

## Desolate 1471

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 22: Message

Moments later, a willowy, silver-robed woman suddenly stepped out of the silent clouds and moved to stand next to the fallen Golden Bridge of Freedom.

“This weapon Iyerre fashioned is certainly powerful. We were able to crush and kill this native Autarch with ease.” The silver-robed woman waved her hand, collecting the fallen treasures and estate-worlds which lay strewn across the clouds, then gave the bridge a close look. “I imagine Iyerre will be interested in taking a closer look at this pseudo-Daoguard Tower.”

Whoosh. With a wave of her hand, she collected the golden bridge as well. She then scanned the surrounding area, a delighted smile on her face: “That was pretty easy.” She then stepped away into the void and vanished without a trace.

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Within a vast sea of fire located within the Great Dark. Many spacetime rifts could be seen at the borders of this sea of fire, and Iyerre was walking through it barefooted. He was hastening towards his proudest creation, the Grassland World... but suddenly, he came to a halt.

“Eh?” An eager look appeared on his face. “It seems they have something to report.” A blurry pillar of light appeared in front of him, quickly resolving into three figures. It was the two men and the woman he had sent off earlier. The silver-robed woman was holding a miniaturized golden bridge in her hands, and she was casually flipping it up and down.

When Iyerre saw the golden bridge, he couldn’t help but smile: “You succeeded?”

“It was very easy.” The silver-robed woman raised an eyebrow. “That native Autarch named ‘Bolin’ died before we even had to go all-out against him.”

“Autarch Bolin?!” Iyerre was unspeakably delighted by this.

Although he was quite confident in the Grassland World, the most powerful weapon he had ever created, he had still been worried that something unexpected might happen. Now that he knew the results, he finally managed to relax. It made sense. The Grassland World was overwhelming powerful, and he had to come up with a way to compel those three into coming here and helping him take control over it. It really wouldn’t have made any sense if they had failed.

“Iyerre, you’ve been suppressed by this Chaosverse to such a degree that although you are a bit more powerful than the native Autarchs, you are still on their same overall level of power! In the end, the weapons you’ve created are actually stronger than you,” the silver-robed woman teased.

“It’s true.” Iyerre nodded in acknowledgment. “I might be weakened, but my artificing skills remain untouched.”

Back in his homeland, Iyerre was so overwhelmingly powerful that these complicated artifacts and treasures were useless to him. A single palm from him would have far more power than any artifact

possibly could unleash. Here, however, artifacts like the Grassland World were much more dangerous than even Iyerre himself.

“What should we do next?” the red-robed man asked.

“Shall we keep ambushing the other natives?” the black-robed man said in a cold voice. “The Grassland World can hide its aura and prevent the Chaosverse from sensing and locating it. We can keep hunting them down.”

“No.” Iyerre shook his head. “Without question, the other Autarchs were notified right away once Bolin died! They’ll be extremely cautious and won’t give us another chance like this.”

He wasn’t a fool, and he didn’t treat the Autarchs as fools either. Previously, Ning and the others had been certain that they were safe. They never would’ve imagined that such an overwhelmingly powerful weapon as the Grassland World would appear without them even being able to detect it. The Grassland World had been so powerful that it had only been forced to reveal part of its true power in order to slay Autarch Bolin!

“Then what should we do next?” the silver-robed woman asked.

“Now that you’ve already revealed yourselves, we should prepare for a frontal clash,” Iyerre said with a smile. “We’ve already killed one of the native Autarchs and seized the initiative! Now, hurry up and send the Grassland World to reinforce the four trapped temples. Go rescue my Exalts and bring them into the Grassland World. They’ll be of great use to you there.”

“Fine.”

“Very well.” All three agreed to the order. They all knew that while the Sithe Exalts were individually weak, in sufficient numbers they were still able to be extremely effective in battle. Unlike those foolish Autarch-class void dwellers, the Sithe Exalts had all reached incredibly high levels of insight into the Dao and were the equals of the native Autarchs in insights.

“Let’s go. I’ll join forces with you as soon as I can,” Iyerre said.

The blurry pillar of light vanished.

Iyerre was in a superb mood. There were only seven Autarchs to begin with. Now that Bolin had died, only six were left! Several of the six had seen their original avatars destroyed, and their new avatars remained fairly weak. Another peak avatar had been tied down within the Annihilation Hive. On the Sithe side, none of their peak combatants had been lost to date!

“Given the current situation, we should definitely be able to win a head-on clash.” Iyerre smiled.

He had been preparing for this battle for many, many aeons. He had made multiple plans for victory, and as he saw it they were completely flawless.

The simplest plan had been to gain victory through the Annihilation Hive! He hadn’t expected it to be resolved that easily, but fortunately he hadn’t placed too much hope on gaining victory so easily.

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A quiet, ordinary chaos planet. Ning was pacing around, filled with worry. Just now, he had received a message from Autarch Bolin:

*"I'm under attack. An Autarch-class void dweller has appeared, and spacetime has been frozen around me!"*

Ning felt rather uneasy upon hearing this. Autarch Mogg had been ambushed but had been lucky enough to survive. Now, Autarch Bolin had been ambushed as well? Did the Sithe feel confident in being able to breach the defenses of the Golden Bridge of Freedom? Had they really sent just one Autarch-class void dweller to accomplish this?

*"All spacetime around me has been subsumed by a vast world of grasslands. I can't see to the ends of this world. The skies above me are filled with a thick layer of clouds that are incredibly tough. I'm using all my power right now to break through the clouds."*

*"I've finally broken through the clouds. There's actually an even higher layer of clouds above me!"*

*"An enemy in this world has just informed me that this place has a total of nine cloud layers, each of which is harder to breach than the last. I apparently have no chance of breaking through the final layer whatsoever, and it is supposedly protected by constantly shifting spacetime which will keep me forever trapped here at the first layer."*

*"I'm being attacked by a total of three Autarch-class void dwellers."*

*"Haha... I've managed to successfully persuade them into holding back. They've been forced to take part in this war and don't really want to battle to the death. It was easy to persuade them."*

Autarch Bolin continued to send one message after another to the others. Generally speaking, whenever the Autarchs were in a dangerous situation they would constantly send messages so that even if they died, the survivors would gain a better understanding of what dangers the deceased had faced and so wouldn't repeat their mistakes.

Time continued to flow on.

*"Not good. A violet-gold chain just appeared from the clouds. Another one just appeared out of nowhere."*

*"These chains are incredibly powerful. They have to be on par with Darknorth's full-force strikes! They are not only strong, they are also incredibly profound. These chains are definitely being used with Autarch-class techniques. They are very difficult to deal with."*

*"Three chains... four chains... five chains! I can't hold on much longer."*

*"Six chains! I can't hold!"*

These messages came very fast, one after the other. As soon as the final message came, Ning could sense that Autarch Bolin's aura had suddenly vanished from his message-talisman. The talisman had become an ownerless object, with Ning no longer able to sense any karma tying him to Autarch Bolin any further.

The karmic links between them had been completely severed. There was only one explanation for this.

“He d-died? Bolin died?” Ning was stunned. Not just him – all five of the other Autarchs were stunned as well.

An Autarch had died!

There had been dangerous situations in the past, such as when Autarch Ekong had been trapped within that temple or when Autarch Mogg had been hunted by Iyerre... but this was the first time in the entire long history of this Chaosverse that an Autarch had been killed. This was completely unprecedented! Autarch Bolin had just been killed? He was dead?!

Ning felt many complicated emotions. Anxiety, sorrow, pain, grief... and smoldering rage.

“This isn’t the time to grieve. Bolin’s dead. He was trapped within that world of grass, and as soon as those chains appeared he was killed. That world of grass is a hundred times more dangerous than the temples we faced prior to this. We have to be careful not to fall into the same trap.” Autarch Titanos was the first to send a message to the others.

“Agreed. We can’t make the same mistake. Don’t let them succeed with another ambush! We now have two options before us. The first is to enter the Quintessence. There’s no way they would be able to enter the Quintessence without the prime essences discovering them. The second option is for us to maintain a vast domain-type sea of mana around us at all times. The mana will be infused with part of our truesoul, and so we would immediately notice them once they went anywhere near us no matter what type of masking technique they use,” Autarch Skyfeeder immediately sent.

“We can’t set up a sufficiently large domain with our mana. I’m worried that their world of grass is so vast that it could still encompass and trap us when used from outside that range,” Autarch Ekong rebutted.

“Our only choice is to join forces,” Autarch Titanos said.

They quickly began to discuss what their next steps should be. They had paid a high price for this lesson; there was no way they could allow themselves to be ambushed in such a manner again. As for hiding into the Quintessence? They weren’t really willing to take this option.

Just as they were negotiating in the midst of their rage and grief, suddenly... a new message was sent to the six of them from Autarch Bolin’s message-talisman, even though it no longer had Bolin’s aura and appeared to be ownerless.

“I am Bolin. I’m not dead yet!”

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### **Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 23: Trap**

When Bolin reflected on what had just happened, he couldn’t help but feel both a sense of fear and joy. When he had been assaulted by those violet-gold chains, he had immediately known that the situation was extremely grim. The chains were attacking with techniques that were just as profound as him, and as soon as all six had appeared he had begun to feel a sense of despair. The difference between them

was just too great! Five chains alone probably would've done him in fairly quickly. Six chains had completely broken through his defensive lines.

When his body had been lashed apart, he had transformed into his invulnerable form and attempted to keep himself alive. He wasn't willing to give up until the very last moment, but as those chains had continued to lash away at him and his energies were completely annihilated, he began to feel a mixture of total despair as well as deep resentment in his heart!

In that final instant before his death, he had suddenly broken through the final bottleneck in understanding the mysteries of life and death. He had reached the level of true perfection, and he immediately sent the tiny remaining bits of his dispersed energies which had been mixed into the clouds into a state of 'false death'! This was a new technique which Bolin had naturally and instantly gained when he had mastered his Samsara Daobirth Essence.

The 'false death' state was a state of neither death or life. It was quite marvelous, causing one's aura to completely vanish and all karmic links to be severed. There was no way for anyone to sense his existence.

In truth, Bolin had long ago reached incredible levels of insight into the cycle of life and death. His very aura had changed due to his many aeons spent meditating on its mysteries, and his skill in life and death was very close to his skill in the Claw Daobirth Essence. If it hadn't been for the fact that he had already created the Claw Daobirth Essence, he probably would've long ago formed the Samsara Daobirth Essence.

However, anyone who already mastered a Daobirth Essence would be influenced by it, making it incredibly difficult to break through in a second Daobirth Essence even if one had reached a high level of enlightenment in it. It wasn't until the final moments when he hovered at the brink of death that he managed to understand his final flaws and reach perfection in this Dao.

"So this is how it works. When I had merely mastered ten Hegemonic Daos, the accumulated insights were enough for me to vault into understanding the Claw Daobirth Essence... but in understanding the cycle of life and death, I had to slowly advance one step at a time. I was able to improve the power of this Dao and reach a level which was very close to that of my Claw Daobirth Essence, but it wasn't until I personally was at the verge of death that I understood how to truly master it."

Bolin nodded to himself. "When mastering the first Daobirth Essence, it is easy because nothing interferes with it. The second one, however, is a hundred times more difficult. It requires constant, nonstop searching."

"Fortune and calamity ride together. I was driven to the brink of despair, but it allowed me to master the Samsara Daobirth Essence." Bolin was in a fairly good mood right now.

After entering the 'false death' state he was able to avoid all forms of detection, but of course he didn't dare to take any actions at all. For the sake of making it look real, he had voluntarily abandoned his Golden Bridge of Freedom and some of his other treasures. He didn't discard his message-talisman, however, because only Autarchs could use them. He had given up his many other message-talismans. The Sithe had never seen an Autarch message-talisman before, and so they didn't realize what was missing from the many they had taken from him.

He knew that his friends would probably be heartbroken once he entered that 'false death' state, and so he waited until the opponent left with his treasures and his bridge before stealthily sending them a message through the message talisman:

"I am Bolin. I'm not dead yet!"

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This message completely shocked Ji Ning, Titanos, Mogg, and the others.

"Bolin, you are still alive?"

"Is this for real?"

"Why can't I sense your existence?"

"Are you truly Bolin? Do you have any proof?"

They were all so excited that they could hardly believe it. However, only the original owner of an Autarch message-talisman was able to use it. Logically speaking, there was no way for the Sithe to send any messages once Bolin died! At the same time, they also knew that Iyerre had reached a much higher level of insight than they had. It was possible that he might have a way of decoding their message-talisman, and so they felt a sense of wariness.

"Ahaha! Don't worry, I really am Bolin. Ekong, I'll have my avatar meet with you shortly. That'll be enough to prove that I'm telling the truth." Autarch Bolin understood his comrades' misgivings.

Ning and the others kept their avatars fairly close together, as they had been working together on how to deal with the sealed temples. Ning himself was fairly close to Mogg's avatar, while Bolin's avatar was fairly close to Ekong's true body.

After just the time needed to boil a kettle of tea, Bolin's avatar finished warping through spacetime and reached Autarch Ekong.

"Ekong." Bolin's avatar, dressed in black robes, suddenly appeared of nowhere without causing any sound or stir. No lines of karma appeared either. It was as though it didn't really 'exist' in this world, but when he spoke his voice whispered across an 'empty' stretch of the void. Moments later, a few ripples could be seen followed by a towering array of castles appearing in the 'empty' region. Autarch Ekong was quite lavish in preparing his dwelling place.

"Is that really you, bolin?" Autarch Ekong stared at Bolin's avatar. An overwhelming sense of familiarity flooded through him, allowing him to feel all but certain that this was Bolin, but he was still wary that this might be one of Iyerre's tricks.

"My true body remains trapped within that world of grass and is still in a false death state. I've blocked out all my auras and all karmic links for fear that the Sithe might be able to find out that I'm alive through karma, and so I was forced to do the same for my avatar. I'll release a bit of energy; test it out for yourself." The black-robed Bolin smiled as he waved his hand, causing a stream of energy to fly out.

Ekong was delighted as soon as he sensed it. This type of energy was far too familiar for him! This was mana formed through the Claw Daobirth Essence! Each expert's mana contained its own unique

signature which was completely un-fakable; Ning, for example, had a pure Omega Sword Dao sheen to his mana!

“You spoke of a ‘false death’ state? What type of state is that, for even us to be unable to sense you?” Autarch Ekong asked curiously.

“I’ve already taken control over the Samsara Daobirth Essence,” the black-robed Bolin said. “Many secrets are hidden within both life and death. Entering a pseudo-dead state was quite simple.”

Autarch Ekong stared at the black-robed Bolin, his eyes filled with curiosity. The man was clearly standing right in front of him, but all of Ekong’s other senses were telling him that ‘Bolin’ didn’t seem to exist. This odd feeling made him sigh with amazement.

“So you’ve come to comprehend two Daobirth Essences? What have you gained from it?” Autarch Ekong asked.

“Nothing special besides the fact that I now have two Daobirth Essences to use.” The black-robed Bolin shook his head. “We already know that Iyerre is more skilled than Mogg in space and more talented in illusions than Stonerule, and that he vastly outstrips Titanos in artificing. He’s extremely formidable in every single area, while his specialty lies in light. Even without the power of the Dao, he’s still able to crush us in a fair fight. Now THAT is truly impressive!”

“Those of us who reached Autarchy via fused Supreme Daos will remain ‘ordinary’ Autarchs. Even if we gain an additional Daobirth Essence, we’re still far from reaching the level of the Omega Autarchs,” the black-robed Bolin said with a laugh. “But of course, the power of the Samsara Daobirth Essence is tremendous and I’ve grown quite a bit stronger due to it. I’m also able to use these two different Daobirth Essences together. Who knows? Titanos might not be a match for me now, haha...”

Different essences had different levels of power. Previously, Autarch Titanos had been the strongest save for Ning because his was the Karma Daobirth Essence. The Samsara Daobirth Essence was also an extraordinary essence, and given that Bolin had another essence as well, it made sense that he had grown significantly stronger.

“Good, good, good!” Ekong was overjoyed. For someone on their side to be strengthened was wonderful news. He quickly sent word to the others, all of whom were similarly overjoyed. For Bolin to still be alive was simply wonderful.

Autarch Stonerule suddenly sent to everyone, “According to Bolin, that world of grass seems to be extremely powerful. I’ll wager we haven’t seen its full power yet.”

“Yes, it was absolutely terrifying. It completely dominated me! If I didn’t manage to master the Samsara Daobirth Essence at the critical moment and avoid detection via the ‘false death’ state, I probably would’ve died for real. Even at my current level of power, I won’t be able to escape,” Bolin said.

Ning said, “Given how powerful this world of grass is, we have to come up with some sort of counter-measure.”

“I’m currently right in the middle of that world. I know exactly where it is, so you don’t need to worry about being ambushed,” Bolin said.

“Huh? Ah, right! Haha.” Ekong laughed.

“Bolin’s within the world of grass, which means we now have a perfect understanding of its movements.” Titanos chuckled as well. This was an unexpected bonus.

“Where is the world of grass right now?” Ning asked.

“It’s been advancing at high speed for quite some time. Judging from its path, it should be headed towards the ‘Nine Cicadas Temple’,” Bolin said.

Ning and the others were all enlightened. Of the temples the Sithe had sent out to attack the Autarchs, one had been defeated by Ning while four had been sealed away. The Nine Cicadas Temple had been given that name by the Autarchs because it was covered extremely strange carvings of nine cicadas on them. The temple were controlled by nine Sithe Exalts, the most of any temple they had encountered thus far.

“If it is flying towards the Nine Cicadas Temple, it is probably planning on rescuing those Exalts,” Ekong said.

“We can’t let them join forces!” Ning said hurriedly.

“The Sithe have repeatedly taken advantage of their higher level of insight to ambush us!” Autarch Titanos said. “Now, thanks to Bolin, we know the exact path this world of grass is taking. That means we can set a trap for it and play a nasty little trick on that terrifying weapon.”

“Right. Let’s set up a trap!” Ning’s eyes lit up.

“Let’s give them a good hard beating,” Autarch Mogg agreed hurriedly. He had been ambushed not too while ago and was itching for revenge.

“Hopefully, we’ll destroy the entire thing,” Bolin said.

The prospect of giving the Sithe a taste of their own medicine was making their blood pump with excitement!

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#### **Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 24: An Autarch Task Force**

Ji Ning and the others began to work hard to produce a plan which would be perfectly tailored to dealing with this terrifying new threat, the ‘Grassland World’. Everyone including Ning knew deep in their hearts how important this battle would be. In fact, it could be said that if they won this battle they would probably have won the entire war! If they lost, then they would probably have lost the war as well.

The price of defeat was simply too great. All of the countless native lifeforms of this entire Chaosverse, from the lowliest of ordinary mortals to the most exalted of Hegemons and Autarchs, would be completely exterminated! Not a single one of them would be left alive! The entire Chaosverse would be completely remade into one which was suitable for the Sithe and inimical to all others.

Ning knew that they couldn’t afford to lose this battle! By now, the Sithe Hegemons and Emperors no longer posed much of a threat. It was up to the final battle between the supreme elites of each side.



“We destroyed one of those temples and trapped four of them! Even if Iyerre gets personally involved, we should be able to withstand him via the Golden Bridges of Freedom. Right now, the only thing the Sithe have which poses a threat to us is that world of grass. In truth, it is an apocalyptic danger,” Autarch Titanos said. “It only needed a fraction of its power to kill Bolin. Even though Bolin now controls two Daobirth Essences, he’s still forced to hide via the ‘false death’ technique and doesn’t dare to face it head-on! In other words, none of us are a match for that world of grass in sole combat.”

Ning agreed with this assessment. The terrifying power which the world of grass had displayed previously was enough to cause even Ning to shiver with fear.

“We’ll never have a better chance than this,” Autarch Titanos said. “We are hidden in darkness, while they stand revealed to us! We can make all preparations necessary and focus all of our power against the world of grass.”

“When Iyerre ambushed Mogg, he didn’t produce anything even as remotely terrifying as the world of grass,” Autarch Bolin said. “That was his ‘big reveal’, so he definitely would’ve gone all-out in that attack. For him to not use a ‘world of grass’ leads me to suspect that the entire Sithe race only has a single such weapon. I’m sure that it wasn’t easy for him to make such a terrifying weapon. Hell, I’m amazed they were able to create it at all!”

“Right. If Iyerre didn’t carry one, that’s probably because there only IS one.”

“If we can defeat the world of grass, we would’ve gotten rid of our greatest threat and essentially won this war,” Autarch Stonerule agreed. “This is now our last, best chance to gain victory.”

“We have to win.”

“We must win!” The seven strongest members of the cultivator civilizations were filled with determination to win.

Ning and the others were going to put everything they had into this fight. Every single one of them was going to take part, and so they began to hasten towards the Nine Cicadas Temple from their respective stations throughout the Chaosverse. Autarch Stonerule was the slowest when it came to travel speed, and so Autarch Skyfeeder actually went to him to ‘carry’ him with her.

Just a bit over a month later, they all reunited near the Nine Cicadas Temple. As for the Grassland World, it was still on its way. It wasn’t quite up to par with Autarchs when it came to warping through spacetime.

“We still have nearly a month left.”

The bulky Nine Cicadas Temple hung there in the void of space, the nine Sithe Exalts still focusing on defending it from within. Ning and the others wouldn’t be able to breach its defenses anytime soon, so they simply left it trapped within their formations.

The Autarchs were located in a region of empty space outside the formations sealing the temple away. Autarch Titanos’ two fleshy antennae were standing up straight, quivering with killing intent. He began to make the arrangements: “During this next month, we need to finish setting up any and all helpful formations. We don’t have much time. Move fast, everyone.”

“Alright,” Ning, Bolin’s avatar, Autarch Skyfeeder, Autarch Ekong, Autarch Stonerule, and Autarch Mogg all chorused in unison.

Time began to flow in a rapidly accelerated pace around them. Autarch Skyfeeder was responsible for keeping time sped up, while Ning and the others were responsible for setting up the formations. They already knew exactly where the Grassland World would be arriving, and so they would set up the grand formation there! The entire formation covered a huge area, as it was meant to encompass the entire Grassland World.

In order to make the formation as strong as possible, they even infused some of the mysteries of the Golden Bridges into the formation. When the time came, the formation would be ready to accumulate an enormous amount of the Chaosverse’s power.

The formation was divided up into two different parts. The outer formation would be maintained by Ning, Bolin’s avatar, and the true bodies of the Autarchs. The inner formation would be maintained by the other five Autarch avatars. The inner formation would serve as the vanguard for doing battle against the Grassland World; if they suffered any casualties, the inner formation would be the first to go.

“Haha, I’m done.”

“The formation’s been set up.”

Ning and the others had worked hard and quickly. In the end, they managed to finish the entire grand formation with two days to spare.

“I’ll take the Dust-1 position.” Ning stood there within a specific part of the formation. Boom! The overwhelming power of the Chaosverse instantly crossed an infinite distance to appear in the region around him. Ning’s location seemed to have transformed into an endless vortex of darkness which devoured all of the power of the prime essences!

This grand formation had two ‘poles’ which represented Yin and Yang. Ning was responsible for one of them while Titanos was responsible for the other, as the two were both skilled in formations.

As for the other five, they were responsible for helping and strengthening the power of the formation.

“The formation is complete. All of us are now much more powerful than we are normally. With so many empowered Autarch-class combatants working together and joining forces, we’ll definitely be able to destroy the Grassland World.” Autarch Titanos let out a loud laugh, completely confident in their chances.

“Right. The chains that attacked me were powerful,” Bolin’s avatar agreed, “But we have so many Autarch-class combatants that we would have more than enough power to each take on a single chain without being affected.”

“Unfortunately, two of the five avatars at the vanguard are very weak. My avatar and Skyfeeder’s avatar were both destroyed and had to be remade, and so they are only at half-strength. Even with the formation supporting them, they are just barely as strong as they would be at their peak.” Autarch Titanos shook his head.

“It is enough. The true bodies will be launching attacks from afar in support, right?” Mogg laughed as well.

Although they spoke confidently, all of them remained quite cautious. They had an enormous advantage in this battle as they had chosen the battlefield and prepared formations for it, ensuring that they could unleash the absolute maximum power possible! However, they didn’t dare to truly go all-out and leave themselves with no way out. If they really did die, the cultivators would never again have a chance of reversing this defeat. Thus, if this battle really did end up poorly then the true bodies who were located in the ‘outer’ part of the formation would be able to flee at any time.

The reason why Bolin’s avatar was also located in the ‘outer’ part was to keep his continued existence a secret. Otherwise, the Sithe would immediately find out that Bolin hadn’t really died.

A total of twelve Autarch-class combatants had gathered together within the formation, and they were empowered tremendously by it. They were right to speak with confidence, but also right to be wary of this terrifying ‘Grassland World’ weapon the Sithe had devised.

“They are about to arrive.” Autarch Bolin’s true body was in constant contact with them. “Five more warps through spacetime and they’ll arrive.”

“Make your preparations, everyone,” Autarch Titanos said. “Hide the formation’s power. Don’t make your moves until they enter its range.”

Titanos had been alive for longer than any of the others, and he had been the most powerful before Ning’s rise to power. Everyone was accustomed to him giving the orders, and he had been the one to devise the majority of the components of this formation. Ning and the others had only played a supplementary role.

Silence. The entire formation fell completely and utterly silent.

Ning and the others all stared intently, nervously awaiting the most critical battle of them all.

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“According to the information almighty Iyerre gave us, they should be arriving soon. We’ll be able to escape.” The nine Sithe Exalts within the Nine Cicadas Temple were all seated in the lotus position, eagerly awaiting the Grassland World’s arrival. They had felt extremely restless and uneasy after being sealed away here, as all they could do was passively watch and wait for the cultivators to eventually breach the formations protecting them.

“They should arrive in just another day or two.”

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Rumble... a dimensional rift suddenly appeared just a hundred billion kilometers away from the Nine Cicadas Temple, followed by a silvery-white ship flying out of the rift. This was an ordinary-looking realmship, while the person commanding it was nothing more than an ordinary Hegemon.

However... the twelve Autarch-class combatants hidden within this region all knew the truth. They knew that the Grassland World was hidden within that realmship, because Autarch Bolin’s true body remained trapped inside.

“They’ve entered the net.” Autarch Titanos’ eyes shone with baleful light. “Activate.”

“Activate.”

Ning and Titanos were in control of the Yin-Yang poles, and they simultaneously activated the formation with the other five working in concert with them. Rumble... an utterly apocalyptic amount of power instantly filled a vast region of ten trillion kilometers. The mere flow of power caused the void of space itself to be ground into countless sand-like particles, instantly disintegrating the silver realmship. As for the Sithe descendant who was commanding it, he stared in terror as he himself was disintegrated into dust.

The only thing left behind was a strange ovaloid object.

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#### **Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 25: Snake and Sword**

This ovaloid object was the most powerful Sithe weapon... the Grassland World.

“We’ve been trapped!”

“What’s going on? How could there be a trap here? We cut off all connections to the outside world and are undetectable. There’s no way the cultivators could’ve tracked us here. How could they have set up a trap in advance?!” The black-robed man, the red-robed man, and the silver-robed woman were standing atop the clouds, staring at the outside world. They were able to see past the Grassland World’s dimensions with ease.

The world outside had been transformed into a writhing realm of primordial chaos, filled with such power that even they shuddered at it.

“Did they perhaps manage to guess that we were going to come and rescue the Exalts and so set up a trap in advance?” the silver-robed woman asked, puzzled.

“They trapped a total of four temples. How could they be sure that we would come to the Nine Cicadas Temple first?” the red-robed man boomed.

“Could they have set up traps around all four temples?” the black-robed man asked in his icy voice.

“Impossible. You can see how much power the formation outside is using. The ambient power alone is enough to annihilate realmships with ease. The cultivators must have poured all their power into creating a formation of such power,” the silver-robed woman said. “There’s no way they could simultaneously maintain four or five formations of such power.”

The red-robed man shook his head. “In the end, this is their Chaosverse. They must’ve come up with some other way of tracking out whereabouts. No time to waste on wondering how they did it! Right now, our biggest problem is that we’ve already been trapped.”

“Then what should we do?” the black-robed man said with a frown.

Unlike the other Sithe Exalts, they weren't truly Iyerre's subordinates. Thus, they didn't really care too much about whether Iyerre won or not. They had only taken part because they had been required to, while the promised rewards ensured that they weren't excessively opposed to helping out! However, when they could sense that they were in mortal danger, there was absolutely no way they would throw away their own lives for the sake of this war.

Outside this Chaosverse, they could kill these Autarchs with ease. Here in this Chaosverse, these local Autarchs were terrifyingly powerful. Now that they had joined forces and used a mighty formation, the three felt even more nervous.

"We can't risk ourselves. Absolutely not. If Iyerre wants to take risks, let him do it," the black-robed man muttered.

"Let's see just how strong the grand formation is. Let the fools go," the silver-robed woman said. "We ourselves can just stand back."

"Fine." The black-robed man and the red-robed man both agreed. By their very nature, they looked down upon those three 'fools'.

"Hey, idiots! Hurry up and get over here!" the silver-robed woman shouted.

Soon, three enormous creatures emerged from beyond the clouds. The first was the giant cyclopean bear, the second was the red-eyed white-furred humanoid, while the third was the tentacled stormcloud. These Autarch-class void dwellers were extremely displeased at the contempt which these three powerful Sithe displayed towards them. They could sense it keenly, but they were weaker than the three Sithe and so there was nothing they could do.

"What do you want?" the giant cyclopean bear rumbled unhappily.

"We have business for you, of course," the silver-robed woman snapped. "The Grassland World has already been trapped by the cultivators! We don't know anything at all about the situation outside, and so we need you to help investigate it for us."

"Investigate?" The three Autarch-class void dwellers were filled with both rage and fear. They knew just how powerful these three Sithe were... and yet, the Sithe were too afraid to go outside and so were sending them out?

"The three of you are skilled at staying alive." The silver-robed woman's eyes flashed coldly. "I suggest you go immediately. Don't force our hand."

They had to go, whether they wanted to or not! The three Autarch-class void dwellers exchanged glances, communing in secret.

"We can go if you want," the red-eyed, white-furred humanoid said hoarsely, "But we'll need to keep part of our bodies within the Grassland World. We'll only let parts of ourselves go outside! That way, we can be sure to keep ourselves alive. If you want us to completely depart from the Grassland World, we'd rather die than comply! It'd be death either way."

"Right!" the cyclopean bear and the tentacled stormcloud both chorused.

“Haha, so you three idiots aren’t as dumb as you look?” the silver-robed woman snickered. “Don’t worry. We don’t stand to benefit from your deaths. All we want to do is to use you to investigate the outside world. We can agree to your terms... now hurry up and go! Find out what’s going on outside so we can take the appropriate counter-measures.”

The three Autarch-class void dwellers could no longer refuse, and so they immediately soared upwards through the clouds. They went through one layer of clouds after another. The clouds were normally quite resilient, but when they flew through them the clouds all parted before them. Soon, they reached the ninth and final layer of clouds.

“Be careful, everyone.” They exchanged glances, then nervously began to fly through the ninth layer as the two men and one woman below them watched intently.

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Ning and the others were using the formation to blanket and smother this entire region with their power. After trapping that ovaloid object, they quickly saw it dramatically expand in size. Boom! Boom! Boom! It grew to be ten thousand kilometers in size... a hundred thousand kilometers... a million kilometers... ten million kilometers... a hundred million kilometers...

“Suppress it!” Autarch Titanos commanded. Ning and the others began to pour the power of the formation into doing just that.

Boom! Boundless amounts of power began to coil around the Grassland World, compressing and crushing it. As it continued to expand in size, the amount of pressure it faced continued to increase as well. By the time it reached a size of nine billion kilometers, it was unable to expand any further! Every single part of its enormous bulk was under utterly horrendous levels of pressure.

“I can’t believe a mere artifact is able to resist the power of our formation and still expand to such a great size,” Ning said. “It really is far more powerful than any of the temples we saw earlier.”

“Find its weak points. If we can’t find any, just launch an all-out attack,” Autarch Titanos sent mentally.

“Alright.”

“Let’s take a close look at the thing. Ning and the others all began to inspect the Grassland World from their various vantage points, searching for weak points. Alas, they couldn’t see anything from the outside.

A short while later, as they were still inspecting the thing, a gray part of the ovaloid object suddenly began to ripple like the clouds. An enormous creature began to emerge, quickly resolving into the giant head of the vast, foolish-looking cyclopean bear. Next to his head was a stormcloud that seemed to be filled with countless black tentacles as well as an unremarkable-looking red-eyed, white-furred humanoid.

Each just sent parts of their bodies from within the rolling screen of clouds, keeping the rest of themselves within. They stared curiously at the outside world, but they saw nothing but a mishmash of chaos. How could they tell what was going on?

“Autarch-class void dwellers!” Ning recognized them right away.

“Those were the three which attacked me previously,” Bolin’s avatar sent.

“Perfect. Everyone, attack! When they retreat, follow them inside the Grassland World,” Autarch Titanos ordered.

“Alright.”

“Attack!”

Ning and the others began to carry out the plan they had practiced a number of times in the past.

The five avatars of Titanos, Mogg, Skyfeeder, Stonerule, and Ekong within the inner formation all began to activate their respective parts of the formations. They transformed into an enormous five-headed black serpent, with each head representing one of the avatars. The main head of the black serpent was led by Autarch Titanos, who commanded the other four in attacking.

As for the ones in the outer formation, they were even more powerful but chose to be cautious and launch long-range attacks from afar.

“Go!” Autarch Mogg waved a finger from afar. Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! A series of round arcs of saber-light flew out, filled with the boundless mysteries of the Space Daobirth Essence.

Bolin’s avatar waved a finger as well, causing ten thousand beads to appear which were filled with the mysteries of the Samsara Daobirth Essence. To keep his true identity hidden, he did not use his Claw Daobirth Essence.

The other Autarchs all used their most powerful long-distance attacks as well.

“All Daos Are The Sword!” Ning willed his six Northbow swords to come flying out, filling them with the power of his mana and linking them together with the power of the other Autarchs. Ning was responsible for guiding the powers of all six Autarchs, because as an Omega Emperor he was skilled in virtually every aspect. He understood illusions, karma, the samsara of life and death, and both space and time.

He was a bit weaker than Bolin when it came to life and death and a bit inferior than Titanos when it came to karma, but he remained incredibly skilled in all respects. Thus, he was the perfect mediator for their powers, allowing the six to join together in a flawless manner and truly transform their attacks. It was a pity that Ning’s avatar was still tied down within the Annihilation Hive. Otherwise, he could’ve also taken responsibility over the five avatars attacking from the inner formation, allowing them to become even more powerful!

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 26: Unstoppable**

The three Autarch-class void dwellers were in the ninth layer of clouds of the Grassland World, nervously reaching out to the outside world.

“See anything?” the cyclopean bear said, carefully scanning the primordial chaos outside.

“I don’t see a damn thing.” The tentacled stormcloud was extremely cautious as well.

“Look out!” The red-eyed, white-furred humanoid’s eyes were glowing with bloody red light as it stared intently towards a distant place, and it suddenly sent a mental warning to the others.

Riiiiip! An enormous black five-headed serpent suddenly slithered forward from within the mishmash of primordial chaos, its head glaring ferociously at the three as it charged towards them with an overwhelming aura.

“I’ll block it!” The red-eyed, white-furred humanoid was the closest to the serpent. It felt a sense of fear, but it still sent its two furry arms forward in an attempt to block.

Whoosh! The five heads of the black serpent suddenly attacked simultaneously while using the full power of the entire formation. This strike completely eclipsed that of any ordinary Autarch’s and was every bit the equal of Iyerre’s ultimate attack.

“Dodge!” After the black serpent crushed the red-eyed, white-furred creature, it cruised straight towards the tentacled stormcloud. The stormcloud creature was terrified but it still sent out many probing tentacles to try and defend against the impact while preparing to flee.

The black serpent slithered closer towards it, the five heads striking simultaneously once more and tearing countless tentacles apart. However, the serpent was noticeably slowed down by them.

A heartbeat later, the black serpent gave a little wriggle and then shot out once more, its speed skyrocketing to incredible heights as it flew towards the final remaining combatant, the giant cyclopean bear. Autarch Titanos’ avatar was standing in the central head, and it murmured to itself: “Where there is cause, there is effect. Karma lies in all things.” The five heads of the serpent struck out in perfect harmony.

Boom! The giant cyclopean bear furiously struck out with its twin paws, managing to block the attack of the black serpent head-on. It was the physically strongest of the Autarch-class void dwellers, and so although it was at a noticeable disadvantage it wasn’t instantly destroyed by the clash.”

“Haha, I’m not as fragile as those other two!” the giant cyclopean bear laughed excitedly.

“Titanos, prepare to enter the Grassland World!” Ning sent mentally.

Behind the giant black serpent, a sword suddenly appeared. The sword shone with dazzling light and was filled with awesome power. The five heads of the black serpent were able to cooperate together in perfect harmony thanks to the power of karma, but this sword had transcended mere ‘cooperation’ and represented many different powers being merged into a perfect whole! Ning was commanding all of the long-distance attacks from the seven Autarchs in the outer formation, and he manifested them through his Sword Dao to create a terrifying divine sword that surpassed even the black serpent in power.

“CHOP!” The awesome divine sword came crashing down with such power that even the cyclopean bear felt a sense of fear. It hurriedly retreated, seeking to use its paws to defend once again.

Slaaaash! Sword-light descended, annihilating all within its path. The upper body of the giant cyclopean bear was completely destroyed by this strike.

“Ahhh!” The giant cyclopean bear was completely terrified. Thankfully it had kept its life-core within its lower left leg, and its entire lower body remained within the ninth layer of clouds. As a result, it was



sable to survive this strike. The three had only agreed to expose part of their giant bodies, precisely because their life-cores were what really mattered the most.

Swoosh! The vast sword stabbed straight into the ninth layer of gray clouds. It shuddered slightly, seeking to tear through the surrounding area and rip apart the hundreds of millions of kilometers of clouds.

“Eh?” Thanks to the divine sword, Ning immediately sensed a powerful force resisting him. “Bolin was right. The ninth and outermost layer of clouds is so incredibly durable that ordinary Autarchs have no chance of destroying it at all. Even though we’re joining our power together and summoning the might of the Chaosverse itself, we’d probably only be able to cut apart a hundred thousand kilometers of it.

Autarchs were completely unable to breach the ninth layer of clouds, while a full-force blow from this divine sword was able to break through a hundred thousand kilometers of it. This was a testament to the sword’s might! The more of the clouds you wanted to destroy, the more power was needed.

“Titanos, help me keep the rift in the clouds open,” Ning sent mentally.

“Leave that to me!” Titanos sent the black serpent in to cover the rift while sending back, “I’ll leave the attack against the world of grass to you!”

The towering black serpent slithered its way into the tear within the gray clouds, its five heads slowly swiveling around its body and keeping the tear open, preventing the gray clouds from covering it back up again! It must be understood that once the tear was closed, Ning’s squad wouldn’t even be able to sense the insides of the Grassland World, much less maintain the sword and continue to fuel it with their mana. They had to keep the tear open and prevent it from closing!

The black serpent was filled with unearthly power, but it was only able to just barely maintain a thousand-kilometer sized rift.

“Sever the connection to the outside world! Quick! Sever it!” the red-robed man shouted frantically. The Grassland World truly was a complete world unto itself and as such could be completely detached from the rest of the Chaosverse, making it impossible for the Chaosverse to sense and detect it. The two men and the woman inside the Grassland World were absolutely horrified at the power of that sword.

“There’s no way to break the link!” the silver-robed woman said frantically. “That black serpent is preventing the clouds from reforming. We can’t break the connection!”

“Not good! That sword is about to attack!” the black-robed man bellowed.

The giant black serpent continued to hold the gray clouds apart within the ninth layer, while the mighty sword transformed to become incomparably vast as it stabbed downwards.

Boom! The tip of the sword stabbed through the eighth layer, then the seventh layer, the sixth layer...

Clang! A violet-gold chain suddenly appeared out of nowhere. The dazzling iridescent chain flew towards the black serpent which was holding the rift in the clouds open, and it was quickly followed by yet another chain as well. The violet-gold chains launched continuous attacks against the giant black serpent. If they were able to destroy it, the clouds would close over and sever the tip of the sword from the outside world, preventing it from controlled and thus causing it to collapse on its own.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

More and more violet-gold chains appeared.

“Hm?” The hilt of the absolutely titanic sword remained within the ninth layer of clouds, while the tip of the sword continued to stab downwards.

“Break!” Ning caused a series of sharp surges of sword-ki to fly out from the hilt of the sword. Each stream of sword-ki was shaped like a fish, and a total of thirty-six swordfishes quickly flew out and took up blocking positions before the black serpent. They then began to swim together to form a whirlpool of sword-light which smashed outwards at the encroaching violet-gold chains.

These thirty-six streams of sword-ki merely represented 20% of the divine sword’s power, but this defensive sword-technique in the form of a vortex of sword-light was still enough to suppress all of the attacking chains.

By now, there were nine violet-gold chains which were furiously assaulting the whirlpool of sword-light, only to be unable to break through.

“Break! Break! Break!” The toughest layer of clouds was the ninth one. With the black serpent maintaining the tear, the other eight layers were now much easier for the gigantic sword to stab through.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The sword continued to penetrate one layer of clouds after another.

“This sword is too powerful! These native Autarchs must have come together and used something akin to a Daoguard Tower which allows them to summon the power of the Chaosverse, then had Emperor Darknorth merge all of these disparate energies together with his Omega Sword Dao. This sword is so powerful that not even all three of us working together can stop it!” The two men and the woman hidden in the center of the Grassland World began to grow a bit nervous.

“If I knew that this was going to happen, I would’ve had us rendezvous with Iyerre before coming here. Iyerre could’ve dealt with these problems,” the silver-robed woman said anxiously.

Iyerre had instructed them to go rescue the Sithe Exalts, while he himself was coming from a completely different region of the Chaosverse. As a result, their reunion was delayed.

“He was overconfident in his Grassland World,” the red-robed man said frantically. “That sword is about to pierce through the last layer of clouds!”

“We’re hidden here in the depths of the Grassland World, while the sword isn’t able to blink through the earth above us. There’s no way it’ll be able to injure us,” the black-robed man said coldly.

“But if we let them cause destruction unchecked, they might end up destroying some of the important components of the Grassland World. Once we lose this weapon, the upcoming battles will be even harder,” the red-robed man said.

“Hmph. That’s not our problem. Staying alive is what matters; losing a weapon is a minor matter. We’ve done our utmost,” the black-robed man said.

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Ning's sword was filled with the power of seven Autarch-class combatants. It started at the eighth layer of clouds and stabbed through one layer after another. The clouds sought to form whirlpools of defensive energy to resist, causing the sword to come under tremendous pressure, but it was still able to persevere... and so, just like that, it punched all the way through the first layer of clouds.

"Bolin, return immediately!" Ning sent mentally. Bolin's true body was hidden within the first layer of clouds.

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 27: Quintessence Ignition**

The towering divine sword had stabbed through all eight layers of clouds. Mana flowed through the area immediately around it, blasting away at its surroundings. This was the combined mana of Ji Ning, Autarch Titanos, Autarch Bolin, and all of the others. For their mana to be there was equivalent to them being there in person, and they could use mana to scan and scry an area. Every single drop of mana contained parts of their soul and truesoul, after all. As their mana surged through the area, it quickly covered the area where Autarch Bolin's true body was located.

"You finally made it." An unremarkable spark of energy quickly began to fly through the mana towards the titanic sword. This was the form Autarch Bolin's true body had taken once it entered the false death stage.

"Thank you, everyone." Bolin's true body only showed itself after going inside the giant sword, and he immediately laughed loudly and delighted. All this time, he had been worried that his hiding spot would be discovered, at which point he would have nowhere to run and would most assuredly die.

"Bolin, hurry up and take control of the formation! With your main body in control, we'll be able to up the power even further," Ning sent.

"Alright." Bolin's body quickly sped up through the interior of the giant sword, rising through the clouds. The divine sword was like a giant mountain which stretched from the very bottom all the way through the ninth layer of clouds, allowing Bolin to easily traverse the Grassland World and stealthily pass through the five heads of the black serpent which were keeping the rift in the clouds open! No one was the wiser as he reached the void outside the Grassland World.

"I've made it out alive." Only after exiting the Grassland World did Autarch Bolin finally let out a sigh of relief. He flew the void and quickly reached his avatar's location in the formation, which he swapped with. The power of the entire formation instantly increased by another 20%. His avatar had already died once, after all, and so it was fairly weak. It was by the far the weakest link in the outer formation, far weaker than the true body.

"Congratulations, Bolin!"

"Bolin, remember that you owe us some fine wine for saving you from that calamity." Stonerule, Ekong, and the others all sent happy messages to him.

Autarch Bolin smiled. "Easily done! I'll send my avatar back and hide inside the Grassland World in my stead. Who knows, it might serve us in good stead!" He then willed his avatar to fly back into the

Grassland World, following the same path he had taken in leaving. After mastering the Samsara Daobirth Essence, Autarch Bolin was superior to all other Autarchs when it came to hiding himself.

He was able to completely hide his aura and sever all karmic connections, making it impossible for even the Chaosverse to detect his existence. Even if his avatar ended up being discovered and failed its missions, its loss was a minor matter. To let his true body die while exploring would be a true shame.

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Boom! After the towering sword stabbed straight through all of the blocking clouds, it stabbed into the grasslands themselves. However, the grass was so extremely sturdy that the sword didn't manage to pierce too deeply inside of it.

"There's no way to dig any deeper into the grassland," Ning sent mentally. "Gentlemen, what do you think we should do?"

"The Grassland World's core should be located deep within its depths," Autarch Titanos said. "Based on what I've seen from researching various powerful Sithe weapons, the most powerful formations will be located around the most important regions. Right now, the problem is that the sword needs to endure the restrictive power of eight layers of clouds while continuing to drill downwards. It's only able to unleash a fraction of its full power, and I don't think there's any chance we'll be able to damage the core components while doing so."

"Right," Ning agreed. "Stabbing through the eight layers is already consuming a bit over half of the power, while those nine chains are taking up another twenty percent. That leaves just thirty percent to deal with the grasslands below."

"The two of you can decide on what to do," Autarch Mogg said.

"You two understand formations better than the rest of us. You decide," Autarch Ekong agreed. The other Autarchs were going to let Ning and Titanos take the lead, because they were the most skilled in the Dao of Formations. Titanos in particular had spent countless aeons analyzing artifice and weaponry.

"The remaining thirty percent stands no chance of punching through," Ning agreed.

"Then let's get rid of those nine layers of clouds first," Autarch Titanos said. "The clouds serve as a protective eggshell around the yolk. If we can scrape away the clouds, we can deal with the interior as we please."

"Destroy the nine layers of clouds?" Ning was intrigued.

"The core is inside the grasslands, while the nine clouds are outside. There has to be some sort of formation keeping these troublesome clouds active," Titanos said.

"Which means if we can destroy the relevant formations, the clouds will disperse on their own," Ning agreed.

"Right." These two understood formations very well, and they quickly managed to come up with a method for dealing with the clouds.

“Break for me!” Ning began to twist and turn the titanic sword, sending it chopping back and forth through the clouds. Each time it did so, it created new gaping wounds within the lower eight layers of clouds! The clouds continued to cover the tears, while the sword continued to stir its way through them like a spoon.

The process continued, with the clouds reforming each time after the divine sword cut through them. This rapid healing process consumed an enormous amount of energy.

“Eh?” The mana within the divine sword was able to follow the energy ripples of the healing process, allowing formation experts Ning and Titanos to discover nine different energy wellsprings in the time needed to boil a kettle of tea.

“So they are located in nine different places at the farthest corners of the clouds?”

Not even Autarchs were able to see to the ends of the vast Grassland World, because there were spacetime formations blocking their site and hiding nine critical components of the formations powering the clouds.

“Break!”

The sword assaulted the nine points with raw force, stabbing out towards the ends of the grasslands and blasting through spacetime barriers with a rumbling sound. Although the sword only had 30% of its full power left, it still had more powerful than any full-force strike from one of the seven operating independently. The spacetime barriers were completely incapable of stopping it. They completely imploded and crumbled, revealing the true scene behind them.

Here, there were a series of thick clouds. All nine layers of clouds were grouped together here, masking something.

“Nine layers of clouds are protecting this place?” Ning and Titanos were delighted. Their guesses had been spot-on; otherwise, why would this place be so carefully hidden and protected?

The enormous sword first withdrew back to the outermost ninth layer of clouds, reuniting with the black serpent. Then... “Break! Break! Break!” Ning and Autarch Titanos worked in harmony, the divine sword leading the way with the black serpent following right behind it. The nine violet-gold chains sought to bar their path, but they were held back by the sword-light radiating from the divine sword.

The divine sword tore through the ninth layer of gray clouds as it made its way to the place hidden by formations previously.

“BREAK!!!” The black sword immediately took responsibility for keeping the ninth layer of clouds ‘open’, while the divine sword pressed the attack. It quickly broke through all eight layers of clouds, revealing countless glittering runes and complicated glyphs which were working together in an unfathomably profound manner. Energy was being sent from deep within the grasslands into the runes, which then sent the energy into the layers of clouds.

“This is a conduit formation!” Ning and Titanos were delighted.

“It’s incredibly complicated. I don’t understand it at all,” Autarch Titanos said. “Let’s break it.”

“Right.” Ning didn’t understand it either. Even if they spent ten years working on it, they probably wouldn’t manage to figure out more than a tiny bit of it. The best way to deal with a complicated formation like this was to overwhelm it with power.

Slash! The divine sword pierced through the opening which the black serpent was maintaining, carrying apocalyptic levels of force as it cut through the eight layers of clouds and then stabbed against the runes.

Boom! Countless runes and glyphs began to tremble. “Haha, illusory runes eh? Then I’ll destroy spacetime in the area. Let’s see if your formation can remain stable then!” Ning continued to violently attack, striking each blow with maximum power and causing the runes to shudder and flicker.

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Deep within the depths of the grasslands. The two men and the woman were beginning to truly panic now.

“What should we do? They found the formation linking us to the nine clouds almost right away.” The red-robed man frowned.

“Should we ignite the quintessence core?” the black-robed man said nervously.

“Ignite the quintessence core?” The silver-robed woman and the red-robed man were both stunned. The ‘quintessence core’ referred to the energy source powering the entire world. The reason why the Autarchs had been unable to truly break into the Sithelands which had invaded their Chaosverse was precisely because the Sithelands had its own miniaturized quintessence. This quintessence core provided the Sithelands with energy, allowing the Sithe to construct those stable and deadly Daoguard Towers! However, over the aeons the energy of that miniature quintessence had been gradually depleted. By now, there was little remaining.

The reason why the Grassland World was so powerful was because it had a quintessence core of its own as well! Iyerre had asked his own teacher to give it to him, and his teacher had obliged. That was the only reason why Iyerre had been able to create this mighty weapon. Otherwise, there would’ve been no way to power the Grassland World. Even the mightiest of weapons needed sufficiently strong external power sources here. This was a foreign Chaosverse, after all; they were rejected here and could not draw upon the local prime essences.

“Igniting the quintessence core will consume an enormous amount of energy. If we use it all up, we’ll have lost this battle,” the silver-robed woman said. “We should check with Iyerre first.” She immediately reached out to contact Iyerre.

A short while later a blurry pillar of light appeared which gradually resolved into the tall, barefoot, balding figure of Iyerre.

“What is it?” Iyerre asked.

“The cultivators set up a trap for us here. The Grassland World has been caught, and the nine layers of clouds are unable to stop them,” the silver-robed woman said quickly. “They’ve even discovered the conduit formation powering the nine cloud layers. Soon, they’ll have destroyed it. Once the nine clouds are destroyed, the Grassland World will be at the verge of destruction as well.”

“WHAT!?” Iyerre’s face was drained of all blood, and a look of shock appeared in his eyes. He was unable to remain calm any longer.

### The Desolate Era

#### **Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 28: Formation Incarnation**

The Grassland World was Iyerre’s most important trump card, the one he intended to rely on to utterly defeat the cultivators and conquer this Chaosverse. It was the main reason why he was so confident in his ultimate victory. If the Grassland World was destroyed, his chances of victory would become virtually nil. He’d all but simply have to wait for defeat.

Thus, as soon as Iyerre heard this bad news his mind became filled with many thoughts. For example, how did the cultivators manage to prepare a trap in advance? How was it that the protections of the Grassland World had been breached so easily?

The latter, he had an answer for; he suspected that the silver-robed woman and the other two weren’t ready to defend it with all their strength. But the former? For now, he truly couldn’t understand how the cultivators had managed to set up a trap in advance.

He didn’t have any time to waste asking these extraneous questions. He immediately ordered: “Protect the Grassland World at all costs! Ignite its quintessence core right away!”

“Ignite the quintessence core?” The silver-robed woman blinked.

“Right. I’m on the way and will be there within a day. You have to hold!” Iyerre’s face was as cold and hard as ice. “I have to win this war. I have to take control over this Chaosverse! If you can’t hold on until I get there, don’t blame me for what I’ll do to you.”

The three couldn’t help but shudder. They knew that if Iyerre became truly infuriated with them... just thinking it chilled their hearts. If Iyerre’s countless aeons of planning ended up being ruined by their cowardice, he might actually kill them!

“Understood.”

“We’re igniting the quintessence core right now. We’ll definitely hold on!” the three hurriedly promised.

“Fine.” Iyerre’s eyes flashed coldly. “Things might seem dangerous, but we still have a chance! If the cultivators have been able to beat you so easily, that means that most likely all of them are there. If possible, trap them all inside the Grassland World! Do your best to tie them down for as long as you can. Once I arrive, we’ll kill them all! We stand the best chance if we can make the battlefield be inside the Grassland World.”

“Understood,” the silver-robed woman and the other two said hurriedly. The two sides then broke the connection, followed by Iyerre’s figure vanishing from the pillar of light.

The three finally let out sighs of relief. They felt a great deal of trepidation towards Iyerre. He was normally an affable person who always had a sympathetic smile on his face, but in their homeland he was second only to the Lord of Chaos. If they truly did cause his countless aeons of hard work to go up in smoke, no one could predict how berserk he would become.

“Ignite the quintessence.” The three traded a glance, then immediately activated the quintessence core.

The quintessence core was an indigo sphere that was located at the deepest depths of the Grassland World. It was filled with an utterly inconceivable amount of power. This tiny sphere had significantly more energy inside it than the entire Blazesun Domain! It had once been an incredibly vast energy source which had spun through the Infinite Void, but the Sith Lord of Chaos had ended up harvesting it.

Not just any quintessence could be 'harvested' like this. The ones which could be harvested while remaining intact and independent were vanishingly rare.

Boom! Right as they began to ignite the quintessence, a thunderous boom rang out from the outside world, followed by a loud laugh.

"Haha, we broke one!"

Ning's voice rang out excitedly: "Come, let's break the next one!"

"Yes, let's go!" Autarch Titanos was delighted as well.

After thoroughly destroying the runes and glyphs, they wrecked the entire formation. It was now incapable of transmitting any more energy to the ninth layer of clouds, causing its 'healing' speed to lessen. However, destroying just a single nexus wouldn't be enough to cause the ninth layer to actually collapse. There were nine formations providing energy, after all.

"One of them has been destroyed already!" The faces of the silver-robed woman and the other two turned pale.

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Boom! The quintessence core ignited, causing the entire world to flare with ten thousand times more power than before! The Grassland World became filled with power, with a blurry blue light appearing everywhere within it. As for the eight remaining conduit formations, they began to pump energy out at their absolute maximum capacities! A vast torrent of energy pumped out, causing all of the formations throughout the Grassland World to skyrocket to maximum power.

Still, there was a limit to how much the conduits could pass through. The remaining amount was simply wasted. One of the nine formations generating the nine cloud layers had been destroyed, after all. Despite that, the power of the formations still rose by over 60%! If all of the formations had remained intact, the power would have instantly doubled.

.....

Riiiiip! Autarch Titanos was right in the middle of using his giant black five-headed serpent to keep a rift in the clouds open while Ning used the giant divine sword to attack yet another conduit formation.

All of a sudden, all of the clouds began to glow with blurry white light. The white light was very comfortable and carried the blessings of radiance, but it also caused the restrictive pressure generated by the clouds to skyrocket in power by 60%!

It must be understood that once one reached an extremely high level of power, improving by merely 10% to 20% was already extremely difficult. A sudden increase of 60% made it impossible for the black serpent to keep the rift open any longer.



"I can't break through it any longer." The divine sword had to fight back against the combined assault of the nine violet-gold chains while also enduring the restrictive pressure of eight different cloud layers. There was no way for it to keep attacking the formation, especially now that the power of the violet-gold chains had increased multifold and the clouds had grown more powerful as well.

"I can't keep holding any longer either." Autarch Titanos was similarly anxious. His black serpent was fighting back against the ninth and strongest cloud layer.

.....

Deep within a giant palace inside the Grassland World. The red-robed man and the other two were seated here, head raised and staring past the dimensional barriers to see what was happening in the world outside.

Below them were a host of other figures, including the three Autarch-class void dwellers and a number of Sithe Exalts. Iyerre had a number of 'spare' Exalts who hadn't been needed to control the various temples, and they had been assigned to the Grassland World. 'Bowenya' was here as well.

"Should we attack?" the black-robed man said in his cold voice.

"Not just yet." The red-robed man frowned. "We still haven't managed to locate the true bodies of the Autarchs yet. That sword is merely composed of energy and magic treasures! Now that we've ignited the quintessence core, they won't be able to cause any further damage to our formations. Let's wait for their true bodies to descend, then trap them inside. When they are inside, we'll be ready to wrap this battle up."

"Agreed." The silver-robed woman nodded.

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Ning and the others were indeed in a tough situation. The power of the nine cloud layers in the Grassland World had increased dramatically, while the violet-gold chains had become several times more powerful as well. They were finding it difficult to fight back.

"Withdraw." The divine sword, previously capable of piercing through eight cloud layers, quickly retracted to the ninth cloud layer and then flew over to help the black serpent push at the rift. Once the rift was closed, all connection to the outside world be lost. They would no longer be able to control those treasures using mana or godsense, resulting in the collapse of the sword.

Riiiiip. The divine sword was still mighty enough to tear the ninth layer of gray clouds open, but it was only able to tear a thousand-kilometer hole now.

"Iyerre has yet to make his move. That means he probably hasn't arrived yet. This is a perfect opportunity which won't come again. We need to seize this moment to destroy this weapon!" Autarch Stonerule sent mentally.

"I feel like we should have us attack in person now," Autarch Ekong said.

"Agreed. However, we need to remain cautious. Our true bodies should just remain in the outermost layer of clouds and keep it open," Autarch Titanos said. "We can't go any deeper inside! Once we do, the Sithe will probably use certain tricks to keep us trapped in there. We'd be shut off from the outside

world and unable to maintain our connection to the formation, at which point we would probably all be wiped out!”

Ning and the others were all wary of this possibility as well. They couldn't afford to take a risk like that.

“Alright. Let's make our moves.”

Just a short while later, a towering figure suddenly appeared within the void and strode towards the gray clouds. This vast figure was barefoot and almost completely naked, wearing just a fur loincloth. It had seven faces and fourteen arms! The face in front resembled that of Ning's, while the three faces to the left side and the three faces to the right side resembled those of Autarch Titanos and the rest of the six. The towering figure's body was covered with a blurry layer of sword-light, and the very act of walking caused it to emanate an aura of terrifying destructive force.

Ning and the others had such powerful bodies that they were strongest in close combat. This formation-incarnation was formed by the seven of them using the power of the outside formations, but led by Ning using his Omega Sword Dao. All seven of their true bodies were located inside this formation-incarnation. As soon as it had been created, it had emanated a natural aura of infinite sword-light. Every single movement it made was filled with ineffable might.

“Being responsible for this incarnation is incredibly taxing.” Ning could feel his entire body aching, as could Autarch Titanos and the others. Not only did they have to keep the giant formation in the outside world active while controlling the divine sword, they also had to physically join together in this vast formation-incarnation.

Splitting their energies three different ways like this was no easy task!

“While we keep the sword active, we'll only be able to use 70% of this formation-incarnation's power,” Ning mused to himself. From a tactical standpoint, they would become deadlier if they completely abandoned the sword and instead focused on pouring all of the formation's energies into this incarnation, using 100% of its power! Still, it wasn't yet necessary for them to take such a drastic step.

Riiiiip. The formation-incarnation strode forwards towards the grayish clouds, its fourteen arms reaching out simultaneously in ripping motions. The clouds around them quickly began to roil about as a vast area of ten thousand kilometers was torn open by it.

It was quite easy for the formation-incarnation to keep this rift open, freeing up the giant black serpent and the divine sword to continue stabbing downwards.

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 44: The Dusk War Chapter 29: Iyerre Cometh**

Deep within the palace located in the depths of the Grassland World. The silver-robed woman waved her hand, causing an image to appear next to her which displayed what was happening in the world outside. “All of you look so nervous. Fine. We'll let you see what's happening outside. That way, you can tell Iyerre that the three of us are being diligent in our efforts.”

The three Autarch-class void dwellers and the Sithe Exalts all stared at the images next to her. They saw a towering, seven-faced titan dressed in just a fur loincloth reach out with fourteen arms. The arms were filled with absolutely unearthly power as they tore apart the ninth layer of clouds and then kept the rift open.

Aside from the titan, there was also the giant black serpent and the gigantic sword. The black serpent was under assault by nine violet-gold chains. The serpent was clearly finding it rather hard to endure the assault, even though streaks of sword-light were assisting it in resisting the chains.

As for the giant sword, it had pierced through the eight layers of clouds and was slamming against the runes and glyphs surrounding the conduit formation.

Slash! Slash! Slash! It was clear to everyone that by the time the sword had pierced through the eight layers of clouds, it had virtually exhausted all of its power and posed very little threat to the divine glyphs and runes. They didn't even tremble!

"We're in no danger."

"After we ignited the quintessence core, these cultivators are no longer a threat to us," Boweyna and the other Exalts agreed.

"The only thing they have which could threaten us is that titan. It has to be a formation-incarnation! Given its power, I imagine the cultivator leaders are located right inside of its body," a skinny Sithe Exalt said. "We've ignited the quintessence core, but it's still able to handle the ninth layer of clouds with ease. That means it has to be even more powerful than the sword!"

"Kiblo is right. Our greatest threat right now is that formation-incarnation," another Sithe Exalt immediately agreed.

The two men and the woman at the front of the temple let out cold chuckles. The silver-robed woman explained, "Actually, our only worry is that the formation-incarnation will NOT come inside. If it dares to do so, we'll be ready to launch a full-strength counterattack against it. We'll do everything possible to cut off its connection to the outside world! Once that happens, it'll no longer be reinforced by the might of the outside formations, at which point the incarnation, the black serpent, and the giant sword will all be dramatically weakened. Their fates will be in our hands!"

"Iyerre has already issued orders," the black-robed man continued coldly, "To seize this opportunity to trap them inside the Grassland World. Once Iyerre arrives, we'll launch our final killing strokes and annihilate them all."

"But what if they don't come inside?" a Sithe Exalt said.

"That's why we aren't attacking yet," the black-robed man said. "The more power we display, the more vigilant they will be. Let's just wait patiently. They'll begin to grow impatient once they realize they cannot destroy the Grassland World, at which point they might charge inside."

The Sithe Exalts below all murmured amongst themselves. These three clearly had completely different attitudes. The Exalts had to risk their lives and do everything in their power to fulfill Iyerre's commands, while these three simply had to 'do enough'. Still, this was indeed a good plan to lure the cultivators inside.

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The outside world. As predicted, Ji Ning, Titanos, Stonerule, and the others were all feeling extremely anxious. They had already done everything they could, save for sending in their formation-incarnation, but they remained unable to destroy the formation.

“What should we do? If we continue like this, we stand no chance of victory at all,” Autarch Ekong said anxiously. “Should we take the risk of charging inside?”

“We cannot!” Autarch Skyfeeder immediately refused. “Right now, we hold the upper hand. It is the Sithe who cannot afford to waste time. They need to force a final battle as soon as possible. We, on the other hand, shouldn’t take on unnecessary risk!”

“Actually, we are drawing closer and closer to victory,” Autarch Titanos said suddenly.

“Eh?” Ning and the others were all startled.

“What is the greatest flaw which all powerful Sithe weapons share?” Autarch Titanos asked. “Energy! This Grassland World has to be using up an absolutely enormous amount of energy. You all saw how, after we destroyed the first conduit formation, the power of the entire Grassland World suddenly skyrocketed. Even the air itself is glowing with blue light, and we can all sense how much power that light holds within it.”

Ning and the others all nodded.

“Clearly, the energies of the Grassland World are being depleted at an incredible rate. In fact, it is literally leaking power!” Autarch Titanos continued, “When we first started to cause damage and attacked the conduit formation, the Grassland World didn’t have this sort of crazy response. Why? Precisely because of how much energy it would consume. They weren’t willing to pay such a heavy price unless absolutely necessary!”

“If we can force the Grassland World to continue depleting its energies at this rate, it’ll soon break apart on its own,” Autarch Titanos said with a smile.

“Right.”

“Once its energy source is gone, even the most powerful of weapons will become nothing more than a pile of refuse.”

“Let it continue using up its power source then.” All the other Autarchs agreed with this idea.

“Besides, Ekong,” Autarch Titanos continued, “Skyfeeder, Darknorth, and the others are unwilling to take the risk of going inside because they can sense that something isn’t quite right. When we first started to attack the world of grass, they initially sent out those three Autarch-class void dwellers to fight back against us. After those three fled, not a single Sithe has come out to stand in our way.”

“Do you really think such a vast world of grass wouldn’t have someone in control of it? Even ordinary temples have several Sithe Exalts and powerful golems protecting them. Does this world of grass really just have a few chains guarding it?” Autarch Titanos said.

“Yes, I have the feeling that something is off,” Ning said. “There’s no way such a powerful weapon would only be defended by a few chains.”

Autarch Titanos nodded. “That’s why I have the feeling that they are intentionally holding back to lure us inside. Once our true bodies go through the clouds, they’ll be ready to show their daggers. This would instantly become the final battle of this war... but the final battle has to be on a battlefield of our choosing, not this world of grass!”

“Agreed.” They would rather give up this opportunity than take on such enormous risk. So long as they remained alive, they were still ‘winning’ and would have a chance to gain a final victory in the future.

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Ning and the others were of the same mind on this, and so they quickly calmed down. They continued to use the black serpent and the divine sword to assault the conduit formation, forcing the Grassland World to pay a heavy price in energy and keep the quintessence core ignited.

The Sithe continued to wait from their hiding place deep beneath the grass, waiting impatiently for the formation-incarnation to come inside... but the Autarchs simply refused to do so!

Time flowed on quickly. A full day went past in the blink of an eye.

The ignited quintessence core was consuming energy thousands of times more quickly than it normally would. This single day had cost it the equivalent of dozens of years of energy! This was an absolutely shocking rate of energy consumption, which was why the three had been so hesitant to ignite the quintessence. This single day had caused the quintessence core to shrink by one full size.

Whoosh! A tall, barefoot man was striding through spacetime rifts, frantically advancing through the void. “I’m almost there.” Iyerre was both anxious and furious. His calculations indicated that the ignited quintessence core could only last for around three days. Normally, it would have been able to last for over a century! Now, however, it had lost nearly 40% of its power. How could he not be impatient?

“Damnit. They still haven’t gone inside!” He had paid such a heavy price, but with nothing to show for it! If the cultivator leaders had barged into the Grassland World, he would’ve ordered his subordinates to launch the final battle in order to keep them trapped there at all costs. By the time Iyerre himself reached the Grassland World, he would kill them all! Iyerre was absolutely certain of being able to kill them when the battlefield was within the Grassland World itself.

And yet... a full day had gone past. The cultivators had to know that they weren’t able to break the formation apart, but they refused to go inside!

Slash! After yet another warp through spacetime, he finally arrived at the scene of the battle. This entire region was covered by an enormous formation, but Iyerre appeared directly within its borders. As he did so, Ning and the others instantly sensed Iyerre’s appearance.

“It is Iyerre!” Ning and the others were all shocked.

“He’s simply incredible. Our formation should’ve suppressed spacetime, but he was able to tear through our suppression and warp through spacetime. The suppression was useless!”

“No wonder our seal against the Sithelands was completely useless.” Ning and the others were all stunned by Iyerre’s might. Omega Autarchs truly did surpass their insights by far too much.

“Hmph.” Iyerre stepped forward, tearing through spacetime once more and appearing in the grayish clouds which served as the outermost layer of the Grassland World. He then easily passed through the clouds to go inside.

Moments later, a wave of power swept across the entire Grassland World, including Autarch Bolin’s avatar which was hiding within via his ‘false death’ state.

“Neither dead nor alive? Is that Autarch Bolin? So my foolish subordinates weren’t able to kill you after all. It must have been you who revealed the Grassland World’s location.” As Iyerre’s voice rang out, he himself appeared on the first layer of clouds. He immediately reached out towards a patch of empty space, forcing it to suddenly reveal the avatar of Bolin which immediately began to flee.

Boom! The blue light of the Grassland World covered Iyerre, illuminating his body. Iyerre simply waved his hand, commanding the blue light to shoot out. When Ning and the other Autarchs fought, they could command the power of the Dao... and here in the Grassland World, Iyerre could command the power of that miniature quintessence. Although it couldn’t compare to the actual Quintessence of the Chaosverse in power, it was still enough to dramatically strengthen Iyerre.

Iyerre swung out a palm which surpassed both spacetime and the cycle of life and death. Bolin’s avatar had nowhere to run and nowhere to hide, and it was instantly splattered into nothingness by that giant palm.

If Bolin had been here in person, he might’ve been able to endure for two or three strikes before falling. This avatar, however, was newly made and very weak. In the Grassland World, it was unable to withstand even a single blow from the empowered Iyerre.

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 0: Era - Afterword**

Author’s Afterword:

Whew. It’s over. Nearly two and a half years have passed, starting from Dec 16, 2012 until today, April 10, 2015. Our journey through the [Desolate Era] is finally over. The enormous [Desolate Era] started with our Ji Ning stumbling through the Netherworld Kingdom into his next reincarnated life, and now we can finally put a final period on this story.

This is the seventh novel which Tomatoes has written. [Legend of the Astral Peaks], [Inch of Radiance], [Stellar Transformations], [Coiling Dragon], [The Nine Cauldrons], [Swallowed Star] came before it. This has been the seventh.

[Desolate Era] has had games and anime made based off of it, with the first episode of the anime already released. It was a bit slow at first due to a lack of familiarity, but starting from the third episode it should speed up quickly. It should stabilize at roughly an episode a week and will continue to be broadcast. A TV series is about to start shooting as well, and it’ll go on satellite television. We’re also preparing for a movie, but [Desolate Era] will require a large amount of investment and so it will be a while in the coming.

Whew. Two and a half years. Haha, two and a half years is a very long period of time! My son was born, and now he can actually recite poetry. I'm speechless.

As for this novel I spent two and a half years writing? At first, everything was so smooth and easy. I was fired up and filled with energy, and the letters just kept flowing. However, towards the middle/late parts of the novel, I was just too tired, especially after I went past 2 million characters. I felt as though I was a marathon runner who had reached his limit and at the verge of collapse. I worked until very late at night, every night, burning the midnight oil and tearing my hair out to think about what to write. Sometimes I couldn't even be bothered to shower. I was a man possessed.

This made things much easier for me. My mental energies quickly began to recover, and I feel as though my physical conditioning has improved by 50%, haha.

I poured my blood, sweat, and tears into [Desolate Era]. It feels like part of my life itself. Now that I'm done writing it, I feel relaxed. Finally, I can take a long break... but at the same time, I feel a bit reluctant to part with it. My emotions are quite complicated.

No matter what, [Desolate Era] is over! This book is done, and I had a smile on my face as I wrote the grand finale.

Mm. As for what's next? A new book, of course!

The new book will be set in a strange and mysterious continent. It'll be a completely different type of book, one which I've never written before. In fact, the cultivation system within it will be unlike any other I've worked on! Haha. I've been a novel writer for nearly ten years, after all. I need to find my breakthrough! All I want to say is that I'll use all of my emotions to write this new novel, pouring all of my ardor into it.

But of course... now that I've finished [Desolate Era], I'm going to completely relax and empty my mind for a time, then prepare for a new book. I'll give myself two months of rest, then officially start the next book on June 15th!

For news on my next book as well for some super secret updates, you can all pay attention to my public 'WeChat' account. I'll keep it updated with news. All you need to do is search for '我吃西红柿' or 'fanqie34' and you'll be able to add me.

Alrighty then. Everything's ok now. The world of [Desolate Era] has come to an end. The next time we meet, it'll be in the world of my new book. See you all on June 15th!

Tomatoes,

The evening of June 10th, Yangzhou City.

RWX's Afterword:

Whew. Wow. Yikes. Wooooow!

This is the third IET novel that I have worked on (with Coiling Dragon and Desolate Era being solely translated by myself). I agree with author IET that '2.5 years is a very long period of time'; I spent just as

much time translating DE as he did writing it, and in fact I've been translating his novels from 2014 to 2018! That's an even longer period of time.

I want to thank each and every reader, commenter, donor, sponsor, and friend who has supported this translation. Like IET, it's been a very long and exhausting process and I'm both filled with joy that it's over but also nostalgia and a bit of reluctance to part with it. However, 'there is no party that goes on forever'; 天下没有不散的筵席. I've translated in sickness and in health (I was actually in the hospital just earlier today due to a severe fever), through breakups and through makeups, and all the other things that can happen over the course of such a long period of time. Now, Ji Ning's story has finally come to an end. As IET notes in his April 2015 afterword, there is also a live-action adaptation of DE coming shortly (theoretically in the next month or so) and we'll be sure to announce it as well! We were originally going to have a short video by IET as well, but he couldn't quite fit it in his schedule. We'll post it as a separate announcement later.

There have been so many memories that have built up over the years, and I've talked and interacted with so many of you that I genuinely view you as friends and family. My keenest memory is of a 'Daolord' on Patreon who deleted his pledge... or rather, his brother did. When his brother deleted the pledge, he added a note: 'Thanks for translating, but my big bro just passed away and I'm cutting his pledges :( Thanks for understanding, he failed his Daomerge' I damn near broke down on the spot. I hope that all of you and your loved ones are as hale and hearty as you were when you first started Desolate Era, and that you will continue to be so many, many years in the future!

1:08 AM, April 21st of 2018, Chengdu City.

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 1: Extermination**

The divine sword had pierced through all eight layers of clouds, and so Ji Ning and the others were able to see everything happening inside the Grassland World. They couldn't help but feel shocked by Iyerre's might. Bolin's avatar was newly created and fairly weak, but for it to be destroyed in just a single blow was insane.

"Bolin, was your avatar actually destroyed?" Autarch Ekong asked, "Even though you are in control of the Samsara Daobirth Essence, you still weren't able to escape?"

"It really was destroyed. Not even a scrap of energy was left," Bolin said.

If even just a shred of his energy had managed to escape, he would have 'survived'. This was much like how Bolin's true body had been almost completely exterminated, but he had managed to survive at the border between life and death thanks to the Samsara Daobirth Essence. That tiny shred of life had entered the 'false death' state and hidden itself. Given that Bolin had access to nigh-infinite amounts of energy, he was able to quickly and soundlessly heal himself.

However, when Iyerre had attacked his avatar didn't have any chance to escape at all.

"He's become even more powerful," Autarch Mogg said solemnly.

Ning nodded. "In this world of grass, his every strike is empowered by the blue energy of the surrounding area. He has indeed become more powerful here."



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“Neither dead nor alive... he’s managed to cut off all karmic links?” Iyerre had sought to use karma to link his strike and use it to attack Bolin’s true body, but it had been completely cut off from all karma and so the attack was unable to proceed.

“Damn.” Iyerre was in a foul mood. His specialty lay in light. Karma? Life and death? He wasn’t really skilled in either of these two Daos. As an Omega Autarch his insights into the Dao of Life and Death surpassed Bolin’s Samsara Daobirth Essence by just a hair.

As for destroying Bolin’s avatar? It made no difference at all, because the avatar was a new one. To destroy a peak avatar that took many years to strengthen would’ve been a resounding success, but a new avatar... Autarch Bolin would be able to recreate it in a twinkling!

“If you won’t come in, I’ll come for you!” Iyerre reached out with both hands. Whoosh! Whoosh! One enormous violet-gold chain after another began to clatter, their very auras transforming as they soared into the heavens. They seemed to transform into inviolable parts of heaven and earth which nothing could sunder. Moments later, their bodies began to glow with white light, and as they lashed out against the giant black serpent they seemed to represent the punishment of the supreme heavens.

Bang! Bang! Bang! The fish-like sword-light in front of the black serpent sought to block for it, but the violet-gold chains cracked them all apart. There was no way to defend at all.

“Not good. These chains just became even more powerful, far more powerful than they were previously. Our Karmic Wurm isn’t going to be able to withstand this.” Ning and the others were all shocked.

Swoosh! The enormous sword quickly shrank in size as it flew closer towards the giant black serpent, seeking to reinforce it. Inside the giant black serpent were their avatars, after all, and some of those avatar were at peak strength. There was no way Ning and the others wished to lose them.

As the divine sword flew over to reinforce the snake, the snake quickly retreated and attempted to flee. However, five more violet-gold chains lashed out towards the giant sword.

Clang! Clang! Clang! Ning and the rest of the seven had poured tremendous power into the giant sword, giving it incredible strength, but the five violet-gold chains were just as tenacious. The worst part was, their movements now became incredibly profound as well! Ning’s group clearly had a slight advantage in power, but the sword was still unable to shake off those violet-gold chains!

This was due to the difference in depths of insight between them and Iyerre. It was much like how three of those Autarch-class void dwellers had encircled Bolin to no avail. Even if they truly had attacked Bolin with their full power, they wouldn’t have been able to do anything to him. If your insights were lacking, you wouldn’t be able to defeat your foe unless you had an absolute advantage in personal strength.

The giant sword had been tied down by five violet-gold chains! As for the remaining four, they simultaneously struck out to attack the giant black serpent.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Explosions rang out as they clashed again and again. The giant black serpent hurriedly fled while trying to defend as best it could, but the violet-gold chains were now being marvelously controlled by Iyerre and tremendously strengthened by the ignition of the world’s

quintessence core! Although Autarch Titanos was in control of the black serpent and the five avatars worked in harmony to defend, the defensive perimeter was still breached after just one round of blows.

Riiiiip. One of the serpentine heads was securely latched onto by a violet-gold chain, then physically ripped off!

Crack! Moments later, another serpentine head was delivered a furious blow from up high by a different violet-gold chain, and the force of the collision was so great that Autarch Ekong's avatar (located inside the head) was completely destroyed.

In the blink of an eye, the four violet-gold chains' furious attacks had caused the giant black serpent to completely collapse. All five avatars died in battle, with none being able to escape!

This caused Ning and the others to feel both sorrow and grief, but there was nothing they could do. It had all happened too quickly! As soon as Iyerre had returned, he had killed Bolin's avatar and then immediately used those nine violet-gold chains to launch a series of consecutive attacks. There had been no chance to flee at all!

The Grassland World was a vast place, while spacetime was suppressed here. The black serpent needed to slowly fly away if it wished to escape, but Iyerre wasn't going to give it the time needed. This was the exact reason why Ning and the others hadn't dared to risk their true bodies inside.

Going in would be easy. Coming out would be very difficult!

"Flee." The giant sword quickly fled backwards, while the nine violet-gold chains immediately swung to attack it. For a time, both sides appeared to be equal.

The giant sword was different from the black serpent. The sword had been formed from a complete merger of the energies of the seven Autarchs. This was far superior to the black serpent, which simply represented five Autarchs working together in harmony! The giant sword was a single whole and guided by Ning's Sword Dao. Every single strike of the sword was filled with tremendous power, making it impossible for the nine violet-gold chains to defeat it, much less destroy it.

A short moment later, the giant sword flew out from the grayish clouds and escaped from the Grassland World.

Iyerre raised his head, glaring. If he had poured in all of his power he would've been able to prevent that sword from escaping, but there was no point. That sword had simply consisted of energy and some Universe treasures. Ning and the others could've quickly forged more Universe treasures to replace them.

"I should keep my true killer attacks hidden until the very end. It isn't worth exposing it on just a few Universe treasures." Iyerre raised his head, staring at the formation-incarnation in the skies.

The incarnation was staring at Iyerre as well. Moments later, it waved its arm and then retreated from the clouds as well. Whooosh! The gray clouds quickly closed over, allowing the Grassland World to grow calm again.

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The outside world. The great formation continued to cover the entire vast area surrounding the Grassland World.

Ji Ning, Titanos, Mogg, Bolin, Skyfeeder, Ekong, and Stonerule felt both sorrow and anger as they stared at the ovaloid Grassland World before them. Three of the five avatars they had just lost were peak-strength avatars, but they had been wiped out in just a twinkling. This taught them a lesson with regards to just how powerful Iyerre was once he joined together with the Grassland World.

In truth, Iyerre had carried the Grassland World with him in his mission to kill Ning. Alas, Ning managed to escape before he reached that temple! Thus, Iyerre had chosen to separate from his Grassland World and gone Autarch-hunting! Autarch Mogg had managed to survive thanks to his Golden Bridge of Freedom, while Autarch Bolin had nearly died while only barely surviving thanks to comprehending the Samsara Daobirth Essence at the critical moment.

“Iyerre and the Grassland World combine to form a much more deadly opponent,” Titanos said.

“He has a far higher level of insight than us.” Stonerule slowly shook his head.

“So what if he does? We’ll kill anyone who dares to invade our Chaosverse, even if it costs us our very lives.” Autarch Stonerule gritted his teeth.

Right at this moment... boom! The ovaloid ‘Grassland World’ quickly shrank in size inside the formation. Moments later, a spacetime rift appeared next to it. Swoosh! It flew straight into the spacetime rift. This caused Ning and the others to feel their hearts lurch. They had suspected all along that their formations were unable to bind Iyerre, but seeing it with their own eyes was still rather demoralizing.

“Wait, he didn’t leave yet!” Ning and the others turned to stare at the rift which had just appeared outside the reach of their formation. The ovaloid Grassland World had actually just flown out there!

“Cultivator leaders, did you think that I had fled? No, no. How could I flee?” Iyerre’s voice echoed throughout every inch of the void. “Let’s see just how powerful your formations are.”

“BREAK!!!” Iyerre let out a furious shout, and those nine violet-gold chains suddenly appeared on the surface of the ovaloid object. The violet-gold chains expanded in size, each becoming a trillion kilometers in length as they swept through the void with ineffable majesty. With Iyerre in control of them and with the ignited quintessence strengthening them, they began to furiously smash down upon Ning’s enormous formation! Iyerre was able to immediately see the flaws in this formation and so his every attack was aimed at a weak spot.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The entire formation immediately began to shudder as a level of power comparable to the divine sword’s began to hammer down upon its various weak spots. This wasn’t a defensive formation; there was only so much punishment it could take!

“Let’s leave for now.” Ning and the others were all quite patient. All of them had prepared escape-type treasures, and they had also opened up a spacetime tunnel within the formation itself.

Whoosh! Ning and the others immediately flew into the spacetime corridor and departed.