

## Desolate 1481

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 2: Weakness, Hunt

Now that Ji Ning and the other Autarchs were no longer actively maintaining the grand formation which covered this region, it quickly crumbled beneath the strikes of the violet-golden chains.

A short while later, four figures emerged from the grayish clouds which constituted the surfaced of the ovaloid Grassland World. It was Iyerre and his three allies.

“They fled,” the silver-robed woman murmured softly. “Iyerre, this is their homeland. These cultivators can fight or flee as they please. If we aren’t able to trap them, we won’t be able to kill them at all.”

“They are all extremely wily. As soon as the odds turn against them, they immediately flee.” The red-robed man frowned as well.

“I agree with everything you two just said.” Iyerre nodded. Killing Ning and the Autarchs would be very difficult, because they all fled at the first sign of bad news! Iyerre was constantly being suppressed by this local Chaosverse, and so once they fled in unison he wouldn’t be able to chase them down.

He could suppress spacetime to make it impossible for them to flee, then warp through spacetime after them... but as he tried to warp close enough to do this, ripples would be generated. Once Ning and the others sensed this, they would instantly flee far away. Iyerre still wouldn’t be able to catch them.

The reason why he had been able to do this to Mogg was because he had gotten close enough to use something akin to a domain-field to prevent Mogg from escaping. Now that Ning and the others were all together and working in concert, Iyerre’s domain would no longer be able to bind them any longer.

In other words... neither speed, suppression of spacetime, nor domains would work. There was nothing which could actually trap Ning and the others. They could come and go as they pleased! It must be remembered that the native Autarchs were in no hurry to conclude the war right away. The longer it dragged on for, the better. If it somehow dragged on for a few million chaos cycles, their Chaosverse would have given birth to another batch of experts that might include new Autarchs or Omega Emperors!

Now that the cultivators had the ‘Truesoul Everlasting’, the rate at which they produced Autarchs would naturally increase significantly.

“They are slippery and cautious. They won’t give us a chance to catch them,” Iyerre said. “Our plan was to use the sudden appearances of myself and the Grassland World to achieve dramatic successes, but in the end both failed. However... in the end, none of it matters. I’ve fully mapped out all possibilities for this entire war. They won’t be able to escape their fate. In the end, we shall still win this war.”

His three allies were rather puzzled. Such self-confidence... where did it stem from? If they couldn’t even catch or hunt down their foes, how were they supposed to beat them?

“Let me repeat myself. I’ve fully mapped out ALL possibilities for this entire war,” Iyerre said with a smile. “Have you forgotten that I sent out the Annihilation Hive at the very beginning of this war?”

“The Annihilation Hive?” The three were startled.

“Haven’t the cultivators already discovered a way to counteract the Annihilation Hive? It’s no longer functioning, right?” the silver-robed woman asked curiously.

“Imbecile.” Iyerre glanced sideways at her. “I released the Annihilation Hive for two reasons. The first was on the off-chance that I might be able to gain total victory if it succeeded in devouring a great deal of this Chaosverse’s energies and caused it to weaken enough for me to take over. This objective failed... but the second objective was the true objective.”

“I sent it out to make it the most lethal weak point in this entire Chaosverse for the cultivators!” Iyerre’s eyes flashed coldly. “Right now, a single one of their avatars is responsible for maintaining the formation that is tying down the Annihilation Hive. All we need to do is charge towards it and destroy the avatar inside the Annihilation Hive, at which point it will start to function again!”

“The Annihilation Hive will once more begin to devour the energies from the Chaosverse, causing it to weaken! The cultivator leaders will be forced to try and stop us. They can’t just sit back and watch as their Chaosverse wastes away... which means that so long as we wait for them at the Annihilation Hive, they’ll be forced to come to us! They’ll obediently step into the battlefield we have prepared.” Iyerre smiled.

The silver-robed woman and the other two revealed looks of delight. They had thought that the Annihilation Hive was of no further use now that it had been counteracted. They hadn’t fully thought through all the other implications.

“Impressive. So long as the Annihilation Hive continues to function, the cultivators will be forced to come and assault it no matter how reluctant they may be. We don’t need to do anything at all. They’ll come to us!” the red-robed man chuckled.

“Let’s go wipe them out in the battlefield of our choosing,” the black-robed man said grimly.

“No rush.” Iyerre smiled. “A war must be carried out step-by-step. You might see an occasional setback, but if you fully planned for all possibilities then you’ll still end up the ultimate victor.”

“Right now, what we need to do is strengthen our forces! Let’s go rescue those trapped Exalts first,” Iyerre said.

Slash! Violet-gold chains began to fly out towards the still-trapped Nine Cicadas Temple. The sealing formation surrounding it was nothing more than a joke to Iyerre. A mere heartbeat later the seemingly-complicated formation had been completely undone, granting the nine Sithe Exalts freedom once more.

The nine Exalts immediately flew over. When they saw Iyerre standing atop the distant gray clouds, they hurriedly bowed: “Almighty Iyerre!”

“Come here. We shall head to the next location.” Iyerre nodded. The Sithe Exalts immediately put away the Nine Cicadas Temple and flew into the Grassland World.

Moments later, the Grassland World once more tore through spacetime and vanished. As soon as it did, a group of figures suddenly appeared off in the distance. It was Ji Ning, Autarch Titanos, and the others. The seven of them hadn’t fled too far through spacetime. They had quickly warped back in secret to scry this place from nearby.

Their movements didn't cause any disturbances, because they were protected rather than rejected by the Chaosverse. In fact, they were even able to borrow the Chaosverse's energies to 'watch' their opponents from afar!

It was Ning's primary responsibility to 'watch' them, as he was extremely skilled in spacetime and well-rounded in many other areas. Given that he was within his own Chaosverse, simply keeping watch on someone from afar was quite simple.

"We were ambushed by them previously. There's no way we're going to let them just disappear again. We have to keep tabs on their location at all times," Autarch Titanos said. "All of our avatars have been destroyed, which means we have no choice but to simply send our true bodies to carry out this task. Darknorth, for now we'll have to trouble you to carry this out as the rest of us work on remaking our avatars."

"Alright." Ning nodded. The others had all lost their avatars, while his was still in the Annihilation Hive and in peak condition.

Ning could still sense them from afar. He could follow the ripples generated by the Grassland World warping through spacetime and 'see' where it was heading.

Whoosh! Ning began to warp through spacetime with the other six in tow, maintaining a distance of roughly a realmverse from the Grassland World. To Ning, a realmverse of distance was nothing at all. His godsense alone vastly outstripped this, and when he relied upon the powers of the Chaosverse and his link to the prime essences he was able to 'watch' from an even more ridiculously great distance.

So long as the two sides maintained a distance of just a realmverse away, Iyerre wouldn't be able to easily detect Ning thanks to the Chaosverse constantly suppressing his powers.

While Ning continued to pursue the Grassland World, Titanos and the others created their new avatars. These avatars merely had 50% of their true power, which was the best they could do on such short notice.

"Judging from the direction they are taking, they should be going to go rescue another temple," Ning sent.

"Then let us destroy it in advance," Autarch Titanos said. "Given our power, we are completely capable of working together to destroy the temples in a short period of time."

Previously, they hadn't considered the temples to be much of a threat. They didn't want to attack the temples and reveal the techniques they could use when fighting together, as this would give their opponents a chance to prepare for them in the future. The reveal had to be reserved for the Grassland World... and in the end, they had successfully destroyed one of the conduit formations and forced the ignition of its quintessence core!

"Let's keep following the Grassland World. Whenever it tries to rescue a temple, we'll fly up ahead and destroy that temple," Autarch Ekong said with a cold smile. "We warp through spacetime far faster than that thing does."

Ning and the others held a significant advantage in both flying speed and warping speed. Even Iyerre was able to just barely meet Autarch standards of speed in warping through spacetime, but of course this was because he was being heavily suppressed by the local Chaosverse.

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The cultivators spent nearly a month travelling at high speed. In about six or so days, the Grassland World would reach a new temple.

“Skyfeeder, Mogg, the two of you should have your avatars continue to track the Grassland World’s movements. Make sure you know where it is at all times. Don’t lose sight of it!” Out of an abundance of caution, Autarch Titanos gave this task to Skyfeeder and Mogg. The two of them were skilled in time and space, respectively. “The rest of us will head out and move towards the nearest temple at maximum speed and use all our power to destroy it.”

“Alright.” The avatars of Mogg and Skyfeeder were both extremely confident.

### **The Desolate Era**

#### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 3: Skycleaver Stance**

A great star-like temple was silently floating within the Great Dark, surrounded by formations and flowing barriers that surrounded it and kept it completely sealed away.

Riiiiip. A rift in the darkness appeared, followed by Ji Ning and the rest of the seven emerging from within it.

“Let’s begin.” Ning, Titanos, and the others exchanged smiling glances.

“This will be the first time we have the Sword Titan release its full power in battle,” Ning said with a laugh. All of them began to pour energy into the formation-bases they were holding. Boom! They quickly summoned the awesome power of the Chaosverse, which began to swiftly condense into the form of a nearly nude giant who was clad in just a fur loincloth. This titan stood there in the Great Darkness, his long dark hair spilling across his shoulders.

He had two arms and a face which looked similar to Ning’s but had more of the cold, pure remorselessness of the Dao of the Sword.

The Sword Titan had two different ‘modes’. The first mode was the seven-faced, fourteen-armed mode they had used previously. This mode used up more energy but it had so much power that the other six Autarchs could each be responsible for controlling two arms as well.

The second mode was this mode. It had just a single face and two arms.

Ning and the others had already concluded that they would have to fight together during the final battle. If they had enough time, they would of course set up formations to prepare the battlefield. Before the battle near the Nine Cicadas Temple, they had actually spent nearly a month setting up that grand formation (the ‘real’ time they spent was 100x as much). However, oftentimes battles would break out suddenly and without warning, giving you no chance to slowly establish the formations you needed.

During such times, they would need to make use of mobile formations they could carry with them. They would have to shrink the size of the formation while preserving as much of its power as possible... and so they developed the 'second mode' of the Sword Titan!

The second mode was activated by the various formation-bases which Ning and the others carried with them at all times. It allowed them to summon the power of the Chaosverse and then materialize this body. Given that it had access to less power, they had to be a bit more sparing with their energy usage and so they only kept the two strongest arms which Ning controlled.

The two arms which Ning was in control of was where most of the power of the entire Sword Titan was concentrated. More than 90% of the power was there!

"Gentlemen, let us use the Skycleaver stance in cracking this temple," Ning said.

"Alright." The other six understood and agreed.

Rumble... the loincloth-clad Sword Titan strode through the void, a longsword appearing within one of its hands. This was one of Ning's Northbow swords.

Autarch Titanos, Autarch Skyfeeder, Autarch Mogg, Autarch Stonerule, Autarch Ekong, and Autarch Bolin were inside the Sword Titan. They immediately unleashed their various techniques, filling the Sword Titan's body with their six roaring streams of energy. Under Ning's guidance, all of the different energies merged perfectly into the Omega Sword Dao, allowing the Sword Titan to unleash the most powerful of its many fusion attacks – the Skycleaver stance!

Whoosh! The Sword Titan's two hands came together to grasp the Northbow sword in a double grip, then lifted it high into the air. A heartbeat later, it brought the Northbow sword down in an utterly indomitable chop towards the trapped astral temple before them.

Boom! Crack! The entire astral temple began to shudder. This strike destroyed three of the six formations protecting it, and even the remaining three formations were shuddering as explosions rang out across the temple.

"What in the world is happening outside?"

"Didn't almighty Iyerre say that he's about to arrive and save us? Why are our formations collapsing?!" The seven Sithe Exalts inside all felt quite terrified, but the formations sealing them in here prevented them from seeing what was happening outside. All they could sense was that just now, an incomparably sharp power had come crashing down upon them and had nearly blasted the entire temple apart.

"Kill!" The Sword Titan delivered a second chop, then a third chop. Every single blow was filled with utterly terrifying power.

The reason why these two arms were the 'strongest' arms was precisely because these were the arms which Ning was in control of. The other six Autarchs worked together to unleash their Daos, while Ning guided the power of their Daos into 'his' two arms to unleash the most powerful of attacks. If they were in the 'first mode' with fourteen arms, the other Autarchs would individually control the other twelve arms. However, they were unable to make perfect use of their colleagues' energies. They were only able to mobilize a fraction of it.

In other words, those twelve arms combined weren't nearly as strong as the two arms which Ning controlled. Thus, even when the Sword Titan was at 'peak' power, more than 90% of its strength came from these two 'primary' arms!

Boom! Boom! Boom!

"Quick, go into lockdown mode!"

"Completely seal the temple off from outside attacks!" The Sithe Exalts within the temple were panicking like mad. The formations had already been disposed of. Now, their only choice was to try and use the natural sturdiness of the temple itself to defend against these attacks.

Ning's Sword Titan did not elect to blink inside the temple. Instead, the sword Titan continued to launch frenzied blows from outside using the Skycleaver stance! Every single strike contained the full power from seven Autarch-class combatants which had been perfectly fused together via the Eternal Omega Sword Dao.

This was a level of power that far surpassed that of the 'giant sword' and the 'black serpent' which had fought in the Grassland World, and it was also mightier than the violet-gold chains.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The temple was even sturdier than Universe weapons, but after nearly a hundred blows it finally began to crumble. Moments later it completely blew apart, with the Sithe Exalts inside being reduced to dust by the leftover power from the final Skycleaver stance. This was as to be expected – even the Autarchs, the creators of the Skycleaver stance, would've been destroyed in one blow from this overwhelmingly powerful fusion attack.

"That felt incredible! Unleashing the full power of the Sword Titan was a wonderful feeling." The Sword Titan broke apart, revealing the figures of the seven. Autarch Ekong was particularly excited by what they had just done.

"It's been a long time since I've had that much fun. The Skycleaver stance truly is astonishingly powerful," Autarch Titanos said with a smile.

"In my opinion, all the various techniques and trump cards we have accumulated over the aeons should make it so that we are entirely capable of fighting the Grassland World head-on," Autarch Ekong said.

"Last time, we retreated before we really had a chance to test ourselves. That was irritating! I think we were entirely capable of winning if we fought them head-on."

Ning shook his head. "Don't underestimate the Sithe."

"Darknorth is right. There's no need for us to risk ourselves like that. The longer we can delay the final battle, the greater our advantage shall be. We need to slowly bide our time and allow our natural advantage to accumulate into an overwhelming one. You need patience to win a war," Autarch Titanos said. "We don't need to be anxious. It is the Sithe, it is Iyerre, who need to be anxious!"

Both sides were led by wily old bastards who had been alive for unfathomable ages. Both had plenty of patience. Iyerre, for example, had made preparations for all possibilities. Even though he had encountered repeated setbacks, he felt certain that it wouldn't impact the grand scheme of things. He knew that victory would be his.

The cultivators, in turn, knew what their own advantages and disadvantages were. If they could make maximum use of their advantages, they'll gain victory in the end.

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"Eh?" Iyerre was seated in the lotus position on the grass within the Grassland World, which was hurtling through spacetime. Suddenly, his face tightened. He could sense that the auras of the seven Sithe Exalts he had been planning to rescue had suddenly vanished.

"Dead?" Iyerre frowned. "Did the cultivators somehow predict that we were going to go rescue them and so moved ahead of us to destroy the temple and kill the Exalts?"

He began to feel rather suspicious. "Let's head in another direction." Iyerre immediately sent the Grassland World to move towards a different temple, the Six Seals Temple.

Half a month went past. Iyerre had yet to reach the Six Seals Temple, but he could sense that it had also been destroyed. This caused his face to darken.

After another half-month, the final remaining temple was also destroyed, with the six Sithe Exalts within being slaughtered.

"Damn. This Chaosverse continues to suppress us, making it so that we cannot warp through spacetime as fast as those weak natives. In fact... are they perhaps following us in secret?" Iyerre was quite irritated, but there was nothing he could do. He was at an environmental disadvantage here. "Fine then. The Exalts didn't make too much of a difference. We shall still win without them."

"Hear my orders." Iyerre's voice suddenly echoed throughout the entire Grassland World. His three colleagues, the Autarch-class void dwellers, and the Exalts including Bowenya all heard his voice.

"We are heading to the Annihilation Hive right away! The cultivators must fight us, which means they must engage us in battle. There's no way for them to avoid this! They'll have to battle us to the end... which means that this is the last battle. If we win, we'll have achieved victory and I, Iyerre, promise to give you everything you desire. If we lose, none of you will survive." Iyerre's face was cold and calm, and his voice was very peaceful as well, but his subordinates all shivered when they heard it.

Whoosh! The Grassland World suddenly changed directions once more, moving towards the Annihilation Hive!

It was possible that the cultivators were secretly following them from behind, but Iyerre didn't care. He was going to head straight towards his target openly. The cultivators might know what he was doing, but it wouldn't matter. They would still have to come and fight him!

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The avatars of Autarch Skyfeeder and Autarch Mogg were charged with following the Grassland World. After following its new trajectory for over half a day, they were able to realize where the Grassland World was now headed.

"The Annihilation Hive?" The two avatars traded a glance in the darkness. Both of them understood what the Sithe were planning, and they couldn't help but turn pale.

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### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 4: Within the Annihilation Hive**

“The Sithe are heading for the Annihilation Hive?” Ji Ning, Titanos, Mogg, Skyfeeder, Stonerule, Bolin, and Ekong fell silent. They stood there within the Great Dark, staring at each other.

Titanos said in a low voice, “I imagine you all know what their plan is. They are going to go to the Annihilation Hive and destroy Darknorth’s avatar! That will allow the Annihilation Hive to continue devouring power from our Chaosverse. We have to fight them there. We can’t let it just continue to weaken our Chaosverse unabated. Yes... we have no other options.”

“We do have another option!” Hard light flashed through Autarch Ekong’s eyes. “We’re faster than them. Let’s get to the Annihilation Hive first and destroy its quintessence core!”

“Destroy the sphere of annihilation?” The others were all intrigued.

“Is it possible?” Autarch Titanos looked at Ning. Ning knew more about it than anyone else present.

“The quintessence of the Annihilation Hive holds the mysteries of a type of destruction which I have named ‘Oblivion’ within it. It is incomparably profound and also tremendously powerful. I’m not even close to being strong enough to destroy it,” Ning said. “However... when we work together, we are also tremendously powerful. Perhaps we might just manage to destroy it after all.”

“We have to! Once we destroy the sphere of annihilation, they’ll have nothing to threaten us with,” Autarch Ekong said eagerly.

“Destroy the sphere of annihilation.”

“When we join forces, we are virtually unstoppable. We were able to crush entire temples in head-on attacks. I refuse to believe we can’t crack that thing!” Autarch Bolin’s eyes were filled with malevolence as well.

None of them wanted to be led around by the nose by their foes!

However, they all knew that it was uncertain as to whether or not they would be able to damage the ‘sphere of annihilation’. It was a completely foreign object that they knew nothing about... but they had to make the attempt! If they succeeded, they’d celebrate. If they failed, then they would have to go stop the Sithe!

“I hope this works.” Ning looked at his six comrades, silently praying to himself as he did. His avatar had been analyzing the sphere of annihilation for many years, and the more he understood the more nervous he felt.

“Come. Let us go to the Annihilation Hive!” They immediately began to speed towards the Annihilation Hive at maximum speed.

Roughly one month later, they finally reached the Annihilation Hive. Iyerre’s team was still far away; they’d probably need over half a month before they would arrive.

“The Annihilation Hive.” The seven of them stood shoulder-to-shoulder, staring at the great hive before them. It remained vast beyond measure, but the sucking power from it was now much weaker than



when it was at full power. It was still able to destroy the raw darkness in the area around it, but the energies released by the destroyed darkness all returned to the prime essences of the Chaosverse. There was no way to steal them away at all.

“Let’s try and see if we can destroy the entire thing first,” Autarch Titanos said. “If we can, we don’t need to worry about destroying the sphere of annihilation.”

The sphere of annihilation, by itself, didn’t have the power to forcibly take energy from an entire Chaosverse. It was all thanks to the formation supporting it that made this possible.

“Darknorth.” Bolin looked at Ning.

“Let’s try using the Skycleaver stance with full power,” Ning said. The Skycleaver stance wasn’t necessarily the best technique to use in actual combat, but it was definitely the best for causing destruction.

Soon, the towering, loincloth-clad Sword Titan once more appeared within the emptiness of space. He strode towards the behemoth hive, glowing with pure sword-intent. Every single movement he made radiated power and destruction, and he quickly reached the surface of the behemoth hive. He then drew an enormous sword with his right hand.

“Skycleaver stance!” The Sword Titan held the sword in a two-handed grip, lifting it up high over his head. The six Autarchs began to use their various techniques, allowing Ning to guide their different Daos to merge together and unleash the Skycleaver stance! This was actually just one stance of an entire set of sword-arts which Ning had created for them.

Boom! The divine sword came crashing down, shattering spacetime and splintering the Five Elements. It destroyed all in its path as it came crashing down with absolutely terrifying power towards the surface of the Annihilation Hive.

Boom! A massive explosion occurred, causing even the enormous behemoth hive to tremble. As for Ning’s Sword Titan? A powerful counter-force pushed back against him, sending it stumbling a few steps backwards in space.

It was simply too powerful. Not even Ning’s Sword Dao was able to completely deflect this counter-force, and so the Sword Titan had to endure much of it.

“How does it look? Any cracks?”

“Did we cause any damage to it?” Ning and the others carefully inspected the behemoth hive while asking each other the same question. They were all hoping that the thing had been at least slightly damaged. Even the tiniest of cracks would symbolize that if they continued to hammer away at it, they would be able to completely destroy it in time. Alas, none of them could discover any cracks at all, which was why they were all asking the others if they saw anything.

“Nothing.”

“I can’t find any. I don’t see any damage at all.” Their hearts all began to sink.

“Let’s try a few more attacks and see if that does anything,” Autarch Titanos said.

“Alright.” Ning and the others nodded. They once more joined forces, having the Sword Titan raise its sword up high for the Skycleaver stance once more.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! The Sword Titan delivered the terrifying Skycleaver stance again and again, furiously smoting the Annihilation Hive and causing it to shudder and even fly backwards.

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Deep within a three-hundred meter hidden space inside the Annihilation Hive, there was a formation-base with a long-haired man seated in the lotus position atop it. The long-haired man’s hair was half black and half white, and he was nervously keeping track of the hive’s status.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Every single explosion caused the entire Annihilation Hive to shudder.

“Who is attacking the Annihilation Hive from outside?” Exalt Anitya was rather startled and nervous. He was only able to see what was happening within the hive; he was unable to see the outside world. “The entire Annihilation Hive is actually trembling. This level of power far surpasses what Emperor Darknorth can accomplish. Can it be that the cultivator leaders have joined forces?”

Exalt Anitya was rather nervous, but a short while later the attacks came to a halt.

“They dealt over a thousand strikes, but they weren’t able to even scratch the Annihilation Hive.” Exalt Anitya let out a sigh of relief. The Annihilation Hive was one of the most important Sithe trump cards, and it had been just as expensive to create as the Grassland World. It was far more powerful than the various temples. It wouldn’t be easy to destroy it!

“Hm. Outsiders have just come inside.” Exalt Anitya stared at the images which appeared before him. They displayed a stream of power that flew inside the hive and towards its core hive. The light and power surrounding the figure was so blinding that Exalt Anitya was unable to see who it was.

“I have to report this.” Exalt Anitya immediately contacted Iyerre. The formation-base below him slowly began to swivel as a pillar of light appeared. A figure appeared within the pillar of light which solidified into the seated form of Iyerre.

Exalt Anitya rose and bowed respectfully: “Almighty Iyerre, new invaders have entered the Annihilation Hive. They tried to assault the hive from outside, and they attacked over a thousand times with shocking levels of power. However, they still weren’t able to even scratch the Annihilation Hive!”

“Mm.” Iyerre’s eyes flashed coldly. “Someone actually dared to assault the Annihilation Hive? It must have been those cultivator leaders working together.”

“They are moving closer and closer towards the core. They’ll reach the sphere of annihilation soon. Will they be able to destroy it?” Exalt Anitya was worried.

“Just keep watching. Don’t take any other action,” Iyerre said.

“Alright,” Exalt Anitya said respectfully.

Whoosh. The pillar of light vanished.

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Within the behemoth hive. Ning and the other Autarchs had already reached the black pyramid located at the center of the vortex of astral clouds, reuniting with Ning's avatar.

"So this is the sphere of annihilation?" Autarch Ekong stared at the nearby shadowy black orb, which continued to devour everything surrounding it. It was like an endless hole that swallowed and destroyed all things! It embodied the essence of 'Oblivion', causing the Autarchs to feel a sense of trepidation when they looked at it.

"What type of profound mysteries does this thing hold, for it to be able to destroy all things? It seems as though there is nothing whatsoever which surpasses it," Autarch Stonerule said softly.

They had attuned to many different Daos before, but the mysteries embodied by this sphere of annihilation were more profound than any they had ever studied. It eclipsed all Daos they had seen. The so-called 'Omega Daos' and 'Daobirth Essences'... they would all be devoured and destroyed by this power of 'Oblivion'.

"My avatar has been meditating here for many years and is able to replicate a bit of Oblivion's power." Ning shook his head. "But I still do not understand its true nature."

"My Destruction Daobirth Essence is shallow and crude in comparison," Autarch Ekong sighed.

"Iyerre might be at the same level of insight as this 'Oblivion' Dao," Autarch Mogg said. "But maybe not. He's so far above us that we cannot judge him accurately."

Omega Autarchs had extremely profound levels of insight, perhaps as profound as the mysteries of Oblivion. Both were far beyond the likes of these seven to comprehend.

"In the end, it is simply a naturally-occurring quintessence core. It's unable to fight back against us. The seven of us, when working together, can summon the power of the Chaosverse itself. We should be able to destroy it," Autarch Ekong said.

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### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 5: Laughter**

Ji Ning and the rest of the seven stared at the shadowy black orb. There was utter stillness. Even their auras seemed to have frozen. All of them had experienced countless things as they had ascended the path of cultivation to reach their current heights, but they now felt a sense of tremendous pressure.

This sphere of annihilation was an inimical threat to their entire Chaosverse. If they could destroy it then things would be much simpler... but if they failed, they would have no choice but to begin the final, deadly battle.

The seven of them exchanged a glance, nodding silently to each other. They were out of options. They had already tried to destroy both the behemoth hive and the black tower, but they were unable to do so! Now, their last chance lay in attacking the 'sphere of annihilation' at the center of the tower.

Rumble... an awesome amount of the Dao's power was being gathered here, with Ning and the rest of the seven guiding it to form the towering, loincloth-clad titan. They simply didn't have enough time to set up the full formation, as the Sithe would be arriving in nearly half a month. Using the second mode of the Sword Titan was the best they could do.

“Destroy the sphere of annihilation!” The Sword Titan strode through the air, a greatsword appearing within his hands.

“Attack!” Ning ordered. Within the Sword Titan, the six Autarchs immediately began to unleash their most powerful attacks. Six massive streams of energy quickly began to course through the Sword Titan’s body, then slowly began to coalesce into one. The Sword Titan lifted up its arms, double-gripping a massive greatsword and then delivering a furious blow towards the shadowy orb before it.

As the sword chopped out, it destroyed all the different types of energy that were in its path, reducing them to nothingness. This was the Skycleaver stance!

“It has to break.” Ning and the rest of the six watched hopefully.

BOOM! The sword smote furiously upon the shadowy orb, which instantly began to twist and distort. The power of this sword was simply too great! The orb was distorted, transforming from being a perfectly round globe into an ovaloid shape. Some cracks actually began to appear at its edges as the sword slashed right through it.

“Did we succeed?” When Ning and the others saw the black orb elongate and crack, they couldn’t help but feel a sense of wild excitement. But then... their hearts turned cold. The shadowy black orb once more returned to its normal spherical shape, continuing to devour everything around it while the cracks went back to normal.

“Try again!” Autarch Titanos commanded desperately.

“Again!” Ning gritted his teeth. He truly didn’t wish to admit defeat!

Boom! Boom! Boom! The Sword Titan began to strike again and again against the shadowy black orb, each strike filled with such incredible power that the black orb repeatedly cracked apart... but each time, it quickly healed afterwards and then continued to devour away at its surroundings. It wasn’t weakened in the slightest.

After striking several thousand times, Ning and the others finally gave up. Their hearts were ice-cold. The Sword Titan vanished, revealing the bodies of Ning and the other six. They all stared silently at the shadowy black orb.

A long silence ensued. Suddenly, Ning spoke out: “We haven’t failed yet.”

“Eh?” The other six looked at Ning. They had already attacked with all their might. Could it be that Daolord Darknorth had another suggestion?

“Bolin... ever since you mastered the Samsara Daobirth Essence, I’ve been ruminating on creating a new sword-art,” Ning said. “When we came together to form the Sword Titan, the Skycleaver stance we used was based off a sword-art I created which was meant to use the Space Daobirth Essence, Time Daobirth Essence, Claw Daobirth Essence, Illusion Daobirth Essence, Destruction Daobirth Essence, and Karma Daobirth Essence!”

“It employs six types of Daobirth Essences... but now, brother Bolin, you have also mastered the Samsara Daobirth Essence. I think I can create an even more powerful set of sword-arts which employs seven different Daobirth Essences, which would make our Sword Titan even more powerful.”

Titanos, Bolin, and the others were all delighted by this. Right! Their sword-art was based off of using six Daobirth Essences. There was no reason why they couldn't upgrade it to use seven instead!

"I already have the rough outline of this sword-art in my mind," Ning said, "But I've still been in the process of perfecting it. Give me enough time to finish it and make it even more powerful!"

"Alright."

"I'll accelerate time for you."

"Take it at your own pace, Darknorth. Don't try to rush. We still have more than half a month."

Titanos and the others instantly worked to assist him. If he was able to create a new sword-art, even if it wasn't enough to destroy the sphere of annihilation it would still strengthen their Sword Titan and make it more formidable during the battle to come.

Autarch Skyfeeder took over the responsibility for accelerating time, letting Ning calmly set his mind upon perfecting this sword-art. Ning himself had long ago mastered the Samsara Sword Dao. All he had to do was to link it to Bolin's Daobirth Essence, which was fairly easy. However, what Ning was trying to do was to perfect this technique and make it even more powerful! He actually had Titanos and the others try the new stance out, then went back to continue working at it.

Time flowed on, one day after another. The power of this new fusion sword-art grew increasingly mighty. Meanwhile, the avatars of Mogg and Skyfeeder continued to follow Iyerre's Grassland World, ready to report anything that needed reporting.

"You still have two more days before Iyerre's world of grass arrives here," Mogg said.

"I've already completed the sword-art." Ning nodded. "I won't be able to make any improvements unless I'm given another ten thousand years."

There were a total of four stances to this fusion sword-art! Their names remained unchanged: Skycleaver stance, Brightcave stance, Dawnmoon stance, and World stance.

"Now that my Omega Sword Dao is guiding seven different types of Daobirth Essences when using this sword-art, the power has increased by nearly 30% compared to before," Ning said. Titanos and the others were delighted to hear this. Given how powerful the Sword Titan was, increasing its power by even a tiny bit was extremely difficult. A 30% increase was absolutely incredible! This was primarily due to the fact that the Samsara Daobirth Essence was an extremely powerful Daobirth Essence to begin with, one which empowered the new sword-art tremendously.

"Let us begin." The seven exchanged glances, then stared at the distant shadowy orb. They activated the various formation-bases they were carrying, summoning the power of the Chaosverse and converting it to form the loincloth-clad Sword Titan. The Sword Titan hefted a greatsword, once more preparing to unleash its supremely powerful Skycleaver stance! This time, of course, it was the new version of the Skycleaver stance.

Seven different streams of Daobirth Essence power coursed through the Sword Titan. Ning was able to easily unite the seven streams into a single whole, forming his Omega Sword Dao with their powers.

"Skycleaver stance."

The Sword Titan once more chopped down at the shadowy orb, but this time it was noticeably more powerful than before. Boom! Boom! Boom! The divine sword plunged deep into the shadowy orb, causing a series of explosions to ring out. The black orb began to crack and shatter in many different places as the sword went into the orb and out the other side.

The black orb looked heavily damaged, but some invisible law once more pulled it back together. It quickly returned to its normal shape and began to once more calmly devour everything around it.

“Still no permanent damage?” Ning could hardly believe his eyes. They launched another hundred strikes, but the result was the same. Each time, the black orb looked as though it was so heavily damaged that it would most assuredly break apart, but instead it would quickly heal. It was like a globe of water. No matter how much ‘damage’ they caused to it, it would easily reform into a globe once more.

The Sword Titan vanished. Ning and the other six stared at the black orb in disbelief.

“Damn,” Ning muttered, gritting his teeth.

“Hahaha! Oh well.” Autarch Ekong actually began to laugh loudly, a frenzied look in his eyes. “I’ve wanted to have a good fight against the Sithe for ages now. We have so many tools at our disposal, but we’ve never dared to take on the risk of actually using them because we’re afraid to lose. Now? Now, we have no way out. They’ve forced us to stand and fight! Good. Let’s fight then! We’ll risk it all in this battle. I want to see who will be the survivors – the Sithe, or us!”

“Ekong’s right. Discard all your fears and all your worries and pour everything you have into the next battle.” The wily old Autarch Titanos began to laugh loudly as well. “I’ve been alive for far too long. I’ve almost forgotten what life used to be like when I was a weak young cultivator who had to experience one life-threatening challenge after another. It has been a long time since I’ve had this sort of feeling where my very truesoul is shivering in anticipation. Let’s do our best and fight them to the bitter end!”

Ning joined in their laughter, as did Skyfeeder, Bolin, Mogg, and Stonerule. Hah! If there was no way out, they would fight. They’d literally fight the Sithe to the death in this next battle!

“Gentlemen. It is my honor to be able to battle with you to the bitter end,” the only female Autarch, Autarch Skyfeeder, said with a smile.

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 6: The Final Battle**

“My friends, I can’t even describe how happy I am to be able to fight alongside all of you in this battle,” Autarch Bolin said with a smile.

“We’ll fight to the bitter end together.”

“Haha...”

“Come, come! I think we need to share some wine before this battle begins.” Autarch Ekong waved his hand, causing an estate to appear before him which was filled with stone tables and chairs. Ji Ning and the others all smiled as they sat down.

Ning picked up his wine cup, then glanced at his six friends. He felt as though this was almost a dream. He could still clearly remember how he had been reborn from the Netherworld Kingdom into the Ji clan of the Grand Xia, and how he had slowly trained step-by-step until he had reached the apex of the cultivator world. Now, he would stand alongside his six friends and peers, entering into a lethal battle by their sides. This was a battle which would determine the fate of all cultivators!

If they lost, it would all be for nothing. His friends, his family, and all of civilization would be destined to die.

"Y'know, I was thinking. Darknorth... should we have your true body stay out of this final battle?" Autarch Titanos suddenly said. All of the other Autarchs nearby were stunned.

"Not take part?" Ning was stunned as well. "Titanos... are you saying, the rest of you would fight but I wouldn't?"

"Your avatar could," Autarch Titanos said slowly. "Here's what I'm thinking. We could have your avatar form the Sword Titan with us. Your avatar has 80% of your true power! You are already the strongest of us seven. Your avatar is more than strong enough to merge our powers together. I wager it'll still be able to keep the Sword Titan at 90% of its full strength."

"If we lose, at least your true body would still be alive! So long as you are alive, our civilizations will have a chance to eventually recover." Autarch Titanos looked at Ning. The other five began to hesitate, considering his words.

"If my true body doesn't get involved in this fight, it'll have a major impact on our combat prowess," Ning said. "Both my avatar and myself will take part in this fight, guiding the six of you in forming the Sword Titan! If my avatar guides your avatars in forming a giant, it'll have roughly 50% to 60% of the the strength of the main one."

"We'll have one Sword Titan and one Avatar Titan. That way, we'll be able to unleash the maximum amount of power possible. If my true body doesn't take part, we'll only have a single weakened Sword Titan," Ning said.

The Avatar Titan would be using the same type of formation. The other six avatars were only at half power while Ning's avatar was at 80% power, but the Avatar Titan would remain a powerful tool in this fight. It would be even stronger than the giant sword they had used in the Grassland World.

"But if we lose, we'll have lost all hope," Titanos said hesitantly.

"Brother Titanos!" Ning said sharply, "Are you still thinking about a 'backup plan' at a time like this? Do you really think that I can reverse the situation all by myself if I'm the only one to survive? Even if I do eventually become an Omega Autarch, by then I would've had to watch as the Sithe bound our Chaosverse and Iyerre became a Chaoslord. In the end, I would still die!"

"We should put everything we have into this fight instead! We'll use both the Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan to maximize our chances." Ning stared at Autarch Titanos.

"Titanos, I agree with Darknorth. This time, screw the backup plans," Autarch Ekong said.

“Let’s fight.” Autarch Skyfeeder was by nature a fearless woman. She had previously been planning to attempt to bind the Chaosverse, even though the others who had tried all died!

“I agree that we should do everything we can to win this battle.” Autarch Bolin, Autarch Mogg, and Autarch Stonerule all turned to look at Titanos.

At their level, life and death mattered very little. They actually approved of Ning throwing himself into danger, because they had to consider what was good for the whole of civilization. They wanted to live... but they didn’t want a life that was worth of death! They didn’t fear death... so long as their deaths were meaningful!

Autarch Titanos hesitated a moment, swayed by the rebukes of his six colleagues. He then let out a self-mocking chuckle: “All my life, I’ve laid schemes upon schemes and have always had a backup plan ready. All of you are right. Even if Darknorth survives by himself, the chance of him being able to reverse a defeat here is miniscule. Him leaving would lower the strength of our forces. It’s better for us to fight them to the bitter end.”:

“:That’s more like it! How miserable would I feel, watching you all perish while I survived by myself?” Ning lifted up his tankard of wine and poured a cup for Titanos. “Come, Titanos, come! I’m going to punish you with some wine.”

“I accept, I accept.” Titanos immediately took the wine cup.

The seven had already decided to do their utmost in this upcoming battle. They no longer felt any worries, and so they happily drank together while awaiting Iyerre’s arrival.

“Iyerre will be arriving in two hours,” Autarch Mogg said suddenly.

“We still have two hours left?” Ning and the others exchanged glances.

“Let’s go out and get ready to welcome these outsiders.” Titanos rose to his feet, as did Ning and the others.

Whoosh! They all put away their respective estates and flew out together, blinking out of the black tower. This time, Ning brought his avatar out alongside him. The Annihilation Hive once more exploded with power and began to generate that incredible sucking pour, but the Sword Titan formed from the seven Autarchs was able to easily pass out of it.

Rumble... the Annihilation Hive began to furiously devour the energies of the outside world at its previous pace as a vortex once more appeared around it. Ning and the Autarchs, however, simply ignored it. Although it was a formidable weapon, it needed to devour energy for an extremely long period of time to do real damage. A few weeks wouldn’t make much of a difference. Not even a century would have a real impact.

Thus, for now they would ignore the Annihilation Hive and focus their efforts on the Sithe. Neither side was going to shirk away from this battle! Victory or defeat would be determined very soon. The winner would rule this Chaosverse. The loser would never be able to rise again.

Whoosh. Whoosh. Two figures suddenly warped over to them. It was the avatars of Autarch Mogg and Autarch Skyfeeder.



“All our avatars are here. We’re ready to fight now. A pity that we lost one of the Golden Bridges of Freedom. Otherwise, we’d be at absolute maximum power,” Autarch Titanos said with a chuckle.

They quickly separated into two squads, both led by Ning. The seven true bodies stood together on one side, while the seven avatars stood next to each other on the other side. Fourteen Autarch-class combatants were ready to do battle.

“It’s all my fault for losing that Golden Bridge.” Autarch Bolin shook his head.

“You aren’t to blame. Those things simply required far too many precious ingredients. I did everything I could but was only able to create seven of them. Sometimes, I can’t help but think to myself about what a coincidence it all was. We originally had an extra, but Darknorth rose just in the nick of time to round out the seventh,” Titanos said with a sigh.

“To be able to battle alongside my six predecessors is Darknorth’s honor,” Ning said with a smile.

The seven of them stood in empty space, their hearts at peace. They had already cast aside all their worries. At a time like this, worrying wouldn’t make any difference. They simply had to do everything they could to win.

If they died, all of civilization would die with them, but there was nothing for that. The seven of them had truly done all they could.

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The ovaloid sphere continued to warp through space. Atop its outermost layer of grayish clouds stood a tall, gray-robed man who was slightly balding. His eyes seemed to contain the cosmos within them as he calmly stared at the empty space before him.

“It is finally time for the last battle.” Like the cultivators, Iyerre knew that he had reached the most critical moment in his entire life. He would either soar to the heavens and become a Lord of Chaos, becoming the most invincible figure in all the Infinite Void aside from his master... or he would be defeated and never have this opportunity again, even if he managed to survive.

He hadn’t worried about the sphere of annihilation being destroyed, because he knew just how marvelous an object it was. There were only two ways by which it could be destroyed. The first way was to overpower it. As an Omega Autarch, outside of this foreign Chaosverse he himself would just barely be able to summon enough power to destroy it. The second way was to comprehend the apocalyptic mysteries it contained, at which point one would be able to easily deconstruct it.

Neither Autarchs nor Omega Emperors would be capable of such a task.

“This realm truly is a mesmerizing one,” Iyerre murmured. “This realm and all things within it should be mine to rule. These weaklings have continued to bar my path. Now, I shall sweep them all away.”

Whoosh. The Grassland World warped through spacetime one final time. By the time it reappeared, Iyerre could now see the enormous Annihilation Hive off in the distance, surrounded by that even-larger vortex which was destroying and devouring all things around it.

However, the fourteen figures standing here were even more noticeable than the vortex of destruction. Ning and his peers stood side-by-side, while the seven avatars did the same.

The fourteen calmly watched as that ovaloid object flew through space towards them. The only person standing on the surface of the ovaloid object was Iyerre, and he smiled thinly when he saw the fourteen. He swept his gaze across them, then let out a chuckle which echoed throughout spacetime: "No more running? No more hiding?"

"There's nowhere to run," Autarch Titanos said.

"We'll give you what you want. We're going to fight you to the death." Ning smiled.

"Iyerre, I hope you don't piss yourself when you see our real power," Autarch Ekong said with a laugh.

"I think he probably will piss himself," Autarch Bolin smirked.

Ning and the others all smiled or laughed as they spoke. Iyerre wasn't angered by this. He simply smiled back and nodded. "You natives are quite brave."

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 7: Doll**

The two sides stared at each other from far. They seemed relaxed, but the atmosphere was already beginning to tense up.

"Hmph. Talking won't solve anything. Come and stop my Grassland World, if you dare," Iyerre said, then sank into the gray clouds and vanished. At the same time, the ovaloid object transformed into a streak of light and shot towards the vast behemoth hive.

Ji Ning and the others traded glances.

"Iyerre vastly surpasses us in terms of insight. Now that he's personally in control of the Grassland World, no formation we can use would be able to slow it down." Autarch Titanos smiled. "The Grassland World can enter the Annihilation Hive with ease, protecting it and allowing it to continue devouring our Chaosverse's energies. The only way to stop it is to go inside of it!"

"Charge into the Grassland World and break it apart." Autarch Bolin nodded slightly.

"That's the only option. Gentlemen, let's do this." Ning laughed.

"We'll have to trouble you to lead us in this fight, Darknorth. We'll need your guidance for the Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan," Autarch Stonerule said.

"I can serve as the leader, but I'll need all of your support."

"Let's go."

"Let's do this." Ning and the others shared a few quick words, then began to make their moves.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The seven Autarchs and their seven avatars began to simultaneously call upon the power of the Chaosverse, gathering it around them to form vortexes of energy that quickly transformed into a pair of towering titans! Both titans were nearly nude and clad only in fur loin-cloths, but one had a slightly more powerful aura than the other.

The Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan advanced side-by-side towards the ovaloid object.

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Iyerre appeared out of nowhere within the palace hidden deep within the Grassland World. Flanking him was the silver-robed woman and the two men, while below him stood the Sithe Exalts and the three Autarch-class void dwellers.

“Vilesky, you three come over here to the center,” Iyerre instructed.

The three Autarch-class void dwellers exchanged puzzled glances, then nervously advanced to the center of the palace. The cyclopean bear, the red-eyed white-furred humanoid, and the tentacled stormcloud harbored distrust towards the Sithe, but unfortunately they were much weaker than Iyerre. There was nothing they could do! In the Infinite Void they were weaker than Iyerre, and even here in the Grassland World they were still weaker than Iyerre.

“Those native cultivators are about to attack. This shall be the final battle.” Iyerre glanced down at the three void dwellers, then smiled: “I’ll need you three to be prepared to make sacrifices for our victory.”

“Just tell us what you need us to do. We’ll do everything in our power,” the three responded respectfully.

“Excellent.” Iyerre nodded. “What I need is for the three of you to offer me your lives.”

Surprise appeared in the eyes of the cyclopean bear and the other two, only to be quickly replaced by utter terror. Suddenly, nine violet-gold chains appeared in the area around them. Each chain moved in an abstruse and profound manner, and they howled through the air as they lashed out at the three Autarch-class void dwellers.

“Iyerre, what the hell are you doing?!”

“Didn’t you promise to give us our freedom if we helped you?”

“Why are you attacking us?!”

The three void dwellers tried to fight back, but now that Iyerre was personally controlling the violet-gold chains, the void dwellers were vastly outclassed in both power and technique. The violet-gold chains immediately began to land brutal blows on them, causing their bodies to explode. The chains then quickly wrapped around their life-cores.

The nearby Sithe Exalts all watched in shocked silence. None of them dared to say a word. They knew how ruthless Iyerre was. To him, anyone and everyone was but a pawn to further his goals. The ‘promises’ those three Autarch-class void dwellers had believed in were nothing more than jokes!

“Give you your freedom?” Iyerre stared down at them, his eyes flickering coldly. “Did you three idiots really think you were qualified to negotiate terms with me? If it wasn’t for the fact that I had a use for you, I never would’ve let you remain alive for this long.” Iyerre then reached out with his right hand, producing three adorably-shaped black dolls. The three black dolls flew out to hover directly above the center of the palace.

Hiss. Hiss. Hiss. The shattered remnants of the void dwellers’ bodies began to fly towards the black dolls. Even their life-cores, still entangled by those chains, began to fly towards them.

“No...!”

“No... but... no!”

The three Autarch-class void dwellers suddenly felt a sensation of infinite terror. Those ordinary looking dolls were exerting lethal amounts of gravitational attraction, causing their life-cores to uncontrollably fly towards them. Their splattered bits of blood and flesh were also flying towards the black dolls, and as soon as they touched the dolls they were swallowed up with a hiss.

“Iyerre, you’ll definitely fail. You’ll fail!!!” a life-core with the illusion of a cyclopean bear inside screamed frantically.

“You’ll die! The cultivators will kill you all!” The life-core which was filled with an illusion of a tentacled stormcloud was struggling and braying as well.

“Damn you, Iyerre! You are shameless!” the phantom of the red-eyed, white-furred beast bellowed.

The three life-cores flew towards the three black dolls, which effortlessly devoured them as well as the flesh and blood from their corpses.

Iyerre couldn’t help but secretly feel amazed by this. “Master’s skills in artifice are simply incredible. Those Autarch-class void dwellers might be foolish, but their bodies are incredibly sturdy. It is their bodies which gave them Autarch levels of power, but the dolls were able to devour them with ease. I may also be an Omega Autarch, but I’m far from being Master’s equal when it comes to artifice.”

His master was a Lord of Chaos. Although they were both Omega Autarchs, Iyerre felt that his master remained superior to him in many different areas!

It was much like how Bolin, Titanos, Mogg, and the others were all Autarchs but shared different insights and were at different levels of power. There was indeed a great difference in power between Iyerre and his Master. The creation of the Annihilation Hive and the Grassland World had only been possible because his master had provided him guidance from behind the scenes. As for the black dolls, his master had personally created these things.

Whoosh! The three black dolls floating in midair suddenly began to dramatically expand in size, transforming into a trio of towering black scaled beasts which now lay on the ground. They pulsed with auras of power but didn’t move in the slightest.

“Separate into three squads as I previously instructed.” Iyerre glanced at his other subordinates. The silver-robed woman, the black-robed man, and the red-robed man immediately acknowledged the order while the many Sithe Exalts quickly took up positions behind them.

“From now on, each squad will be in charge of controlling one of these machine warbeasts,” Iyerre said. “Although each has devoured the full power of an Autarch-class void dweller, it will only be able to fight at peak power for roughly one hour. Thus, we must achieve victory as soon as possible.”

“Understood,” the silver-robed woman and the other two said. They had known all along that this was going to happen. Indeed, the reason why Iyerre had invited them to take part in this invasion was for them to operate the machine warbeasts. Ordinary Exalts were a bit too weak to truly unleash the

potential of these things in battle. Each of the three would control one, with the other Exalts providing assistance.

“Now go,” Iyerre commanded.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!!! The silver-robed woman and the others quickly flew inside the enormous machine warbeasts and took control of them. This was a major trump card which their Lord of Chaos had bestowed upon Iyerre.

“GWAAAAAR!” The three black warbeasts raised their heads and howled. Their auras were actually stronger than those of the Autarch-class void dwellers, because the machine warbeasts were burning up all of their power at a rapid pace while holding nothing back. They could also attack with marvelous techniques; they weren’t nearly as clumsy as those void dwellers were!

“They are coming.” Iyerre raised his head to stare towards the skies. He could see two towering giants wielding divine swords chop through the grayish clouds as though the clouds were nothing more than rotted wood. The two titans charged downwards, easily piercing through the layers of clouds.

“Follow my orders.” A savage look appeared on Iyerre’s face. “Each of you can only fight for an hour, so we need to do everything we can to annihilate them during that period of time! This is the Grassland World, a battlefield of our choosing. We’re definitely going to win. Now go! Kill these cultivators!”

“Kill!” Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh. The three black warbeasts quickly warped through space and disappeared from the temple.

As for Iyerre, his eyes were blazing as he barked, “Quintessence, ignite!” Instantly, the quintessence core located deep within the Grassland World once more began to erupt with power, filling every inch of the entire world with tremendous might. The battle had just begun, but everyone was already preparing to fight like a madman!

Iyerre disappeared from the palace, going forth to face his foes.

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 8: World of Liberation**

The Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan both continued to charge downwards. Whoosh! Whoosh! The clouds had become much sturdier now that the quintessence had been ignited, but before the might of Ji Ning’s Sword Titan and Avatar Titan they remained unspeakably fragile.

Sword-light flashed as they pierced straight through the clouds, charging all the way down to the second layer of clouds. Right at this moment, they all suddenly sensed danger.

“Eh?” Ning was the leader of this formation and was constantly on guard for any possible movements. Suddenly, three enormous black warbeasts appeared from the clouds nearby. They looked much like armor-clad apes, but they each had a pair of curved horns on their heads. Their knees were bent into a half-stooped position, and they stared intently at the Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan.

“Where the hell did these three come from?” Autarch Ekong sent mentally. “All of them seem dangerous.”

“This is probably one of the trump cards the Sithe have been hiding the entire time. Now that the last battle has begun, they no longer see a need to hide themselves,” Titanos sent back. “These three beasts have odd auras. Be careful, Darknorth.”

“Alright.” Ning nodded.

“Attack!”

“Die, cultivators!” The three warbeasts attacked simultaneously, first surrounding the nearby Avatar Titan. The Avatar Titan lifted up his twin swords, ready to meet their attacks.

The furious claw-strikes of the warbeasts caused the very heavens to darken as they lashed out with overwhelming force towards the Avatar Titan. In turn, the Avatar Titan swept out with his right hand, generating an ephemeral streak of sword-light in the air which struck out at the warbeast. Whoosh! The sword-light immediately retracted, while the warbeast simply howled and continued to press the attack.

“These three machine warbeasts are extremely powerful.” Ning and the others were all shocked. “They’re actually able to fight our Avatar Titan to a standstill. Our sword-arts will only be enough to hold off two of them at most.”

“Die!” The three warbeasts fought with uncommon ferocity. Clearly, they wanted to destroy this weaker-looking titan as soon as they could.

Whoosh! The nearby Sword Titan had already charged over, sending an awesome stream of sword-light slashing through the air with unstoppable force. One of the warbeasts immediately used both of its paws to block this attack head-on. Both combatants had extremely marvelous techniques, but an explosion rang out as soon as the paws struck against the horizontal sword-strike. The warbeast was sent flying backwards, and it only managed to catch its footing after flying a million kilometers backwards. Then, it once more charged over.

“It is extremely strong, and its scales are just as tough as the black tower which houses the sphere of annihilation. There’s no way to injure it at all.” Ning was secretly alarmed.

Clang! Clang! Clang!!! A series of clanking sounds could be heard as one violet-gold chain after another began to appear. They were like great serpents which blotted out the skies, emanating auras of awesome power as they swept out towards the weaker Avatar Titan and sought to destroy it.

“The chains aren’t that dangerous.” Ning didn’t worry too much about them at all.

The three black warbeasts and the nine violet-gold chains continued to furiously assault the Avatar Titan, but the Avatar Titan and the Sword Titan fought alongside each other. The Sword Titan was especially mighty, with each of its blows sending the black warbeasts flying with ease and making it impossible for them to gain a true advantage over the Avatar Titan. The warbeasts truly were rather troublesome, as their techniques were brilliant and they were completely impervious to damage.

“Eh?” Ning, Titanos, and the others suddenly sensed a new threat approaching. They hurriedly turned to look towards the skies, only to see the figure of Iyerre appear. Iyerre’s robes were fluttering around him, and his body was covered by an awesome aura of power formed from the energies released by the ignited quintessence core. He was currently diving downwards head first, his hands folded in a prayer

position before him. An absolutely dazzling stream of golden light was emanating from between his hands, preparing to spread outwards.

Omnipresent... light.

It almost instantly illuminated the entire Grassland World. The light was blinding, and it weighed down heavily upon both the Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan.

“Die!” Iyerre changed his stance, pulling back his left hand while pushing out with his right. He had once used this technique against Mogg, but now that he was using the ignited quintessence core’s power this strike was now much stronger than before. When fighting Mogg, he had to spend quite a bit of time to accumulate the amount of energy necessary. This time, he was quite fast.

“Iyerre isn’t all that powerful, but he’s at such a high level of insight that he can employ his energies to terrifying effect.” Ning immediately made the Sword Titan to slice upwards with a sword, blocking Iyerre’s downwards palm.

BOOM! This unfathomably powerful palm crashed head-on against the all-encompassing sword.

Iyerre staggered a few steps backwards, a frown on his face: “This formation-giant is incredibly strong. Darknorth is making perfect use of these native cultivators’ powers.”

“Hmph.” The Sword Titan had been able to block Iyerre with ease. Even when Iyerre was using his most powerful strike, he was only 30% more powerful than the machine warbeasts. It wasn’t enough to threaten the Sword Titan.

“Light!” Boom! Iyerre began to glow with even more dazzling light. The light was everywhere, filling the entire world with an iridescent glow. What worried Ning the most... was that he could no longer find Iyerre! After releasing that blast of infinite light, Iyerre had actually vanished into the light itself. Ning could neither see him physically nor track him via godsense.

Suddenly, an alabaster arm reached out to grab at the Avatar Titan.

“That’s Iyerre!” The Avatar Titan hurriedly moved to block. Since Ning was controlling both titans, he was able to make them work in perfect concert. The Sword Titan immediately went over to help out as well.

The dazzling light continued to suppress both the titans, while Iyerre launched one sneak attack after another with incomparably profound techniques. Blocking his attacks was very taxing, and eventually one would get through.

“Everyone, prepare the World of Liberation,” Ning sent.

“Alright.” Titanos, Mogg, and the others all knew that the moment had come. They had been planning to save this trump card for use at a critical moment, but they were now at such a disadvantage that they were finding it hard to even maintain their defenses. It was too hard for the Sword Titan to defend against the warbeasts, the chains, and Iyerre at the same time. The Avatar Titan was in tremendous danger right now, and once it was destroyed their foes would be free to focus their attacks against the Sword Titan. When that happened, the situation would become even grimmer.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

Suddenly, six surges of power shot out simultaneously. Golden bridges began to appear directly beneath the feet of the Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan. It was the Golden Bridges of Freedom! The six Golden Bridges of Freedom joined together into a hexagonal shape, forming a single complete edifice! They began to accumulate awesome amounts of power from the Chaosverse that surpassed even the power of the ignited Grassland World.

It must be remembered that the Golden Bridges of Freedom were modeled off the Daoguard Towers. They were able to accumulate and make use of large amounts of the Chaosverse's energies. Once they linked together, they were able to use even more!

"WORLD STANCE!" Ning roared. This was the only domain-type stance he had created for the fusion sword-arts – the World stance!

Rumble... Ning, Titanos, Bolin, Skyfeeder, Mogg, Stonerule, and Ekong began to simultaneously unleash their respective domains. Autarch Bolin actually unleashed two domains, one for the Claw Daobirth Essence and one for the Samsara Daobirth Essence.

As for Ning, he was responsible for controlling and unleashing the Eternal Omega Sword Dao Domain!

All eight domains came together, drawing upon the power of the Chaosverse as well as the power of the golden bridges themselves!

Ning's 'Omega Sword Dao Domain' was able to perfectly connect together all of these different domains, allowing the different types of power to merge together into dazzling streams of sword-light. The entire world became filled with countless streams of sword-light, each of which was formed from a different type of domain-energy. The power of this domain vastly surpassed Iyerre's domain of light.

"This is..." Iyerre and the warbeasts felt as though countless streams of sword-light had enveloped them and were pressing down at them, forcing them to resist it with every single movement they made.

"These eight different types of domain-energy and the power from the Golden Bridges of Freedom have been perfectly joined together to form this domain – the World of Liberation." Ning and the others were all excited. As soon as the 'World of Liberation' domain was released, Iyerre and others were dramatically weakened. Even the nine violet-gold chains were weakened significantly, and as a result Ning and the others immediately gained the upper hand.,

"Join forces to kill Iyerre! Once Iyerre dies, those three indestructible warbeasts will begin to fall apart on their own," Titanos sent mentally.

"Kill Iyerre!" Bolin barked.

"Attack!" Their eyes were filled with murder. The three warbeasts had been suppressed by their domain, reducing them to 70% of their normal power. Even if all of them joined forces against the Avatar Titan, it would still be able to defend against them using the Cavebright stance.

As for the powerful Sword Titan, it had only one target: Iyerre!

## [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 9: Death Battle**



The Sword Titan charged incredibly fast towards Iyerre, whose face tightened. Even before the World of Liberation domain had started to suppress him, he wouldn't have dared to fight the Sword Titan in sole combat. Now that he only had around 60% of his full power, he would probably be destroyed in just ten strikes if he tried to fight the thing head-on.

"I can't believe these natives have actually forced me to do this." Iyerre immediately took a step forwards, vanishing into thin air.

"Damn." The Sword Titan's greatsword chopped through where Iyerre had just been, hitting nothing but air. Ji Ning, Bolin, Titanos, and the others were secretly infuriated by this. However, even in the outside world Iyerre was able to disengage from battle as he pleased. Here in the Grassland World, it was even easier for him.

"Since he's fled, let's first capture those three warbeasts then destroy the Grassland World's core. Without the Grassland World and the three warbeasts, Iyerre won't be able to cause much trouble." Ning and the others all knew that Iyerre wasn't able to summon much power due to the local Chaosverse suppressing him. He had to create and use powerful treasures in order to pose a threat to them.

However... the more powerful the treasure, the greater the cost to make it. It had taken Iyerre aeons to construct the Grassland World and the Annihilation Hive. If they managed to destroy the Grassland World, it would be ages before Iyerre would be able to challenge them again. By then, the cultivators would have grown far more powerful than they were right now.

Whoosh. The Sword Titan gripped the Northbow sword in both hands as it charged towards one of the warbeasts. Although they were indestructible, capturing them was still a possibility.

"Gwaaaaar!" "Gwaaaaar!" "Gwaaaaar!"

The three black warbeasts separated, moving in three different directions. Suddenly, all of them raised their heads, causing a strange black-white glyph to appear from their foreheads.

"Eh?" The Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan both turned to stare upwards at the figure which had just appeared above them. It was Iyerre, who had disappeared just moments ago. Iyerre's forehead also had a black-white glyph emanating from it. Countless strands of black and white light reached out, piercing through the air and connecting Iyerre to all three of the warbeasts. Together, they formed an incredibly marvelous formation which transformed Iyerre and the three warbeasts into one being!

The energy leaking out from the ignited quintessence core was being sucked up into this enormous formation, while the energies of the three warbeasts were also being rapidly consumed.

Iyerre and the three black warbeasts began to glow with blurry black-white light, and their auras increased dramatically in power.

"I can't believe these natives have actually forced me to use my last trump card." Iyerre gritted his teeth. In the end, this final battle had surpassed Iyerre's expectations.

Iyerre had believed that with the battle being held within the Grassland World, the combined forces of himself, the three warbeasts, and the violet-gold chains would be more than enough to gain victory! Alas, Ning had first created an even more powerful sword-art with an extra Daobirth Essence in it, then

unleashed the suppressive power of the World of Liberation domain. All this had forced Iyerre to unveil his very last card! He had truly gone all-out now, with nothing held back.

His master had been the one to create the black warbeasts! When they fought individually, they weren't all that powerful, but when merged together into a single whole they were able to unleash their true power. This was why his master had also bestowed the Yin-Yang Formation upon him, allowing him to perfectly join together with those three beasts. However, this would cause the three warbeasts to run out of power even more quickly.

"Die!" Iyerre was above them while the three warbeasts circled around them. The four all glowed with unearthly halos of black-white light, and countless strands linked them together as they charged towards the Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan.

Boom! The Sword Titan and Iyerre exchanged blows. The result was that Iyerre was knocked flying backwards, but he quickly regrouped and charged forward once more.

"He's actually become so much more powerful!" Ning, Titanos, and the others were all shocked. The World of Liberation was suppressing Iyerre, but he had still skyrocketed in power to reach 70% of the Sword Titan's might! Given his profound insights, he was now completely capable of sustained combat against the Sword Titan.

"If even he has become so powerful, then what of those three warbeasts?" Ning and the others knew that the situation had just taken a turn for the worse.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The Avatar Titan was being surrounded and besieged. He used his sword-arts to defend and exclusively focused on using the most defensive stance, the Cavebright stance. He instantly used this stance fifteen times in a row, but he was already in an extremely dangerous situation. The Sword Titan immediately brandished his sword, moving to reinforce the Avatar Titan.

"Haha! Native cultivators, you are doomed. All of you will die. None of you will escape!" Iyerre went forth to help destroy the Avatar Titan as well.

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The situation had instantly turned extremely grim. Even though the World of Liberation weighed down upon the Sithe, the Sithe had the unquestioned upper hand. Just two seconds later, the two titans were in an extremely disadvantageous situation despite working together.

"We can't let this continue. If we just defend, we'll definitely lose. We probably won't be able to last for ten more seconds before the Avatar Titan is torn asunder. Once that happens, the Sword Titan will be swarmed and destroyed as well. We'll lose this fight!" They all understood this, which was why they were all extremely anxious. However, they had already used everything they had. It was incredible that they had reached this current level of power!

"There's nothing we can do. Let's go all-in."

"Go all-in."

“All-in.” Bolin, Mogg, Stonerule, Ekong, Skyfeeder, Titanos, and Ning all shared this exact same thought. Whoosh! Their bodies suddenly began to glow with light as a terrifying aura of power began to spread out.

It must be remembered that their bodies were completely formed of mana. Consequently, their bodies contained absolutely astonishing stores of energy. Hegemons and Emperors who were gripped by despair would choose to self-detonate, precisely because the sudden release of such an enormous amount of energy would generate an absolutely incredible explosion. Back during the Endwar of the Three Realms, many Immortals and Fiendgods had sacrificed themselves via self-detonation to deal Old Man Yuan a fatal blow.

Ning was an Omega Emperor, while the other six were Autarchs. They wouldn’t choose to self-detonate, as self-detonation might not even be enough to kill someone like Iyerre, who was extremely skilled at staying alive. If the seven of them died while Iyerre survived, they would have lost this war!

Just as importantly, at their current level of insight these seven had exquisitely perfect control over their bodies. Self-detonation would simply result in the explosion scattering energy out haphazardly. It was a fairly foolish choice, and they had chosen something else: to transform a portion of their bodies into raw power!

Ning and the Autarchs had chosen to sacrifice parts of their flesh and blood! Their bodies began to glow with light as a terrifying amount of power began to burst forth from them! In normal battle, it was easy for them to unleash ten thousand strikes because they were able to replenish as much energy as they used. Now, however, all of them suffered severe self-inflicted wounds because they had used up more than half of the energy which had been stored in their bodies.

This was an absolute maximum. If they burned away even more energy, their damaged truesouls would no longer be able to maintain perfect control over this level of power. Every single speck of mana was infused with their souls and truesouls, after all! If they lost too much, their truesouls would weaken to the point where they could no longer maintain control. Only by maintaining perfect control would they be able to unleash truly awesome levels of power.

This was the most ideal, suitable time for taking such a risk... but they could only do so a single time! This was because they would all be so heavily wounded after this strike that they would have merely 40% of their strength remaining. There was no way they could duplicate this attack, and so it truly was their final, last-gasp attack.

“We have to win.”

“Kill!” Autarch Bolin’s entire body glowed with light as his severed flesh and blood transformed into raw power. He was able to maintain control over it, causing it to swirl around him instead of exploding.

“Prepare to die,” Autarch Ekong roared, his body surrounded by the awesome energies of the Destruction Daobirth Essence.

Skyfeeder, Mogg, Stonerule, Titanos, and the others all controlled their own energies as well. As for Ning, he drew upon the incredible power of his Sword Dao.

“All of you, DIE!” The Sword Titan’s aura suddenly skyrocketed in might, causing the entire Grassland World to quiver. The amount of energy generated by seven Autarchs sacrificing more than half of their bodies was simply too enormous. They only guided a tiny portion of it into the World of Liberation, but the domain’s power instantly skyrocketed! Boom! Boom! Boom! Countless rays of sword-light came pressing down, crushing the clouds below them into dust and even crushing the grasslands at the very bottom.

Boom! The Grassland World had been so completely suppressed by the sword-light, it was like a giant invisible hand had just caved it in by a layer.

This was nothing more than a tiny, tiny amount of the energy the seven had just unleashed. They were keeping control over the rest of the power and preparing to use it to unleash a truly terrifying blow. This was the absolute maximum amount of power their damaged truesouls could control perfectly.

Iyerre could feel that death was coming for him. When he saw how terrifying this explosive aura before him was, he didn’t even think about trying to defend against it head-on. “This is probably the final desperation strike these cultivators have up their sleeves. There’s no way they would be able to launch a second such attack. If I can avoid this one, I’ll have won.”

“Withdraw!” Iyerre commanded. Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Iyerre and the three warbeasts retreated simultaneously, vanishing within the void.

“Foolish cultivators, this is the Grassland World. This is our chosen battlefield!” Iyerre’s voice rang out within the world.

“You are the fools!”

“Imbeciles!” Ning and Ekong let out furious retorts in succession, their voices echoing within the heavens.

Boom! Boom! The Avatar Titan and the Sword Titan charged downwards simultaneously, smashing into the grasslands. As soon as they did, they instantly blinked deep within its depths.

## **The Desolate Era**

### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 10: Tit For Tat**

When they entered the depths of the Grassland World, they quickly saw a spiderweb of countless passageways.

BOOM! An awesome domain filled every single passageway with countless streams of sword-light. The World of Liberation’s power blew through every single formation like rotting wood, crushing all barriers in its path! It must be remembered that even before Ji Ning and the others had gone all-out, they had been able to reduce Iyerre and the others by 30% to 40% of their maximum power. Now that the Autarchs had gone all-out, the World of Liberation was so incredibly powerful that it was able to almost instantly crush ordinary Autarchs to death!

Even the nine layers of clouds were completely unable to block this intensity of energy, much less the barrier formations deep inside the grasslands.

“I’ve found it. The quintessence core for this world lies in that palace over there.” Thanks to the World of Liberation, Ning and the others were able to sense a completely sealed castle located at the very bottom of the Grassland World. The castle was roughly ten thousand kilometers in size, and all of the energy emanating from the Grassland World actually stemmed from this castle. They could clearly sense how the deep, dense azure aura covering the castle was constantly being dispersed in every direction.

“If we can destroy the quintessence core, Iyerre and the others will be dramatically weakened! Those three warbeasts won’t be able to escape us.” They immediately transformed into a streak of light, bursting through the chaotic passageways and moving closer-and-closer to the castle.

Iyerre was able to dodge with ease because of his high level of insight, but the three warbeasts were only able to dodge because of the power of the Grassland World. The Sithe in charge of the black warbeasts had insights which were merely on par with Ning’s. In Ning’s Chaosverse, their escape techniques were far inferior to Ning’s! So long as the Autarchs could destroy the Grassland World, they would then be able to defeat and capture the three warbeasts one by one.

Once Iyerre was the only one left, he’d be much easier to deal with! But of course... all this was only possible if they destroyed the Grassland World!

“Dammit!” When Iyerre sensed the Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan moving at high speed towards the quintessence, he immediately grew anxious. “How are they able to stay in control of all that power and prevent it from exploding?”

If someone was filled with too much power, there would be no way to maintain control of it. They would have to immediately release it in the form of an attack. However, Ning and the others had already thought of this problem. They only discarded 60% of their bodies, rather than 90% as they originally envisioned. The resulting levels of energy were just barely within the realms of what they could control; they could release it or retract it at will. Although it was much weaker than the pure destructive power which would be generated by sacrificing more in a one-shot attack, it allowed for an attack that they could aim and control. In the end, the latter was much more dangerous.

“Iyerre, what should we do? Are we going to just watch as they destroy the Grassland World’s quintessence? Once they do, we probably won’t be able to beat them,” the red-robed man sent mentally. They had a huge advantage right now, but this was in large part due to the strengthening effect of the ignited quintessence core. The formation they were using also required them to draw upon the energies of the ignited quintessence.

“Go go go go go! Go stop them!” Iyerre roared. “Stop them at any cost!” The core of the Annihilation Hive was the sphere of annihilation, which contained the mysteries of total destruction. It was extremely hard to destroy. The core of the Grassland World, however, was just a normal quintessence which would be much easier to annihilate.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Iyerre and the three warbeasts easily warped over to the outside of the core castle.

“They are about to arrive!” Iyerre and the others stared at the dark passageways before them. A terrifying aura was beginning to approach those dark passageways. The area had long ago been filled

with the power of countless streams of sword-light, but the sword-light wasn't strong enough to claim their lives.

"This is way too much power. Way too much!"

"Can we possibly stop them?" The silver-robed woman, her two colleagues, and the many Sithe Exalts all felt their hearts tremble.

"You can and you must. If we lose, the cultivators will not spare you. All of you will die!" Iyerre gritted his teeth, his eyes savage. The most critical moments had arrived. "And these three warbeasts were personally fashioned by my master. Not even I have the power to destroy them, much less these cultivators."

The others calmed down slightly upon hearing this. They were filled with absolute, blind faith in Iyerre's master.

"Here they are!" Iyerre and the others all felt their hearts clench as those two towering figures emerged from the dark passageways. The Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan flew out right next to each other.

"It's Iyerre and his lackeys. I knew they wouldn't just watch as we destroyed the quintessence." Ning and the others knew that the moment of truth had arrived.

"Charge!"

"Break into that castle at all costs!" Ning and the others didn't hesitate at all. The Avatar Titan took the lead while the Sword Titan brought up the rear as they charged towards the castle. As long as they were able to touch it, they would be able to blink inside it.

"Stop them!" Iyerre roared ferociously. One violet-gold chain after another began to dance defensively in front of the castle, while all three black warbeasts charged in unison to block the Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan.

"Fuck off!" The Avatar Titan's job was to clear the way, but the violet-gold chains were being controlled in an absolutely marvelous fashion by Iyerre. They all parted before the Avatar Titan, coiling behind it to strike at the Sword Titan! Iyerre and the others all knew that the Avatar Titan wasn't that great of a threat. The true threat remained the Sword Titan, which was in command of an enormous amount of power.

"Grow, grow, grow!" The three black warbeasts suddenly expanded dramatically in size. The tunnels weren't that large, and their sudden increase in size resulted in them filling up much of the tunnel with their bulk. If Ning and the others wanted to reach the castle, they would have to first defeat these clawed terrors.

"If we have to fight them, we'll go ahead and destroy all three of them!" The Sword Titan wielded a longsword in each hand, lifting them up while the seven inside of it began to unleash the prodigious power which they had been keeping in abeyance.

Whoosh! The right sword sliced out, chopping towards the three black warbeasts which sought to bar the titan's path. The power contained within this sword caused spacetime itself to disintegrate. There

was nothing which could impede this terrifying strike! All three warbeasts were utterly terrified by the might of this blow, while Iyerre gritted his teeth and prayed, "They have to block them!"

Whoosh! When the divine sword slammed against the body of the first warbeast, it suddenly transformed to become as soft as silk. It twisted, seeking to wrap itself over the black warbeast and bind it. The black warbeast, however, transformed to become a black liquid which the sword could not bind.

"You want to capture it? Do you think the most powerful machine warbeasts my master created would be so easily captured by the likes of you?" the distant Iyerre laughed coldly.

The Autarchs instantly understood that there was no way to capture them, and so they immediately changed strategies. "Destroy them!"

Whoosh! Whoosh! The two divine swords were filled with ineffable power as they came crashing down towards the three beasts. It must be remembered that even an 'invulnerable form' would be destroyed if the amount of power facing it surpassed the limits of its tolerance! These three black warbeasts were currently forced to face the full, absolute might of this twin-attack from the dominating Sword Titan! The black warbeasts were extremely tough. They weren't the slightest bit injured, and in fact they were able to deflect 99% of the concussive force... but that remaining 1% entered its body and reduced the Sithe Exalts it encountered to dust.

"No!"

"Ahhh!" Bowenya and the others only felt an overwhelming amount of power pass through them, followed by their bodies completely disintegrating.

Boom! Boom! Boom!!! The three black warbeasts were sent flying backwards and smashed into the walls of the passageway. They were physically unharmed but filled with dead Sithe.

Thanks to the local formations, Iyerre was able to clearly see what the situation was inside the three black warbeasts. The three powerful allies he had half-coaxed, half-forced to come had been able to withstand that terrifying blast. However, all of the Sithe Exalts in the first and second warbeasts, which had taken the brunt of the strikes, had been slain! Three Sithe Exalts had died in the third warbeast as well. Now, only his three allies and five Sithe Exalts were remaining.

Boom! Crunch! Crunch! Crunch! The nine violet-gold chains had worked together with the black warbeasts to defend against this attack. Two of the chains actually blew apart! The Sword Titan shrank in size, seeking to fly through the gap, but the remaining chains flew over to block it once more.

"Ahahaha!" Iyerre's loud laughter echoed throughout the passageway. Ning and the others were anxious, nervous, and resentful.

"You have lost! LOST!" Iyerre roared with laughter. "That last-gasp desperation attack was very powerful, but both the warbeasts and the chains are completely fearless. You weren't able to destroy them and blast open a route to the castle!"

It was true. That final, frenzied strike had not done what they needed it to do – clear a path to the castle! Ning and the others gritted their teeth. Those warbeasts were simply too difficult to deal with.

“Those three warbeasts are finished. You are the only one left. You are the one who has lost, Sithe.” The Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan charged straight towards Iyerre.

“Who said they are finished?” Iyerre let out a loud laugh.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! The three black warbeasts once more flew over to block in front of Iyerre.

The black warbeasts were under the control of Iyerre’s three powerful allies. The Sithe Exalts merely provided additional support.

Ning and the others stared at the untouched Iyerre as well as the three enormous black warbeasts. Their hearts grew cold. As soon as they had witnessed the black warbeasts rise up once more, they had already begun to feel a sense of despair. Those things were still battle-worthy? How was this even possible?

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 45: The Fragrance of the Plum Blossom Chapter 11: Truly Unbearable**

The seven dancing violet-gold chains and the three warbeasts were charging towards them once more. Ji Ning and the other Autarchs had already used up the massive energy they had gained from sacrificing parts of their bodies. Even the power of the World of Liberation had dropped back down to its normal level.

Boom! Bang! The Sword Titan used its sword-arts to defend against the three black warbeasts simultaneously.

“One of the warbeasts is just as strong as it was previously, while the other two still have 80% power.” Ning quickly came to this conclusion after clashing against them once more, and it turned their hearts cold.

Iyerre smiled coldly as he watched from behind, launching attacks towards the weaker Avatar Titan.

“Flee!” Ning and the others didn’t hesitate at all, quickly coming to this decision. Iyerre and the three warbeasts were as one thanks to the formation, and all four were incredibly strong. This was why Ning and the others had been forced to sacrifice parts of their bodies to launch a final desperation attack... but it had failed! If they were truly forced to fight the Avatar Titan would probably be defeated in short order, at which point the Sword Titan wouldn’t be far off from defeat either. As of right now, they had only one chance to survive – escape!

Escape the Grassland World, run far away, and recover! Once they did so, they could come back here to fight again.

Swoosh! Swoosh! The Sword Titan and the Avatar Titan both began to flee.

“Running? After all that’s happened, you still think you can escape?” Iyerre grinned coldly. He was effortlessly dominating the Avatar Titan with the help of the seven violet-gold chains, while the three black warbeasts continued to chase down the Sword Titan. “Stop struggling. Struggling won’t help you.”

Iyerre’s body began to emit tremendous amounts of dazzling light which filled every single passageway. He himself vanished without a trace, hiding within the light while he continued to furiously assault the Avatar Titan. The Avatar Titan was just barely able to hold on, thanks to his defensive sword-arts!



Alas, Iyerre outstripped the Avatar Titan in terms of power, and he had a higher level of insight as well! Given that he also had seven violet-gold chains helping him while he launched sneak attacks from hiding, it only took six seconds before Iyerre managed to land a knife-hand blow on the Avatar Titan, plunging it into the titan's body and causing the avatars inside to feel a sense of despair.

Riiiiip! The towering Iyerre used his two hands to physically rip the Avatar Titan in half. Ning and the other avatars shared a glance, then simultaneously made the same decision without any hesitation at all: self-detonation!

Boom! Boom! Boom! All seven avatars exploded simultaneously.

Their worry was that when Iyerre killed them, he would use karma to route the attacks against their true bodies as well! Autarch Bolin and Autarch Titanos were able to completely themselves off from all karmic ties, but what of the others? If Iyerre wasn't reinforced by this formation his karmic attacks probably wouldn't be a threat to them, but he was currently strengthened by both the ignited quintessence core and his link to the three warbeasts. Ning and the others didn't dare to take this risk.

"A clean end." Iyerre turned to glance upwards. "But it won't matter. Struggle all you want. You are doomed."

Whoosh. He took a step forwards, warping through space before appearing in front of the Sword Titan.

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The Sword Titan was frantically trying to flee, but the three black warbeasts continued to slow him down, preventing him from travelling at maximum speed.

"These warbeasts are indestructible and can warp through spacetime to block us." Ning and the others felt anxious.

"We're almost there." Whoosh. They finally reached the grassy surface once more, at which the Sword Titan blinked out to the clouds above.

"Hahaha!" Iyerre's loud laughter rang out. The Sword Titan raised his head, the seven all watching as Iyerre emerged out of nowhere and appeared in the skies. Iyerre said with a laugh, "There are nine layers of clouds here. It will take you so very, very long to fly through all these layers that I'm afraid you won't be able to escape."

"Damn." Ning and the others all knew that Iyerre was far more difficult to deal with than those three black warbeasts, because of how high his level of insight was.

"Escaping is our only chance."

"Let's give it our all."

"Do everything we can to escape." Titanos, Mogg, Ning, Bolin, Ekong, Stonerule, and Skyfeeder all knew that they had to get out of here.

Boom! Twin swords in hand, the Sword Titan began to soar toward the clouds.

“Do you really think you can escape?” Iyerre charged downwards, surrounded by seven violet-gold chains that stretched out a million kilometers. Space rippled behind him, followed by the three black warbeasts appearing.

Swoosh! The Sword Titan immediately arced sideways in a bid to avoid them, but the seemingly-omnipresent violet-gold chains still managed to appear in front of them, as did Iyerre and the three warbeasts.

Clang! Clang! Clang! Boom!

The Sword Titan used its sword-arts to battle against Iyerre and the three black warbeasts while continuing to soar towards the clouds in the skies. Although the three black warbeasts were extremely strong, they didn't pose too much of a threat because they were merely on par with Ning and the others in terms of insight. Ning was able to use his self-created fusion sword-arts to block all three of them... but Iyerre was much more dangerous! Iyerre's attacks caught Ning flat-footed time and time again. Blocking his attacks was a much more difficult proposition.

Iyerre didn't even need to fear the Sword Titan in solo combat, much less now when he had the three black warbeasts helping to slow the titan down.

“If we just keep defending, we're going to lose. We have to escape!” Ning and the Autarchs couldn't see any chance of winning this battle. Their only chance lay in escape. If they got out of here, they just might end up the victors after all!

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Boom! Boom! Boom! Spacetime was shattered throughout the Grassland World, with the Five Elements thrown into a state of chaos as the Sword Titan continued to charge upwards while being surrounded and bombarded with attacks by the Sithe.

Boom! The power of the World of Liberation, by itself, was enough to tear through the clouds. The Sword Titan charged upwards through the opening, but Iyerre and the black warbeasts continued to press the attack against him. Iyerre was like a patient hunter, continuing to harass his prey while searching for the perfect opportunity. Ning and the others felt as though they had daggers pressed against their backs. Every single attack Iyerre launched was incredibly dangerous.

“We have to hold until we get out! We have to.”

“Keep holding!”

Titanos and the rest quietly prayed. It was now up to Ning. Ning was in control of the entire Sword Titan, and he used it to execute his sword-arts. This was an extremely taxing fight! The three black warbeasts had insights on par with his, while Iyerre's insights were far more profound. It was already impressive for him to maintain an airtight defense, but they really couldn't afford to let themselves be beaten here. If they lost, it would all be over!

Boom! The Sword Titan charged past the second layer of clouds, continuing its upwards ascent.

“Not good.” Ning paled as Iyerre managed to snake a palm past the Sword Titan’s defensive sword-stances. Ning didn’t hesitate, immediately discarding the Northbow sword in his left hand and using his hand instead to launch a sword-art. Boom! He managed to block Iyerre’s palm.

“He actually blocked it?” Iyerre had thought he was about to win. He couldn’t help but feel slightly startled.

As the Sword Titan was knocked flying backwards, yet another Northbow sword appeared in his left hand. Ning had a total of six Northbow swords, after all! As for the one he had discarded, it had flown back to below the Golden Bridges of Freedom.

Boom! The Sword Titan burst through the third layer of clouds. However, as it did so a ghostly and gigantic palm once more burst past Ning’s defenses. This time, Ning was completely unable to react. The palm slammed into the left side of the Sword Titan’s waist, with the Sword Titan unable to block even with his hands.

“NO!!!!” Ning, Titanos, Bolin, and the others all watched in shock. Time itself seemed to have slowed down.

Bang! The alabaster fingers pierced deep into the Sword Titan’s flank, stabbing straight through it. Then, as though it could sense the Autarchs, it reached out towards the nearest person inside – Autarch Mogg.

Autarch Mogg wanted to block... but how could he?

“No. We can’t lose!” Tears appeared in Autarch Mogg’s face. Bang! The giant alabaster hand stabbed into him, filling every inch of his body with a burst of such overwhelming power that every last speck of mana within it began to crumble from the force of the strike.

BOOM! He was completely obliterated. Not even a scrap of his truesoul fragments was able to return to this Chaosverse. Everything had been devoured.

Riiiiip. With Mogg’s death, the entire Sword Titan began to destabilize. Iyerre tore at the insides of the Sword Titan with his alabaster hand, ripping a gaping wound through the Sword Titan’s chest and to its shoulders, nearly cleaving the titan in half.

“Kill them!” Iyerre’s voice was filled with intoxicated glee as well as a boundless desire for his foes to die.

“Kill!” The three black warbeasts grew excited as well. They were about to win! They all pounced down towards the already-crumbling Sword Titan, while Iyerre himself began to launch an attack as well.

“We can’t lose.” Ning desperately tried to make the Sword Titan wield the Northbow sword and block, but without Mogg the power of their sword-arts dropped dramatically. There was no way for him to stop Iyerre, whose attack once more dug deep into the Sword Titan’s body. This time, he managed to latch onto Autarch Skyfeeder. Light glowed around his palm, and Autarch Skyfeeder was similarly unable to defend against him. The end result was destruction.

“Damn it all!” Autarch Skyfeeder stared into the skies, filled with despair and resentment.

BOOM! Upon her death, the Sword Titan's body crumbled apart as well. Now that they had lost two Autarchs, the Sword Titan was no longer able to stay intact. Ning, Titanos, and the others began to instinctively flee despite their despair.

"Hahaha!" A black warbeast pounced forwards, clawing at Autarch Stonerule's back. Autarch Stonerule was absolutely agonized. "Why? Why? WHY!" BOOM! Autarch Stonerule was annihilated as well, his truesoul fragments completely devoured.

Ning continued to flee, his heart feeling as though it was being cut apart by countless knives. All he could do was watch as one of his friends after another was killed.

"I can't lose. We really can't lose!" Countless figures flashed through Ning's mind. This Chaosverse was filled with innumerable living beings. Ning's friends... his disciples... his family members... the hard-working cultivators he knew... there were countless people in this Chaosverse, part of whom he knew and part of whom he didn't.

They had lost. Their entire civilization was about to be overthrown.

"I'm sorry." Autarch Titanos didn't struggle. He simply shut his eyes, two streams of tears cascading down his face as he transformed himself into a plume of light. However, the black warbeast's sharp claws reached out, still managing to capture and devour all the truesoul fragments and prevent them from returning to the Quintessence.

"Wipe them all out!" Iyerre roared with laughter. "Kill them all! Drown their entire civilization with blood! This Chaosverse is MINE! IYERRE'S! AHAHAHA!"

But then... the entire Grassland World seemed to have fallen silent. All other auras were completely suppressed, while Iyerre's laughter became frozen as well. He suddenly turned to stare at the sword-bearing white-robed youth. Two streams of tears were cascading down the youth's face.

A ripple of pure 'blackness' swept out from Ning's body. That utterly black rippled contained an utterly terrifying will of destruction. This was true destruction, a will which would obliterate any and all things. Nothing and no one could withstand this type of oblivion.

The white-robed youth opened his eyes, and within those eyes they could see the annihilation of an entire Chaosverse.