards Ning from afar. This was Autarch Mogg’s avatar.

“Darknorth.” Autarch Mogg’s avatar had actually arrived long ago, but he hadn’t dared to intervene by going inside.

“Haha, Mogg! Perfect timing,” Ning laughed. “Give me a hand. It doesn’t matter what techniques you use, just hammer away at the formation with all your power.”

“Sure.” Autarch Mogg’s body transformed to become absolutely towering in size, and he manifested a total of six arms as well, each of which wielded a long and slender saber. He began to furiously assail the temple’s formation alongside Ning! Ning understood the flaws within the worlds and so his attacks had already put the formation under incredible stress. Now that another Autarch-class combatant had joined him, the stress was further amplified. The worlds began to crumble even faster than before.

Now, a world was crumbling every two seconds. One world after another shattered before their blows...

“We’re almost at the point where we can’t keep up with how fast they break our worlds.”

“Our energy stores are almost gone.” The Sithe Exalts were filled with despair. If they were at full power, they could at least use the spacetime formation or other formations to protect themselves once the eight revolutions formation broke apart, but they had virtually exhausted their energy stores in their attempts to first trap and then kill Ning. Now, Ning and Mogg were forcing them to use up their final bits of energy.

“We’re finished.” Their faces were filled with despair.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The final worlds were broken apart, causing the six Sithe Exalts to abandon all hope. As the remnants of the eight revolutions formation began to crumble, they shared a final glance.

“If almighty Iyerre succeeds, those of us who died in battle might have a chance to be revived.”

Boom! Boom! Boom! A series of explosions rang out, followed by the complete collapse of the remnants of the eight revolutions formation, which now lacked any controllers.

“Self-detonation?” Mogg’s avatar gritted its teeth. “Why are the Sithe so loyal? None of the Sithe Exalts we captured and tortured after the last war have surrendered either.”

“Destroying one of their temples counts as a victory in my book,” Ning said. He waved his hand, drawing the remnants of the temple into his own estate-world. “Let’s go.”

“Let’s leave.” Mogg nodded. Riiip! The two tore through spacetime and left side-by-side.

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Iyerre was still flying through the Great Dark at maximum speed. He looked calm, but flames could be seen flickering deep within his eyes. He was eagerly looking forward to the moment where he could kill Emperor Darknorth. By killing Emperor Darknorth, his victory over this war would be secured!

Whoosh. The barefoot Iyerre came to a sudden halt within the empty darkness of space... He stared off into the distance. He could sense the deaths of each and every Sithe Exalt under his command, and his face gradually grew increasingly unsightly to behold.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 16: Rage

Iyerre could sense that two of the Exalts in control of the Eight Revolutions Spacetime Temple had just been slain. Clearly, the situation had just taken a turn for the worse. Generally speaking, so long as the formation protecting the temple was undamaged the Exalts in control wouldn’t be killed.

A short while later, he could sense that the other six Exalts had all died as well.

“All eight of them died. All they needed to do was trap Emperor Darknorth for eighty-two days. They just needed to hold out for a few more days... those useless idiots!” Iyerre felt rage blazing away at his chest. He had been preparing for countless aeons. Victory had been within his grasp... but at the most critical moment, his servants had been unable to keep Emperor Darknorth confined. How could he not be angered by this?

“If I can’t kill Emperor Darknorth, I’ll have to switch to the second plan and start killing off the other Autarchs one-by-one.” Iyerre nodded slowly.

This was a more difficult prospect. Killing Emperor Darknorth would have given him a 99% chance of success. Now that Ning had escaped, his chances of success had just dropped sharply. Still, he remained confident in his overall chances. He knew what forces he had available and what his opponents were capable of, which was why he felt so confident.

Iyerre suddenly waved his hand. Whoosh! Three figures suddenly appeared by his side. Their auras were all tremendously powerful, far more powerful than the auras of ordinary Sithe Exalts. All three of them appeared humanoid, and it looked as though two were male while one was female. The first man was dressed in black robes, while the second was dressed in red robes. As for the woman, she was dressed in dazzlingly beautiful silver robes and had a soul-stirring smile on her face.

“Iyerre.” The three bowed fractionally to show respect, but they addressed him simply as ‘Iyerre’ rather than giving him the title of ‘almighty Iyerre’ as most Sithe Exalts did.

“It is now time for the three of you to take action,” Iyerre said.

“You need to remember your promise,” the black-robed man said sinisterly.

“Don’t worry. After this battle is over, I’ll give you your freedom and also give you treasures as a form of thanks. My master himself has personally attested to this. Are you really worried that I would go back on my word?” Iyerre said.

The three traded glances, then nodded.

“Starting today, we shall operate in two groups,” Iyerre said.

“Eh? What’s this? You won’t be needing us to help you against Emperor Darknorth after all? Oh, I know. Those useless subordinates of yours weren’t able to tie him down for long enough, right?” the silver-robed woman laughed. The two men next to her had mocking smiles on their faces as well.

Iyerre frowned slightly, then continued: “Yes. They weren’t able to tie him down. Emperor Darknorth has already escaped! Our only choice is to carry out our second plan. The four of us will work separately, with you three in one team and me by myself. The cultivators don’t even know that we exist, so if we are careful we might just be able to ambush and kill two of their leaders at once.”

“Agreed.” The three all nodded.

“Remember, once we separate you need to hide behind the treasure I gave you. Don’t reveal any hint of your aura at all. Once the Chaosverse discovers any traces of your auras, the cultivator leaders will also be instantly warned as to how dangerous you are,” Iyerre said.

Iyerre was at such a high level of enlightenment that he could cut off all detection from the Chaosverse by himself, but the Sithe Exalts and the three people before him could not. Thus, they had to use the treasure which Iyerre had given them! This was the reason why Ning and the others hadn’t noticed any of the hidden dimensions prior to them disgorging their contents at the start of the war.

“Don’t worry. We won’t make such foolish mistakes,” the red-robed man smirked.

“This is your first time entering a different Chaosverse. It is best to be cautious, as you are unable to use the power of the Dao here. You’ll be much weaker than you are used to,” Iyerre warned. These three weren’t his subordinates, and so he could not command them. All he could do was offer them warnings, for fear of them making a mistake and revealing themselves before they managed to kill a native Autarch. If that happened, this war would become even more difficult to win.

The cultivator Autarchs were in their own Chaosverse and backed by the boundless power of the Dao. All of them were mighty beyond measure, and the only way to kill them was to catch them off-guard! Once Iyerre revealed himself, the cultivator leaders would be able to quickly flee and hide from him.

As for Emperor Darknorth... he was the most powerful of the local cultivators. If Iyerre had to fight him by himself, victory was far from assured. Iyerre was still being suppressed by this Chaosverse, after all! That was why he had brought his second trump card as well. He had been planning to work alongside those three powerful experts. Together, they would’ve spelled certain doom to Ning.

But of course... that was only if Ning had remained trapped inside the temple! Outside the temple, Ning could flee whenever he wanted to. It was very difficult to kill anyone who was of the same level of strength.

"Let's head out," Iyerre instructed.

Whoosh! An ordinary-looking realmship suddenly appeared next to him with a Hegemon in control of it. This Hegemon was a Sithe descendant who had been born into this Chaosverse, and so his aura was identical to that of an ordinary cultivator's.

The Hegemon was responsible for control of the realmship and sending it hurtling through the Chaosverse, while the three experts would remain hidden within a treasure the Hegemon carried.

"Very good." Iyerre watched as the realmship departed, cold light shining in his eyes. "Thus far, the cultivators have only lost a few avatars. None of them have actually perished! I'll wager that they have no idea that the temples were only meant to confuse them, making them lower their guard once they 'knew' what they were up against. Those weren't my real trump cards at all."

"Come, then. Let's see who shall be the first 'Autarch' I kill once I reveal my presence." Iyerre waved his hand, causing a white lotus to appear in his palm.

Rumble... Iyerre's energy flowed into the white lotus, quickly spreading out to cover an extremely vast area that was a hundred times greater than the area Ning could scan using his godsense! Iyerre could accomplish this because he had vastly surpassed all the others in terms of insight, even though he was being suppressed by the Chaosverse. As for the white lotus, it was an incredibly valuable scanning treasure which his master had helped him forge.

"So... who shall be the first to die?" Iyerre smiled as he stepped into a spatial rift, hurtling through spacetime. He moved to one region after another, wandering through many different regions. Ever since the temples had appeared, the cultivator Autarchs had stopped attacking in person and had only sent out their avatars to do battle. Thus, actually locating one of them was no easy feat.

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Time flowed on, one day after another. In the end, Autarch Skyfeeder and Autarch Bolin's trapped avatars all ended up perishing in battle. However, the temples ended up being trapped by the other Autarchs who cast giant formations around them, making it impossible for them to flee!

Thus far, the Sithe had revealed a total of five temples. These temples had cost the cultivators three Autarch avatars belonging to Bolin, Skyfeeder and Titanos. As for the temples themselves? Ning had captured one, while the other four had been sealed and rendered immobile.

The cultivators had lost three peak power avatars, but they quickly began to remake new ones, even though the new ones would be significantly weaker for quite some time.

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Over two months after Ning had escaped the Eight Revolutions Spacetime Temple.

Whoosh! Iyerre's muscular form suddenly exited a spacetime rift and appeared within a realmverse. He continued to hold that white lotus in his hands as he carefully scanned the vast area around him. "Eh?" Iyerre revealed a look of delight.

During the past two months, he had been searching for the Autarchs in a manner that was reminiscent of looking for a needle in a haystack. Thankfully, he was able to warp through spacetime just as fast as the Autarchs were, while his scanning treasure completely surpassed Autarch-level capabilities! During the past two months, he had managed to discover Autarch Stonerule's avatar... but to reveal himself in exchange for just an avatar? There was no way Iyerre would make that type of trade!

"I've finally found one of the actual Autarchs. Hm... this aura seems familiar. I encountered it countless times over the aeons. Isn't this Autarch Mogg, who stood guard over our 'sealed' lands for all those years?" Iyerre revealed a smile. "Perfect. Autarch Mogg... I'll use your life and your blood to anoint my war-banner."

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A mountain peak which was floating in space. There were some ordinary-looking log cabins at the top of this mountain, and a tall, skinny, black-robed figure was seated in the lotus position within one of those cabins. His face was covered with scales, and his eyes were shut.

The temples were all quite troublesome to deal with, and so the Autarchs had chosen to draw back all of their true bodies and only permitted their avatars to roam the outside world.

This mountain peak might look ordinary, but it had been personally fashioned by Autarch Mogg for him to cultivate in. Without his permission, not even the other Autarchs would be able to approach without him noticing.

But... right at this moment a barefoot and gray-robed figure suddenly appeared before the mountain peak. This figure had a benevolent, sympathetic smile on his face.

It was Iyerre!

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 17: Iyerre vs Mogg

Iyerre stood there in empty space, staring at the floating mountain before him and the clearly visible log cabins at the very top. Given his abilities, he was able to sense that within the log cabin sat Autarch Mogg.

Generally speaking, for someone like Autarch Mogg, it was impossible for him not to notice when someone was staring at him. However, Iyerre was able to do so without him noticing anything at all.

"Autarch Mogg of the cultivators. He really spent quite a bit of effort putting this mountain together. It is filled with all sorts of seals and scanners." Iyerre smiled as he continued to inspect the place. Autarch Mogg's various warning systems and barriers were perhaps quite troublesome for other major powers on his level, but they were nothing more than parlor tricks to something like Iyerre.

Iyerre was able to see immediately through the many flaws of these defenses. This was due to the far superior level of insight he possessed! He had been able to create things like the Annihilation Hive and the formation temples, all of which had stunned Ji Ning and Titanos. Everyone had been certain that only a Lord of Chaos could've created such incredible edifices.

Ning and the others certainly weren't able to create such things, but finding a few weak spots and exploiting them was much easier. Even so, only Autarch Titanos had been able to devise the reverse-vortex formation, while Ning had spent many days before managing to overcome the Eight Revolutions Spacetime Temple.

This was a testament to the difference in insight between them!

When the Autarchs had set down those many layers of seals around the heart of the Sithelands, they have felt that the Sithe would be unable to escape... but in truth, those seals had been an utter joke to Iyerre, who was able to bypass them with ease. The only reason he pretended his forces were sealed away was to ensure that the cultivators would lessen their vigilance against him. In truth, he had long ago sent his countless Hegemons and Emperors to the various secret dimensions.

"This mountain might be able to stop the Autarchs, but it cannot bar my path." Iyerre smiled as he walked closer towards it.

Whoosh. His entire body became vaguely incorporeal and semi-translucent. He slowly strolled forwards, moving towards the mountain peak and then climbing up it.

The many barriers atop the mountain were completely incapable of barring his path. Autarch Mogg was highly skilled in the Dao of Space, and his various seals and barriers were all dimensional in nature. However, Iyerre was using an even more profound application of the mysteries of space to become part of ordinary space itself, making the barriers completely ineffective against him.

After walking for ten seconds, Iyerre came to a sudden halt. He frowned slightly as he stared at the distant log cabin. "A Dao Domain field?" This was a bit more troubling. Dao Domains were also known as Essence Domains. Ning had his Sword Dao Domain, while Autarch Mogg had his Space Daobirth Essence Domain.

This was a time of war. Although Autarch Mogg's true body was not taking part in combat right now, he still vigilantly kept his domain up at all times. He didn't put too much effort into it, but it was still enough to cover half of the mountain. Any enemies who penetrated this mountain would be instantly discovered by his domain.

"The power of his domain comes from the Chaosverse itself; it represents a domain formed by the power of the prime essences. I can avoid the prime essences and make it impossible for them to detect me, but I'd be discovered as soon as I entered the reach of his domain." Iyerre pondered this question. "Suppressed by this Chaosverse, I'm unable to use any of the Dao's power at all. I'm stronger than these native Autarchs, but not by that much. I don't have the overwhelming advantage that I should."

This was why he had brought three mighty helpers when he had gone off to fight Ning. Now that he knew Ning had escaped, Iyerre had parted ways from the three. They were each responsible for killing one Autarch... but now that they had separated, Iyerre 'only' had a 80% chance of killing Autarch Mogg, who was even weaker than Ning.

"I'm hidden in the darkness. He has no idea how strong I am. I'll definitely be able to kill him in this battle."

"Time to attack." Iyerre began to make his move. He reached out with his ivory-skinned right hand, penetrating the Space Daobirth Essence Domain and sending a series of gentle, comfortable ripples straight into the mind of Autarch Mogg, who was still seated in the log cabin.

"Hrm?" Autarch Mogg suddenly felt very comfortable and at peace. This gentle feeling caused a hint of a smile to naturally appear around his lips. Freedom... release... the glorious joy brought by the light filled his every thought, banishing all his worries and concerns.

Whoosh! The alabaster hand shot out with incredible speed, piercing through the various spatial barriers and the impediment of the Essence Domain to strike towards the log cabin.

His domain had clearly been intruded upon... but right now, Autarch Mogg only felt a sense of relief and release, as though he had never been as free and relaxed as he was right now. "It's all in the past now. All my worries and concerns are over... wait. No. The war against the Sithe just started. We're in the middle of a war! How could I possibly be truly relaxed and carefree?" Autarch Mogg quickly came back to his senses, and when he did he immediately 'saw' that hand pierce through his domain. By now, it had already reached the log cabin.

The alabaster hand passed straight through the cabin itself, not damaging it in the slightest. A tremendous sense of danger filled Autarch Mogg's mind, terrorizing him.

"How could I have ignored it when it passed through my domain? How could I have been drawn into a state of completely relaxation without even realizing it?" Autarch Mogg was utterly terrified by the implications of this. Being trapped in an illusion was one thing, but this had been no illusion! His spirit and his thoughts had been manipulated without him even realizing it, even though he was an Autarch! He had only come back to his senses after sensing the obvious contradiction of him being at 'peace' during a time of war.

"Who? Who did this?!" Autarch Mogg had no time to analyze things. He immediately manifested six arms, clasping a saber in each hand and using them to launch a marvelous coordinated attack against that alabaster hand. His saber-light flashed like dimensional edges, moving with inscrutable speed.

The alabaster hand 'danced' towards him in such a gentle, beautiful, and graceful manner that Autarch Mogg's spirit was shaken once more. Flick! The fingers of that hand gently brushed against the saber-light, causing it to be dispersed and redirected elsewhere. Flick! Flick! Two of Mogg's other sabers were pushed aside as well. The alabaster hand had used almost no power to defend, but none of Autarch Mogg's attacks were able to land on it.

Mogg's three remaining sabers spun in concert to form a tight defense around him out of saber-light that was linked together with space itself. It was as though an independent dimension was standing in front of him, helping him block.

Riiiiip! The giant hand suddenly became bright and sharp, tearing past two of the sabers. Mogg's defensive saber-arts were his pride and joy, but they were completely unable to defend against this giant hand. As for the dimensional barrier he had erected before him, it was instantly pierced through as the giant hand stabbed at Autarch Mogg's chest.

“Run!” Autarch Mogg was truly stunned and terrified. The seven Autarchs had often sparred against each other and held Dao debates with each other, but not even the most powerful (Ji Ning) had been able to gain such a major advantage over him in their fights.

“This person is significantly more powerful than even Darknorth!” Autarch Mogg exclaimed to himself in amazement.

As he retreated, the light from the giant hand had already reached out to stab him in his chest. Autarch Mogg could sense a sharp, penetrative force dig deep into his body, causing him to vomit out a mouthful of blood. He hurriedly summoned the mana in his body to resist this attack, but the invading energy was extremely difficult to deal with. In the end, Autarch Mogg was only able to cancel out the invading energy with his mana by throwing an enormous amount of energy at it. This had actually cost him more than 30% of his total power.

A single quickly clash had resulted in him being badly wounded!

Boom! Autarch Mogg was sent flying into the walls of the log cabin from this blow. The log cabin instantly blew apart, and even the barriers surrounding the area began to tremble. The surrounding area collapsed, transforming into a dark region of primordial chaos... and from within the darkness emerged a gray-robed, barefoot man who strode through the collapsing dimension with ease, completely unaffected.

“Who are you?!” Autarch Mogg shouted frantically. In all his battles against the Sithe, he had never once encountered any individual who held such a terrifying advantage in power over him.

“My name is Iyerre. I’m here to kill you.” Iyerre smiled, but he moved incredibly fast. He gave Autarch Mogg no reprieve at all, charging towards him right away.

“Flee.” Autarch Mogg knew that he had just run into a terrifyingly strong foe. If this battle continued, he’d probably end up dying here. Without hesitation, he chose to immediately flee!

When Iyerre saw that Autarch Mogg was trying to warp through spacetime to escape, he tapped his foot downwards. “Freeze.” An invisible ripple sprang out, completely sealing off spacetime in the area around them, making it impossible to warp away!

“He’s actually even more formidable than I am when it comes to the Dao of Space?!” Autarch Mogg could quickly sense how spacetime had been locked away. He himself was also capable of suppressing spacetime, but he wouldn’t be able to do it this easily or to this effect. He couldn’t help but feel amazed as he transformed into a streak of light and began to physically flee.

Iyerre frowned as he watched Autarch Mogg flee: “These native Autarchs are able to use the boundless power of the Dao. In my homeland, I could exterminate these creatures with the wave of a hand... but in their own Chaosverse, killing them is really quite difficult.”

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 18: Golden Bridge of Freedom

An ordinary chaos planet. A white-robed Ji Ning was seated in the lotus position atop a boulder, surrounded by a 100x temporal acceleration field. He was trying to deconstruct and solve the

formations protecting the temple which had been sealed away by Autarch Stonerule! It remained a source of potential trouble and Ning felt that it was best to get rid of it.

“Eh?” Ning’s face suddenly tightened. He could sense that a new, terrifying danger had just appeared far in the distance. This danger was so great that Ning could sense his heart clenching. It was every bit as dangerous as the Annihilation Hive.

“What’s going on?” Ning was puzzled by this, as were the other Autarchs. Everyone could sense this terrifying new threat.

As soon as Iyerre had attacked Mogg, the prime essences of the Chaosverse had immediately detected and locked onto him. This was their first time ‘finding’ him and realizing what a terrifying threat he posed.

Perhaps he wasn’t an immediate threat as the Annihilation Hive had been, but he was an expert who had reached incredible levels of insight. So long as he was alive, he would cause endless troubles for this Chaosverse. He could even create new Annihilation Hives! Strictly speaking, he was more dangerous than anything else around.

Suddenly, Ning could sense a message coming from Autarch Mogg: “I just suffered an attack from a Sithe expert. He attacked me by himself, and he was able to completely bypass all of the formations and seals I set down around myself. He even managed to invade my domain while influencing me so that I didn’t notice in the slightest. Thankfully I was able to recover in time, but even so he was able to deal me a heavy injury in our first head-on clash. He’s too strong, far stronger than me and significantly stronger than even Darknorth. If I had to fight him head-on, I’d probably die after just a few rounds of battle.”

“What?!” Ning was shocked, as were the other Autarchs who were receiving this information at the same time.

Since when had the Sithe become so powerful as to be able to overwhelm an Autarch in sole combat? In all these years, it was an ironclad rule that Autarchs were completely invincible in sole combat.

“What type of treasures did he use?” Ning immediately asked. Autarch Titanos and the others were asking the exact same question as well.

“Nothing. He didn’t use any treasures at all. He didn’t even use a weapon. His hand alone dealt me a grave wound! And... he said his name is ‘Iyerre’!” Autarch Mogg said.

“He didn’t even use a weapon, but was still able to heavily injure Mogg in just one clash?” Ning was stunned. “I can’t believe such a powerful figure managed to remain hidden for so long. He must have been biding his time for aeons... and now that he’s revealed himself, he’s definitely going to launch an all-out attack. Why doesn’t he use a weapon? Is it perhaps because weapons are essentially meaningless to him? Or is it perhaps that his hands ARE his weapons? Either way, he’s relying on his own power!”

The information which Autarch Mogg had sent over caused many different thoughts to flicker through Ning’s mind.

“The Sithe are suppressed by our Chaosverse and unable to use any of the power of the Dao at all! For him to be this powerful while suppressed, how powerful would he be if he could use the Dao?” Ning

mused to himself, “There’s no way he’s an ordinary Autarch, nor can he be merely an Omega Emperor! It is highly likely that he is actually an Autarch of an Omega Dao!”

An Omega Autarch! This was the only possibility Ning could come up with which could explain this person’s strength. Ning wasn’t the only one to come to this conclusion; the other Autarchs did as well.

In truth, they had suspected this possibility long ago. They had long postulated the possibility that the real instigator of the Sithe incursion was an Omega Autarch, but all of them had believed that someone who had reached such an invincible level as the Sithe Lord of Chaos wouldn’t have taken the risk of entering a ‘foreign’ Chaosverse. Once he came in, he would lose his connection to his own Chaosverse and be suppressed by the ‘foreign’ Chaosverse, resulting in him being so dramatically weakened that he could very well perish.

In the outside world, a Lord of Chaos was completely invincible. Why take the risk? But now, a Sithe named Iyerre had appeared. Could it be that he was a second Omega Autarch of the Sithe Chaosverse?

“This person named Iyerre,” Autarch Mogg continued, “Is overwhelmingly powerful. I’m absolutely certain that he is an Omega Autarch. I can think of no other possibilities! He’s reached incredible levels of insight and is able to suppress spacetime with ease, and he’s even better at it than me. My insights into the mysteries of space are like a joke to him. They are completely ineffective. He’s definitely surpassed me in the Dao of Space!”

“An Omega Autarch!” Ning and the others instantly were certain of this. This ‘Iyerre’ had a higher level of insight than the Autarchs and was superior to Mogg in the Dao of Space, which was Mogg’s specialty. He had to be an Omega Autarch!

“Be careful, Mogg,” Ning sent back. There was nothing they could do to help, because they were all too far away. It would all be up to Autarch Mogg himself.

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Autarch Mogg was continuing to flee through space.

“Autarch Mogg!” the pursuing Iyerre suddenly roared from behind.

Boom! An invisible wave of force instantly surged into Autarch Mogg’s body. Autarch Mogg felt as though the world around him had changed, transforming into a dazzlingly beautiful ocean while he himself had become a seagull soaring through the skies above it.

“Break!” Autarch Mogg had a perfect Dao-heart and a powerful truesoul. This mighty shout allowed his tremendous willpower to instantly tear the illusion to shreds.

The casting of the illusion and the breaking of the illusion had happened almost instantaneously. “Your illusions are a bit tougher than Stonerule’s, but they still don’t amount to much,” Autarch Mogg replied, his voice echoing in the emptiness of space.

“Damn.” Iyerre frowned when he saw this. In a foreign Chaosverse, he was unable to use the power of the Dao and was suppressed as well, but in at least one area he remained at peak power – illusions! This was because illusions were aimed directly at the soul and truesoul. The greater your insights into the art

of illusions were, the more powerful your illusions would become. The Dao had little to do with it. Alas, Iyerre was an Omega Autarch but had not reached Autarchy through the Dao of Illusions.

If Ning for example became an Omega Autarch, it would be through the Omega Sword Dao. His specialty would still be the sword! The same was true for Iyerre, who was skilled in the Dao of Light.

“You won’t be able to escape.” Iyerre gritted his teeth, unleashing one of his ultimate attacks.

Anywhere else, he could use any techniques as often as he pleased. Here in this Chaosverse, however, he had to consider how much energy these techniques would take up. His energy consumption was commensurate to his vast insights, and replenishing energy was extremely difficult for him.

“Omnipresent Light!” Iyerre’s body suddenly began to release a vast amount of light. Countless rays of light soared out in every single direction, illuminating every part of the vast void around them. The rays of light illuminated even Autarch Mogg himself, and when they shone upon him he felt them pressing down upon him with terrifying power, trying to force him to kneel down. This tremendous pressure caused him to slow down dramatically.

This was the most powerful domain-type technique which Iyerre had created after becoming an Omega Autarch. Wherever his light reached, all had to submit to him!

In the outside world, his light alone could actually kill ordinary Autarchs. Here in this Chaosverse, it was dramatically weakened and so only served to generate a suppressive effect.

“How could there be such a powerful binding effect? It’s far stronger than any of my domains!” Autarch Mogg was shocked. The suppress effective was so powerful that his speed had been nearly cut in half.

Whoosh! Iyerre flew towards Autarch Mogg, his entire body glowing with boundless light and a sympathetic smile on his face. “Why must you fight this, Autarch Mogg? You must be tired.”

“Truly impressive, Iyerre. You should be an Omega Autarch of the Sithe race. I’m thoroughly impressed. Even without being able to use one whit of the power of the Dao, you still possess incredible power.” Autarch Mogg smiled coldly. “But this is our homeland. Do you really think you can kill me? Hmph!”

Boom! An enormous golden bridge that was a million kilometers long suddenly appeared behind Autarch Mogg. The bridge even had a refined, three-story tower next to it, and Autarch Mogg was standing right at the entrance to the tower. He smiled coldly as he stared at the distant Iyerre: “Iyerre, dare you step onto my bridge?”

“What is this?” Iyerre’s face turned grim. He could clearly sense that this vast golden bridge was emanating an aura of terrifying power, power which came from the prime essences of this Chaosverse.

“You Sithe have your trump cards, but so do we! Did you think we had none? Did you think we spent all these countless aeons just waiting for death like fools?” Autarch Mogg stood there atop his bridge at the entrance to the tower: “This should be the final, last-gasp attempt by you Sithe to take over our Chaosverse. We had been planning to reveal the Golden Bridge of Freedom during the final battle, but you unexpectedly drove me to the brink of death and forced me to reveal it now.”

“Golden Bridge of Freedom? It uses the power of the prime essences of this Chaosverse...” Iyerre had an ugly look on his face.

“Yes. As you suspect, it is modeled after your Daoguard Towers!” Autarch Mogg smiled coldly. “We’ve been analyzing your Daoguard Towers for countless aeons now. Although the Golden Bridge of Freedom isn’t quite as marvelous as your Daoguard Towers, it is still able to make use of some of the power of the Quintessence.”

The cultivator leaders had known for many years that calamity could spring upon them anew, and so they had been laboring without pause to prepare for this day. A Golden Bridge of Freedom had some of the effects of a Daoguard Tower. While one was standing atop the bridge, one would be virtually invincible. This was one of the trump cards the Autarchs had been preparing for this war.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 19: Victory

Only the power of the Chaosverse itself was truly boundless and without limit. When Ji Ning had visited the essence wellspring of the Blazesun Domain, he had discovered that its energies vastly surpassed that of any Autarch’s! And that was just the tip of the iceberg when compared to the Chaosverse as a whole. The Chaosverse was so powerful that just attempting to bind it, even without it fighting back, would result in death to Ning and the other Autarchs. Trying to force something like this would result in the collapse of the truesoul!

Its power was simply unimaginable. Compared to the Chaosverse as a whole, the power over the Dao which Ning or the Autarchs could wield was like a drop of water in a vast sea.

The Daoguard Tower was something which could allow powerful experts to make use of a greater amount of the Chaosverse’s power! Daoguard Towers were exquisitely designed. After the Autarchs had acquired several Daoguard Towers from the Dawn War, they had spent many years analyzing them before finally creating similar treasures known as Golden Bridges of Freedom which had 30% of a Daoguard Tower’s power.

The native cultivators already had the advantage of fighting on home turf. Now that they had Golden Bridges of Freedom, their defensive prowess was dramatically strengthened.

“Come on, Iyerre, oh mighty Omega Autarch! Come and do your worst. Show me just how tough you are! I am in my own homeland and standing atop my Golden Bridge. If you can still kill me, I’ll gladly admit defeat!” Autarch Mogg stood at the entrance to the tower, glaring daggers at the distant Iyerre.

“A Golden Bridge of Freedom which is based on our Daoguard Towers, eh?” Iyerre quickly regained his usual equanimity. He smiled coldly: “Fine. Let’s just see how powerful you are when standing on your Golden Bridge! Goldbridge”

Boom! Iyerre put his palms together as though in prayer, causing an utterly dazzling streak of light to appear between them. The light slowly grew brighter and brighter, as though it was the very essence of all light itself! As for his palms, they had become the sole source of light in the entire area and was far more dazzling than the Solar Star of the Three Realms had ever been.

Iyerre simply stood there calmly in space, his palms folded in prayer while emanating increasingly brilliant levels of light.

“He’s building up power!” Autarch Mogg’s heart was pounding as he stared from atop the Golden Bridge. This strike was clearly going to be far more powerful than the previous one.

This strike could be described as the most powerful strike which Iyerre was capable of. However, it did have a flaw. It wasn’t very agile and could only be used as a devastating frontal assault! Even worse, in this foreign Chaosverse it took him a bit of time to build up power even when he was simply drawing upon his own energy reserves. If he had tried to do this earlier when he had ambushed Mogg, the power build up alone would’ve startled Mogg and sent him fleeing. As for during his pursuit of Mogg, the two were flying far too fast and there was no way he could build up the energies necessary for this technique.

“Damn.” Autarch Mogg frowned. “In the end, the Golden Bridge of Freedom remains a pale shadow of a true Daoguard Tower. Its only advantage is that it is mobile while Daoguard Towers are completely immobile, but even so it moves very slowly.”

The vast golden bridges were slow and not very agile. They were primarily used to keep their occupants alive, which meant that Autarch Mogg’s only choice was to watch as Iyerre built up strength and wait for the attack.

As for putting away the Golden Bridge and then fleeing once more? Without it, he would die even more quickly!

“Exterminate!” Iyerre suddenly roared. His left hand drew backwards while his right hand struck outwards. Instantly, all of the power from those two incomparably dazzling hands of light became concentrated in his right palm, causing it to glow even more brightly than before! The mighty presence and aura of this attack alone was enough to render Autarch Mogg speechless. If he tried to take this attack head-on by himself, he would definitely be crushed to death by it.

The empty void of space itself seemed to shudder and moan in fear as that giant right palm of incandescent light reached out towards Mogg.

“Not happening!” Autarch Mogg immediately summoned his Golden Bridge, sending it flying upwards to block for him. Alas, while the giant palm wasn’t very agile it was still far more agile than the enormous golden bridge. It was easily able to dodge past the blocking bridge and smashed straight past it. The golden bridge had an awesome aura of the Dao protecting it, but the giant palm smashed straight through the barrier like it was nothing and continued straight for Autarch Mogg.

“Golden Bridge!” Autarch Mogg roared loudly. The tower behind him had six corners and six highly noticeable windows. The tower suddenly emitted six rays of prismatic light filled with the entire bridge’s boundless power and Dao, using them to push back at the giant golden palm.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The six ribbons of light did their best to push the palm back, but they were unable to do so. In the end, all they could do was to bind themselves around the giant palm like chains. The giant palm continued to press onwards, but it was clearly much slower than before.

“Without the bridge, I might not be able to withstand you... but standing atop it, you can do nothing to me!” Autarch Mogg manifested a total of six arms, each wielding a long saber, then used all of his power to attack. Countless dimensional ripples filled the air around him, merging together to form a single giant dimensional blade that smashed against the giant golden hand head-on.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Explosions rang out unabated. The giant golden palm quickly dimmed, then retracted backwards.

Autarch Mogg was smashed backwards against the tower. He vomited out a mouthful of blood, but a crazed smile was on his face: "Haha, Iyerre, you aren't strong enough!" Although he was injured, he was able to recover before finishing his words.

As for the distant Iyerre, he felt a sense of pity in his heart. He had consumed an enormous amount of power to unleash his most powerful attack. Still, it had been worth it. Now he knew exactly how strong the Golden Bridges of Freedom were.

"Not bad." Iyerre smiled. Whoosh! He retreated backwards, then disappeared without a trace.

Autarch Mogg finally let out a sigh of relief. Iyerre had put him under a tremendous amount of pressure.

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Ning and the others were all anxiously awaiting news from Autarch Mogg. All of them were worried about him.

"I'm fine, I'm fine!" Autarch Mogg quickly sent word back to them. Only then did they let out sighs of relief.

"That Iyerre fellow really was powerful. Even though I had the Golden Bridge of Freedom, he was still able to overwhelm me! However, he wasn't able to actually kill me. When he saw this, he chose to leave instead of continuing the fight," Autarch Mogg said.

"Tell us a bit about the fight against Iyerre," Autarch Titanos said.

"Very well." Autarch Mogg began to narrate the battle in detail. Ning and the others listened attentively, working together to analyze what had happened. In truth, it had been a fairly simple battle. Iyerre had only struck a few times in an effort to conserve energy.

"I can't believe Omega Autarchs are still this powerful when they are being suppressed and unable to use any of the power of the Dao." Autarch Titanos let out an amazed sigh. "So the Sithe invaders are definitely led by an Omega Autarch. This is terrible news... and judging from how Iyerre simply left, it's clear that he has other tricks up his sleeve and hasn't been driven to the brink just yet."

"We can't let our guard down until we win the final battle," Autarch Ekong said.

"I'm sorry, friends. I had no choice but to reveal the Golden Bridge of Freedom. Now he knows our most powerful defensive technique," Autarch Mogg said.

They had prepared some trump cards of their own for the final war, but the Golden Bridge of Freedom was their strongest defensive trump card. If even it had been unable to withstand Iyerre's power, they would've been in serious trouble.

In a war, using unexpected trump cards at a critical moment to catch an opponent offguard could produce some truly incredible results! Thus, trump cards generally were saved for the very end. When

Ning and Ekong had been trapped within their respective temples, they had faced several dangerous situations but hadn't been driven to the point of revealing their Golden Bridges of Freedom.

In addition, those bridges had a weakness – they could only be used for defensive purposes! Using them within the temples wouldn't have helped Ning or Ekong actually escape!

“Mogg, if you didn't use the Golden Bridge you would've died. Our side would've lost two Autarch-class combatants! That would've been a far greater loss,” Autarch Skyfeeder said.

“Be careful, everyone. Iyerre has failed in his first attempt, but he'll probably prepare something even more deadly next time.”

“So long as we keep the bridges active, they probably won't be able to do anything to us.”

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Within the darkness of space. Iyerre stood there in the void by himself, his body covered with a layer of ripples which blocked the Chaosverse from detecting him.

Whoosh. A blurry pillar of light appeared before him which slowly resolved into a trio of figures. These were the three powerful subordinates he had sent out earlier.

“Iyerre, why have you contacted us?” The two men and the woman looked at Iyerre.

“Have you fought against any of the cultivator leaders yet?” Iyerre asked.

“We're still searching for them. The Chaosverse is simply too large; just finding them is a task in and of itself,” the silver-robed woman said.

“I need to warn you that they have something akin to a Daoguard Tower they can use,” Iyerre said.

“Trap them before attacking them.”

“Alright.” The three were shocked by this news.

Iyerre nodded then broke the connection.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 20: Grasslands

Atop a tall mountain located within a desolate, barren planet. At the peak of this mountain there was a stone house. In front of the stone house was a white-haired, dispirited-looking man who was seated by himself and drinking some wine.

This was one of the most supreme leaders of this entire Chaosverse... Autarch Bolin.

“Desolation... destruction...” The white-haired man stared at the vast world before him. He suddenly splashed the wine in his cup towards the world, sending it splattering outwards like a fine drizzle which moistened the earth before him. Slowly, plants began to grow out from the earth, including trees and grass which caused the planet to turn green with life.

The white-haired man frowned slightly as he watched. "The color of life... can it be that an Autarch is only able to control a single Daobirth Essence?" He shook his head. "There should be at least a tiny chance of controlling two."

He felt certain that he had already reached an incredibly high level of insight into the cycle of life and death; in fact, it wasn't too far off from his Claw Daobirth Essence in terms of profundity. And yet... no matter how he tried, he remained unable to form his Samsara Daobirth Essence.

"Death and life. Life is absolutely marvelous and intoxicating in its grandeur." Autarch Bolin watched as the planet transformed, smiling respectfully as he watched life rise in all its awesome grandeur. Suddenly, his face tightened and he turned to stare at the empty void beyond the planet.

The space around the chaos planet had suddenly changed. An enormous being had just appeared within the empty space, and compared to it even the chaos planet was nothing more than the size of this creature's fist. This creature looked like a giant gray bear, and it stared coldly at the planet and Autarch Bolin with its single cyclopean eye.

"An Autarch-class void dweller?" Autarch Bolin murmured softly to himself. "And it seems spacetime has been sealed."

"Cultivator, you shall be the first person I kill within this Chaosverse!" the giant gray bear boomed loudly. It reached out with its giant paw to swat at Bolin. These void dwellers were born with tremendous natural gifts and they each had their own specialties. As for this giant bear, its specialty lay in its terrifying raw strength. Of the various Autarch-class void dwellers Iyerre had caught in the Infinite Void, it was without a doubt the physically strongest.

Riiiiip! The planet was surrounded and protected by many formations, but the giant bear paw caused them all to instantly crumble.

Autarch Bolin stared at the incoming paw coldly, a giant golden bridge with a tower on it appearing before him. Autarch Bolin himself moved to stand in front of the tower.

This was indeed the same type of protective treasure which Autarch Mogg had used, a Golden Bridge of Freedom. Since its existence had already been revealed, Autarch Bolin chose to use it right away as he could sense that this was a dangerous situation he was in.

"Die!" The giant paw came crashing down upon the golden bridge, tearing through its aura of power.

"Playing around with claws in front of me?" A hint of a cold smile flickered across Autarch Bolin face as he manifested six arms. All six of his hands arced into a claw and then tore at the giant furry bear paw slamming down towards him.

These strikes were so ferocious as to cause even the frozen spacetime around them to twist. Autarch Bolin's claws were filled with unfathomable power. They seemed very ordinary, but they also seemed to contain countless transformations within them.

Boom! Autarch Bolin's six claws clashed head-on against that giant bear's paw.

Autarch Bolin couldn't help but take two steps backwards, while the gigantic Autarch-class void bear stumbled backwards as well. It stared at Autarch Bolin with some astonishment.

“You aren’t too shabby, cultivator. Die!” The giant bear began to go berserk, roaring as it pounced at Bolin. It sent out consecutive blows with its two giant paws, which came crashing down like two vast celestial objects with so much pressure that even spacetime was completely flattened. This attack was so powerful that Autarch Bolin had no choice but to defend himself using the might of the Golden Bridge of Freedom.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The giant Autarch-class void bear continued to furiously assault Autarch Bolin for three full seconds, but it remained unable to do anything to him.

“Vilesky, you aren’t going to be able to kill this cultivator as long as he is standing on that golden bridge,” a loud voice boomed out. “Give up on trying to do it yourself. You need our help.”

Autarch Bolin’s face tightened slightly as he turned to stare into the distant void. He barked from the golden bridge, “Show yourselves!”

“Haha, ‘show yourselves’? You are ordering us around?”

“Do you really think you are worthy of giving us orders?”

“You are too weak.” Multiple voices rang out from the empty space around the world.

Moments later the vast void itself seemed to change, transforming into an even vaster grasslands that had a white layer of clouds in the skies above it. As for Autarch Bolin himself, he was now standing atop the grasslands.

“Eh?” Autarch Bolin stared at the grasslands which had just appeared around him. He inspected it closely, carefully attuning himself to the vital energy contained within every single stalk of grass. “This is an actual, real grassland?”

“Why does it seem as though the grasslands extend off into infinite?” Autarch Bolin inspected the world around him clearly. There were clouds above him, but the grasslands seemed to have no end, stretching off as far as he could see. Despite his power, he still wasn’t able to see just how vast this world was! Was this a joke? He could even see to the ends of a realmverse!

“Break!” Autarch Bolin continued to stand atop his golden bridge as he reached out to tear at the skies, seeking to tear them apart.

Slash! His two hands clawed at the layers of clouds. Autarch Bolin felt as though the clouds were incredibly tenacious. He was able to tear through a few of the clouds, but he wasn’t able to break through all of them!

“I refuse to believe this.” Autarch Bolin began to furiously attack with all six arms, using them to tear at the clouds in the skies.

This was what the cultivator Autarchs usually did. They had such boundless amounts of power that they didn’t fear exhaustion, and so using a furious barrage of attacks to crush one’s foes was usually the best method.

After the time needed to boil a kettle of tea, Autarch Bolin finally managed to completely tear through the final layer of clouds, pulling open a giant gaping hole in the skies.

Swoosh! The golden bridge beneath him rapidly shrank in size as he rode it through the gaping hole.

After flying through the gaping hole, Autarch Bolin first stared downwards at the many clouds he was standing upon, then upwards at the many clouds which still filled the skies above him.

Suddenly, a hoarse voice filled the skies: "Haha, keep clawing your way through. This isn't like those puny 'temples'! Although there are only nine layers to this world of grass, each layer is thicker than the last. You have no chance at all of breaking through the final layer of clouds... and you won't even be able to get there. The shifting fields of spacetime here will ensure that you are forever trapped within the first layer of clouds above the grasslands."

"Who are you? A Sithe Exalt?" As soon as Autarch Bolin had sensed how spacetime had been suppressed in this area, he had known that the danger was tremendous.

"Don't compare me to those pitiable fools. I'm not one of Iyerre's subordinates," a clear voice suddenly rang out in response within the clouds.

"Grr..." Far away, the clouds suddenly parted to reveal an enormous figure. This was the giant cyclopean bear which had attacked Autarch Bolin earlier.

Riiiiip. Autarch Bolin immediately turned to stare at two other directions. The clouds parted in two separate places, revealing two different creatures which began to fly towards him. The first was a red-eyed, white-furred humanoid whose body was covered with a bloody red miasma that radiated a demonic aura. Autarch Bolin couldn't help but shudder slightly – this creature seemed to have been born out of pure malice and spite!

As for the second creature, it was like a giant stormcloud. Its body was blurry and indistinct, but one could vaguely make out hundreds of evil-looking eyes as well as countless tentacles reaching out from the clouds.

"Three Autarch-class void dwellers?" Autarch Bolin remained quite calm. "These Autarch-class void dwellers might be on par with me in strength, but that's only due to their natural abilities. Their insights into the Dao are laughably low, while I have the Golden Bridge of Freedom protecting me. I should be able to keep myself completely safe... but the world of grass which has imprisoned me is quite marvelous. The grass should all be real, and it has nine layers of clouds as well as three Autarch-class void dwellers protecting it. Thus far, the only place we have seen three Autarch-class void dwellers has been that behemoth hive. None of the temples had any inside."

The Eight Revolutions Spacetime Temple which had trapped Ning had only held Sithe Exalts. The same was true for the other temples. None of them had Autarch-class void dwellers!

The Annihilation Hive, however, had three. Now that three more had appeared within this world of grass... Autarch Bolin had the feeling that this grassland world was probably far more dangerous than any of those other temples.

What he didn't know was that the world of grass was arguably the most deadly weapon which the Sithe had prepared for this invasion.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 21: Bolin's Death

A giant one-eyed bear, a red-eyed white-furred humanoid, and a giant stormcloud! The three Autarch-class void dwellers circled Autarch Bolin and his golden bridge from three different directions.

Autarch Bolin didn't panic in the slightest. He had experience in dealing with Autarch-class void dwellers, as he had worked with the others to kill two of them during the Dawn War. Later on, Ji Ning and Autarch Mogg had captured two in the Annihilation Hive and then negotiated with the strongest one to have it leave their Chaosverse. Thanks to these experiences, Autarch Bolin knew two important things about these void dwellers.

First, there was no way to compel Autarch-class void dwellers to swear lifeblood oaths – they had simply entered verbal agreements with the Sithe which they could renege upon at will. Second... they could be negotiated with!

"Gentlemen," Autarch Bolin sent to the three, "We cultivators have fought against you and your fellow void dwellers on multiple occasions. During the last war we killed two of your kind, and just recently we fought against three more in the behemoth hive the Sithe constructed. We ended up capturing two of them, while the other one decided to work with us and so we granted it safe passage out of our Chaosverse."

"Hrm?" The three Autarch-class void dwellers circling around Autarch Bolin were slightly startled. They knew that others had been captured by the Sithe, but the three didn't know what had happened to them.

"We have a decided advantage against the Sithe in this war!" Autarch Bolin said persuasively, "Not a single one of us Autarchs have perished in either the Dawn War or this war, while the Sithe have suffered heavy losses and countless casualties. We've captured and slaughtered a large number of their Exalts! I would wager that the one you fear the most is their leader, 'Iyerre', right?"

"Heh. Iyerre should be an Omega Autarch. He's very powerful, and outside this Chaosverse he would vastly outstrip us in might. However, this is our home! The Chaosverse rejects him, preventing him from using any of the Dao's power. He's merely on the same level as us in power! He tried to ambush Autarch Mogg earlier, but in the end he had to retreat with his head hanging low."

"They've suffered catastrophic losses, while not even Iyerre is able to do anything to us. All of us are alive and well. Our side stands a much greater chance of winning this war!" Autarch Bolin continued, "I know that you have been forced to take part in this war. If you insist on battling us to the death, once we win there's no way we will spare you!"

"However, if you choose to betray them and work with us instead, we'll help you out. Afterwards, I'll send you out of our Chaosverse and grant you your liberty. I can swear a lifeblood oath on this," Autarch Bolin said.

"Betray them and join you?"

"Impossible!" The three Autarch-class void dwellers instantly sent messages of rejection.

“Haha, fine. I won’t force you to actually betray them. All you need to do is to pull your punches during these battles. Both of us will hold back by 50%! All we need to do is put on a show for the Sithe to watch. I, Bolin, will definitely remember your show of friendship and can swear an oath that once the war concludes, we won’t make things difficult for you. We’ll send you out of our Chaosverse.”

Although the three Autarch-class void dwellers had many misgivings about this, a short while later they sent back a response: “Fine.”

“Deal.”

“We’ll believe you for now.”

These void dwellers might look stupid, but in truth the Infinite Void they wandered through was unfathomably vaster than any Chaosverse. The Chaosverses were merely the largest celestial bodies that existed within the Infinite Void! The Infinite Void was so vast that it contained truly innumerable lifeforms. As creatures who rose to reach Autarch-levels of power, they naturally were quite crafty and understood how to balance pros and cons.

They harbored great hatred for the Sithe, but Iyerre was so overwhelmingly powerful that there was no way for them to fight back against him. Still, Bolin’s words had indeed convinced them. There was no guarantee that the Sithe would truly win this war, and so they wanted to prepare a way out for themselves.

“Attack!”

The mental conversation had been an extremely quick one. Anyone watching from the outside world would have simply seen a brief staredown, followed by immediate combat. The three Autarch-class void dwellers began to launch a frenzied series of blows against Autarch Bolin. Even though they were holding back on their strikes, they were still forceful enough to cause spacetime to twist and distort around them.

Autarch Bolin was at a complete disadvantage and had been completely suppressed, but his six arms were able to work together in marvelous fashion, allowing him an airtight defense that completely protected him against their attacks.

Both sides were holding back by 50%, but no one watching from the outside would be able to notice anything at all.

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“These creatures of the Infinite Void do not train in the Dao. They have low levels of insight, rendering their incredible natural gifts completely useless. They clearly have Autarch levels of power and are able to overpower Autarch Bolin, but they aren’t able to kill him even though they outnumber him three-to-one.” Three people were conversing via godsense in the void beyond this battle.

“We’re simply using them to tie him down. They serve well as brutes and foot soldiers. It’s enough for them to have completely suppressed him.”

“In the end, it’ll be up to the three of us.”

“Let’s find a chance to make our move.”

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Autarch Bolin continued to fight from atop the Golden Bridge of Freedom. He seemed to be using all his strength to resist the combined attacks of these three Autarch-class creatures, and in truth these void dwellers had been blessed with ridiculous strength and innate power. They might not have trained in the Dao, but they could break almost anything with raw power! Mogg had found it quite difficult to handle just one of them in the Annihilation Hive. Bolin now had the aid of the Golden Bridge of Freedom, but he still found defending against them difficult even though both sides were holding back.

The reason why he had asked for both sides to hold back was so that he would have the capacity to deal with something unexpected.

Autarch Bolin stood there atop the golden bridge, both himself and the bridge being sent staggering downwards by the force of the void dwellers' blows. Both were sent smashing into the thick clouds below them.

Suddenly...

Whoooosh! An iridescent violet-gold chain suddenly shot out of the clouds, moving as agilely as a snake as it lashed at Autarch Bolin.

"Huh?!" Autarch Bolin turned pale. This whipping motion from the violet-gold chain had a strange cadence and gave off a strange sensation. Only someone who had reached an incredibly high level of insight into the Dao would be able to unleash such a strike. Without question, this was an Autarch-calibre technique... and the power rippling from the chain surpassed even Autarch Bolin's own level of power!

Boom! One of Autarch Bolin's six arms instantly expanded in size, and he reached out with a claw-hand to try and seize that chain.

Faced with Autarch Bolin's full-strength claw attack, the violet-gold chains suddenly switched from a lashing motion to a coiling motion, seeking to wrap themselves around him.

Clang! Autarch Bolin missed with his grab, but one of his fingers manage to land a clawing blow upon the chain. However, the chain managed to easily deflect the power of his blow and continued with its coiling attack.

Whoosh! Right at this moment, yet another violet-gold chain appeared from the skies above Autarch Bolin. This one descended towards him with overwhelming power, dealing a furious lashing blow against him.

Clank! Clank! Clank! Three more violet-gold chains suddenly appeared from the clouds above, the clouds below, and to his left. Every chain was attacking in a manner which was difficult to defend against! At peak power Autarch Bolin was able to fight with six arms, but he still had to use at least three of them to defend against the three Autarch-class void dwellers while pretending to be wounded by them. And this was with the void dwellers holding back; if they weren't, he would've suffered a truly heavy injury!

Use three arms to fight back against five of those violet-gold chains? He was caught flat-footed and knew that he wouldn't be able to hold on for much longer.

Whoosh! Finally, yet another violet-gold chain appeared to his right. This time, Autarch Bolin wasn't able to defend at all. The chain violently lashed Autarch Bolin across the chest, catching him completely off-guard. Bang! His entire body caved in then completely imploded from the power of this strike, but a heartbeat later his body transformed into countless specks of light instead. He had just used his invulnerable form and was trying to heal.

"Haha, still trying to survive?"

"Your body's been destroyed. Struggling is useless. You are dead."

Those six violet-gold chains flew out with incredible speed and power, showing no mercy at all as they furiously assaulted those specks of light. Autarch Bolin's dispersed energies were being repeatedly annihilated, and just a short while later his fleeing form had been completely annihilated.

He had been completely suppressed in power. Autarch Bolin had been slain just a heartbeat after the six chains had appeared! He had simply been overwhelmed by the number of enemies he faced.

The power quickly fled from the levitating golden bridge, and it came crashing down into the deep clouds below it. It tumbled across the clouds, with even the tower being twisted by the collision.

The sounds of battle finally fell silent, while the six chains disappeared back into the clouds once more.

"Well. That's certainly a shame." The three Autarch-class void dwellers stared at the fallen golden bridge which now lay atop the clouds, feeling rather regretful. They didn't like the Sithe one bit, and they couldn't help but feel a bit unhappy that the native Autarch they had just reached a pact with moments ago had perished almost immediately afterwards.

"Let's go." The three void dwellers quickly departed into the clouds as well, leaving behind just the fallen golden bridge and a few scattered treasures.