

F.D Emperor 1401

Chapter 1401 Civilization War: True Battle

Du Cong returned home, feeling restless. He always knew this day would come, but he suddenly felt overwhelmed when it did. Air entered and exited his body as this kind of controlled breathing soothed his rampaging thought. "Summon the War Council," Du Cong ordered, and in less than ten minutes, all the best military minds of his base gathered in one room. Du Cong explained the situation to them, and everybody prepared for war. The council mobilized all their troops while waiting for Wang Wei's map.

A few days later, they saw an area of the map rapidly disappearing, and everyone's breathing rapidly increased.

"Report the threat level," Du Cong asked.

"Energy level indicates a cultivator between Tier 4 and 5."

Du Cong frowned, wondering whether it was a coincidence that their first opponent was so weak. However, he decided that it did not matter. This is the path their civilization must take.

"What do you think we should do?" He asked his generals.

"I suggest we deploy one 5B squad."

"A squad? Shouldn't one 5B armor be enough?"

"This is war, and we cannot take the risk."

"That makes sense."

Soon, everybody agreed on a safe approach, and Du Cong made the final decision. Under his order, one of the best 5B Squad — The White Wolf Squad — was deployed. This civilization has mastered space travel, and unlike the ones from the lower dimension, Wang Wei did not have to create a separate sub-space from them. Their space-traveling technology involved combining Light and Space Runes to navigate through the complex spatial structure of the upper dimension.

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"Captain, are you excited?" asked a young man wearing blue armor with the head of a white wolf drawn on his back. He looked excitedly at a middle-aged man with white hair, a scar over his right eye, and the eyes of a ferocious animal.

"Lu Zhen, this is war — take it seriously," said a woman with similar armor. She and Lu Zhen were both Tier 4 pilots of the White Wolf Squad, making them the four vice-captains of the squad.

"Blue Flower, you're too serious," Lu Zhen said. "How many times have we trained in the Void Illusion Realm? This battle will be swift, and once we're done, our squad can be raised to 6B and even the legendary 7A squad."

All three had a brief light of desire flashing in their eyes. No armor pilots did not desire to become a 7A squad. Sadly, there were few of these armors, and the requirements were more than stringent.

"Blue Flower is correct — this is war, so don't play around," White Wolf said seriously, albeit his tone did not hide his confidence.

"On your command, captain."

The other members soon arrived, which included two other 4B Vice Captains pilots and 103 3C pilots for a total of 108. All squads usually have between 72 to 360 members, and the composition could be real pilots with puppets. White Wolf was not fond of puppets, so he always used real pilots. Additionally, his reputation was enough to build a crew with only 3C pilots.

"Let's go," White Wolf ordered after everyone had suited up before leading them to a towering gate. Everyone gazed at this door with wonder and longing. Only hunting squads had the right to leave the base to capture cultivators for training or research purposes. However, most of the time, a guardian would do the job, so even the hunting squad did not have much opportunity to leave, let alone them.

White Wolf took a deep breath before walking through the gate. He felt he had turned into a white light and was traveling at an unreasonable speed. The squad felt an eternity had passed traveling in that void while simultaneously feeling it was an instant.

White Wolf opened his mouth to check on his team when a terrible smell assaulted his senses. This terrible smell — a mixture of blood, urine, fecal matter, vomit, and, more importantly, intense fear — sent a great shock to his system. One of the requirements for being a pilot was a great vision, but White Wolf regretted having such a good vision.

He saw limbs scattered everywhere, followed by bodies of men, women, and children, the despair before their death still on their faces. White Wolf's face paled as he saw a pregnant woman lying on the ground with a big hole in her head. His reaction was not for her death but because his armor detected the womb in her stomach still had signs of life.

Countless sounds of retching echoed behind White Wolf. Usually, he would reprimand his men, but he did not have the strength. A part of their training was called [The Cruelty of War], and they saw even worse sights like this in the Void Illusion Realm. However, everyone could compartmentalize these experiences as an illusion and not real. But the one before them was real. All these people are real people, and they have genuinely died horribly.

"Captain, what should we do?" Blue Flower asked, her face pale under her mask. "Should we start rescuing operations?"

"Our training said cultivators are destructive, so we must eliminate them before focusing on rescuing survivors. Otherwise, even more lives will be lost," said Vice Captain Li Shen.

"But..." Blue Flower said, looking at the child missing his right leg and struggling to survive.

"Lu Shen is right," White Wolf said, finally regaining his bearing. His wolf-shape mask looked in the distance while his body released a terrifying killing intent. "Deploy." The squad flew toward the high-energy response the armor detected.

"A child?" asked Lu Zhen. The enemy was a child with white long white hair, black clothes, and red eyes like an animal. A close look revealed purple pus sacks on its arms and neck.

"Not a child. It should be a cultivation technique that made him look like this," Vice Captain Grindax replied.

"I was hoping the enemy was from the demon race," Lu Zhen commented.

"Don't have any unnecessary dreams. Although we are both humans, cultivators do not see us as the same species," Grindax sneered, his words impacting the team more than he understood. They were all smart people and understood the truth. The Great Guardian Wang Wei and Guardian Jia Ping treated their kind respectfully, but any discerning person could tell how they did not want to associate too closely with them.

These pilots understood. Although now mortals can live up to 10,000 years, allowing them to have long friendships with cultivators. However, 10,000 years was not even a nap for these immortal powerhouses. And that's not to mention that if they did not control their emotions properly and accidentally released their aura, they could annihilate every life in their bases. With such a vast difference, it's understandable why they did not want to associate with regular humans.

Of course, understanding is just that—understanding. Just because these mortals understood the reason did not mean they could accept it emotionally. Ultimately, unless Heavenly Dao accepts mortal civilization as a viable cultivation path that can become immortal and higher, mortals will always feel inferior to cultivators.

"Enough talking," White Wolf ordered. "Get in formation."

All 3-C pilots surrounded this devil child, and their armor linked together. They raised their hands to fire projectiles and spells at their opponents. The four Vice-Captains teamed up, leaving White Wolf as the primary vanguard. The captain launched at this devil child, trying to claw him into two.

All 3-C pilots surrounded this devil child, and their armor linked together. They raised their hands to fire projectiles and spells at their opponents. The four Vice-Captains teamed up, leaving White Wolf as the primary vanguard. The captain launched at this devil child, trying to claw him into two.

The child, whose mind was lost due to the plague and acting out of instinct, finally noticed these people when his life was in danger. Small earth spears manifested behind before rushing toward White Wolf with extreme speed. The vice-captains suddenly appeared in front and worked together to block these spears,

White Wolf's momentum did not decrease due to his teammate's utility help, so he continued forward. The child was about to attack a second time, but the 3-C pilots started their barrages of energy attacks, forcing him to create energy shields to protect himself.

White Wolf finally arrived and released a barrage of attacks. His claws were made of the best materials capable of shredding most Divine Body Cultivator's shields. Additionally, he asked for his

claws to be boosted by [Metal Runes], so adding his White Wolf Martial Arts, the captain was confident in tearing that damn cultivator apart.

However, the shield calmly created earth shields around him, blocking all of White Wolf's attacks.

"The enemy is suspected of being an Earth Dao cultivator," Grindax said in their interlink communication system. "Firing Squad: change to Fire-based attacks."

More than 20 members of the 3-C squads had Fire Rune Base armor, and then they became the primary link of the formation. Using their runes as resonance, everyone else could now attack with fire spells. The squad opened their palms, preparing to release fireballs.

White Wolf cooperated with the team. He did not allow his anger to dictate his actions. He moved out of the way to make more space for the firing squad,

Chapter 1402 Civilization War: Cultivators' Horror

The Devi Child's shield blocked this barrage of attacks, but it still showed signs of melting. The vice-captains took this opportunity to rush in for an attack. Each had their specialty, but their attack now was to ensure maximum damage.

Boom!

The devil child's defense could not hold on and flew to the ground, but White Wolf was already waiting for him with his claw. The child's body instinctively moved, so White Wolf attack only scratched his back instead of cleaving him in two. White Wolf immediately disappeared from his spot, and the next thing that came was another barrage of fire attacks.

The devil child surrounded itself with a double-layer shield: one of pure energy on top, followed by a metal shield in the second layer. Such quick thinking displayed this cultivator's extreme battle experience even after losing his mind. However, the mortals were not bad too. The Void Illusion Realm allowed them to experience many kinds of opponents.

The bombardment destroyed the shield's layer, leaving the second layer with some melting spots. However, before the child could breathe, Vice-Captain Lu Zhen appeared before him with a flame shield and cut his defense like a knife passing through butter.

Blue Flower followed with a trident composed of lightning and thunder, and she threw it with enormous force. The devil child screamed in agony as the lightning ravaged his body, but this was far from enough. Vice-Captain Li Shen produced tree rots that directly embedded themselves into the devil child's arms and legs, not only injuring him but rendering him immobile.

"Now," Li Shen yelled, and Grindax was already prepared to use his specialty: soul attack. Grindax was one of the few enlightened humans who chose a military/martial path instead of research. As such, his armor was designed with spiritual runes, allowing him to use techniques like mind or soul attacks.

The devil child felt danger and immediately tried to teleport from his predicament. However, all squads knew that the minimum level for any cultivation system to access space technique was Tier 4, so they considered this. The 3C pilots' formation was not just to link their minds and energy reserves but also a space blockade in the area they had surrounded.

The devil child screamed in agony as the world spun around him. This attack looked devastating, but Vice-Captain Grindax was not also not feeling too well. Ultimate, a mortal's soul cannot compare to a Tier 5 cultivator. The armor boosted his spiritual power and protected him from the backlash, but its power was also limited.

The Devil child's aura drastically dropped, and White Wolf finally acted. He appeared before the culprit, piercing the latter's chest with his mighty claw. He destroyed all the devil's internal organs before ripping his heart out.

"Disgusting thing," White Wolf sneered. "Even your heart is black." He looked at the disgusting thing in his hand and threw it away. The team watched as the devil child slowly lost gravity and crashed into the ruin of this mortal dynasty.

"I told you this would be easy," Lu Zhen said as his mask automatically disappeared.

"We only won because of our teamwork," Blue Flower replied.

"But we still won."

"Now is not the time to celebrate," Grindax added. "This is just one cultivator among countless. Our work has just started."

"Grindax is right," White Wolf nodded. "Enough chit-chat and immediately start the rescue mission."

"Aye, captain," Lu Zhen smiled. Now, they can finally focus on rescuing as many people as possible. Although this battle was intense and showed the result of their years of training, what is truly important is to save their compatriot.

"I must thank you," suddenly said an eerie voice that sounded like the combination of three or more people. The pilots watched in horror as the devil child got up and looked at them calmly.

"If not for you almost killing me, I would have never awakened my consciousness," the devil child said, buying himself enough time to use his Metal Dao to build metal hearts and other organs.

The devil child slowly floated in the air, standing before the team. "A group of mortals? Is the source of your strength those armors? Interesting," he smirked before his expression suddenly changed to cruelty and horror. "However, you, ants, actually dare to steal the power of cultivator?"

"We did not steal anything. This is the power we build with our own two hands," Lu Zhen snapped back.

"Don't argue with him," White Wolf ordered. "Prepare for battle."

"So, you're their leader?" The devil child looked at him. "You don't look too impressive."

"Since we killed you once, we can do it again," White Wolf said calmly.

"The greatest sin ants can make is not realizing they are ants," the devil child said with a sneer. His injury had reached the point where he could fight at his peak again, meaning he had no more words for these ants.

[Supreme Sword Strike]

The devil child waved his hand to manifest an enormous black sword above the team's head that rang alarm bells in everyone's mind. "Use the Five-Point Array," White Wolf swiftly ordered. The team immediately got into position behind him to resonate all their energy, mind, soul, and runes. They generated a five-color shield above them, which appeared to have excellent defensive capabilities.

However, the devil child only sneered. His gaze shifted to the pilots surrounding him. A white light enveloped the sky in the shape of a perfect circle, followed by countless explosions; it was as if this was a festival, and these explosions were the fireworks. However, those were not fireworks. The devil child eliminated all these pilots with one sword attack, and after barely blocking that sword, the team realized what had happened.

"Now it's your turn, ants."

The devil child rushed toward the team. Vice-Captain Li Shen acted the fastest by using his Wood Rune; Numerousee roots tried to intercept the devil child.

'Wood Dao with the specialty of controlling the opponent? He may also be the team's healer,' the devil child analyzed as he cut down the roots. After this analysis, the devil child suddenly changed his target from the strongest — White Wolf — to Vice-Captain Blue Flower. The female pilot used the time Li Shen bought her to summon a potent lightning bolt and attack.

Unfortunately for her, the devil child had some understanding of the relationship between the elements. He calmly condensed a sword and used it to absorb her lightning bolt. Then, he reversed the lightning and boosted it before returning the attack to Blue Flower — he perfectly countered her attack.

The powerful electrical currents temporarily short-circuited Blue Flower's armor, rendering her helpless. The team's face became horrified as they realized she was wide open, and they immediately tried their best to support and protect her.

Swish!

The devil cultivator disappeared; he teleported directly behind Li Shen and cut off his head with one swift motion. Everyone was still focused on Blue Flower and did not react to what just happened. However, that would not stop the devil child.

His next target was Grindax. After the last spiritual attack, this person was moving sluggishly, and the devil child recognized such behavior as the backlash from spirit injuries. Grindax did his best by mobilizing all the energy in his suit for one desperate block. Sadly for him, the devil child's sword was not a physical attack. The sword directly invaded his Sea of Consciousness and obliterated his soul.

"Nooo!" Lu Zhen screamed. His armor combusted as he removed all the limits and burned all the energy and runes, turning him into a humanoid elemental flame spirit. He flew toward the devil child with one intention — kill him at all cost. However, the latter calmly responded to his action by encasing him into a metal ball and adding dozens of layers to ensure he could not burn through it.

"What an idiot," the devil child commented. The only fate left for Lu Zhen was to burn himself inside that ball.

"Run away."

"What?"

"Blue Flower, this is a direct order — live and run away," White Wolf said. "I'll buy you enough time, so run away." The base cannot use spatial technology to teleport them back until their tasks have been accomplished or they are in an isolated area without any enemies in sight. White Wolf knew that only by finding a safe space could Blue Flower have a chance at surviving.

'Want to run away?' the devil child sneered. He could not hear these two's link communication, but their aura revealed much of their intents even if they wore armor. He opened his mouth to spit a mouthful of blood that rapidly condensed into another devil child.

"He knows," White Wolf said with an ugly expression. He gritted his teeth before rushing to his opponent. He still wanted to fight both these creatures to buy his teammate a chance at surviving.

Chapter 1403 Civilization War: Cruel Truth

White Wolf rushed forward, trying to hold both devils for as long as possible. However, before reaching his destination, the clone disappeared. White Wolf wanted to turn around to protect Blue Flower, but it was too late. The devil appeared before him and stroked him repeatedly with potent sword attacks.

"Your claws are quite sharp — they should make for some decent material," the devil child uttered.

"I'll kill you, bastard," White Wolf scoffed as a sense of urgency drowned his senses. He increased his attack tempo, trying to eliminate this bastard as soon as possible to protect his ally.

"Your mind and will are weak," the devil child taunted. "And that's just the surface of all the flaws you have. The cultivation world has existed for longer than your tiny mind could fathom. Did you really think you could rival us after creating this little armor?"

"Shut up!"

Boom!

White Wolf's body paused as his armor's sensor detected that Blue Flower's life signs were completely gone. His mind reverted to their first meeting.

"Captain, what if they don't like me?"

"They don't need to like you."

"You know what I mean," Blue Flower added. "I've heard about many female pilots that are mistreated. That's why we formed the association to ensure we are on the same squad."

"Then you should trust the association."

"You recruited me through them?"

"That's right," White Wolf nodded. "They've inspected and investigated our team before accepting my application."

"I see, but captain, why did you want a woman in your squad?"

"I wanted a lightning user, but as you know, those are rare. So, I applied everywhere, hoping to get someone."

"I see."

"We're here. Believe me, you'll love this team," Wolf said, noting that she was not too confident. How about this? We'll have a mock battle as soon as we arrive. This way, we can better understand each other as a team, and the others can see how capable you are."

"But that's not a good approach for a first meeting."

"Maybe, but it's the most direct way."

"Alright."

"...Team, come meet our new number."

"...Captain, where did you find this terrifying pilot?" Lu Zhen asked. His armor was torn apart by lightning in the battle simulation.

"So, what do you guys think?" Wolf asked.

"She's awesome," Lu Zhen immediately said.

"She will be a great addition to the team," Li Shen nodded.

"Grindax?" White Wolf asked. "I know you're not one to mince your words, so tell me honestly what you think."

"Her control over her armor is superb, and the utilization of her Thunder Rune is one of the best I've seen," Grindax replied calmly.

"But?"

"She's too slow for a Thunder User," Grindax added.

White Wolf did not comment, "Blue Flower, what do you think of this comment?"

"The academy's instructor had the same evaluation," Blue Flower admitted. "She said I could become a 6B pilot if I fix this problem."

"Grindax here has a knack for training pilots. With him here, your chances at improving and becoming 6B will be much higher."

"I will be in your care," Blue Flower bowed.

"We are all teammates, so let's take care of each other," Grindax nodded.

"Good. Now that everything is resolved, let's celebrate the arrival of our new member."

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'Blue Flower had the most potential of our team,' White Flower thought. 'Maybe if we trained her harder, she could have become a 6B pilot without participating in this accursed mission.' This thought haunted the White Wolf. However, he extricated himself after realizing Blue Flower would eventually have to participate in the war.

'Ultimately, it is the fault of these cultivators for treating us as resources and materials,' White Wolf thought with gritted teeth. 'Calm down — this is not the time for this. I need to make this bastard pay, even if I must die in the process.'

Swish!

White Wolf saw two white lights flash on both sides of his body. He was puzzled by what was happening until his sensor reported the loss of his four limbs. White Wolf was still puzzled because he could not feel the pain since the armor immediately injected a medicinal solution into his body to remove all his pain.

"Like I said, your mind and will are weak," the devil child said. "Your body instinctively paused after a great shock to your psyche. Did you think I couldn't exploit such a major flaw?"

White Wolf looked at this man in his eyes, despairing and already overwhelming his mind. However, he did not let it consume him. Instead, he used his hatred to retain the last bit of his sanity and consciousness.

"Why didn't you kill me?"

"What can I say? I like to play with my food," the devil child smiled cruelly. White Wolf stared at him:

"You want to search my soul and get information about our origin? Sadly for you, this is a futile effort."

The devil child's face changed, and he immediately invaded this mortal's Sea of Consciousness to search for his soul. As expected, White Wolf's soul was already destroyed. The truth of the matter is this devil child was playing with fire, trying to get information from White Wolf's mind. The location and situation of these mortal bases were of the utmost priority, so the protection of their information was left to Wang Wei.

"What a waste," the devil child cursed before looking in the distance. He felt that someone had been watching him for a while and had been on guard. However, the sensation disappeared after this mortal's soul scattered.

"Whatever," he announced. His goal has been achieved since he confirmed that mortal blood could curb the spread of the curse. Additionally, he also got his hands on some decent material. So, the devil child collected the wreckage of all the pilots before killing the surviving mortals and taking their blood. Finally, he disappeared on the horizon.

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War Council:

Du Cong looked at the black screen, his eyes almost empty. The room was so quiet that even the sound of heavy breathing sounded like a shout. To say this battle was a wake-up call was an understatement.

"An ordinary cultivator." Everyone looked at the strategist who spoke.

"That devil child was an ordinary cultivator — not a genius, a Heaven Chosen, or these monsters with Immortal Foundation: he was just an ordinary cultivator with good battle experience."

His words strengthened the somber atmosphere in the room. A few people wanted to rebut, but the truth had just slapped them in the face. "What should we do?" someone else asked, but no one had an answer.

"Can we still track that bastard's location?" Du Cong suddenly asked.

"Oh, yes," someone replied. "He just killed our people; we can track the spiritual residual from his body."

"Good. Send five 5-B squads to eliminate him."

"Leader, is this wise?"

"Just do it," Du Cong ordered.

"If you want to kill him, at least send a 6-B squad."

"No, we need to know how our troops fared against ordinary cultivators on the same level," Du Cong replied, his expression and demeanor extremely calm but also cold. Everyone looked at each other before sending the order. The war room then watched as the devil child decimated all five squads with a slight struggle.

"Send 20 squads," Du Cong cruelly ordered. The war room finally witnessed the death of the devil child. However, at what cost? Only three pilots survived this encounter. On the verge of death, the devil child used a secret technique that reverted his body to look normal; it also pushed his strength very close to the Primordial Spirit Realm.

Luckily, one of the captains in this 20 squads small legion was a brilliant strategic mind. He forced the 3-C pilots to use suicide attacks to injure and weaken the devil before everyone had a chance to kill him.

"About 25 squads," Du Cong said, his eyes more focused than ever. "That's about the number of people we need to sacrifice to kill one ordinary cultivator." He allowed his words to marinate.

"From the beginning, we never had a choice," Du Cong continued. "We must save our compatriots on the outside. Our only advantage over cultivators is that we outnumber them by 1 to a trillion. We must use this advantage and throw lives at them to kill as many as possible."

The people's faces contorted after hearing these words. If that is true, the upcoming war will be a tragedy for them. How many of their kind will they sacrifice to win this war? Can they even win? How long will this war even last?

Cultivators live a long life, and although that is true for mortals now as well, 10,000 years is nothing to the enemy. It's entirely possible for this war to go for a hundred thousand years, maybe millions. If this war ever ends, how many lives will they sacrifice?

"You better accept this reality as soon as possible," Du Cong said before dismissing everyone. He needed to meet with the other leaders to discuss this cruel truth.

Chapter 1404 Civilization War: Modern Warfare

All the leaders appeared, but everyone had a somber look on their faces. With one look, everyone could guess what the others had experienced and gave a sympathizing look.

"Let's start by sharing data," one of the leaders said, and everyone agreed. The meeting immediately started with these leaders reviewing the battle experience of all the bases. Although there were a few outliers where one squad was enough for one cultivator (one pilot single-handle killed a cultivator), the overall result was the same for more than two million bases.

Du Cong was not the only one who decided to use numbers to eliminate the enemy, so all these leaders realized the bleak future awaiting them. Wang Wei trained them to be compassionate and look out for their fellow compatriots, but now, they had the burden of sending these young people to their death.

"There is some good news," said Leader Lang Xi from Base #23456.

"What did you find?" The others knew Lang Xi was excellent at data analysis.

"Have you noticed that the bases with primary research on puppetry suffered fewer casualties? Lang Xi pointed out. "Of course, since they did not have to send their pilots," someone sneered.

"And what does that tell you?" Lang Xi said, rolling his eyes at this man's jealousy. Doesn't he know we are all in this together?

"Our focus should be building puppets," Du Cong said. "With more puppets, we can reduce the amount of pilots that die."

"We can probably replace all 3-C pilots with puppets," commented another user. 3-C pilots are the group that suffered the most significant casualties.

"That sounds like a good approach."

"Don't forget that the price of building one puppet is more expensive than building a 3-C armor and training a 3-C pilot."

"We can always research ways to reduce the price. Our people's lives are more important."

"Fair, but what do we do with the 3-C pilots and lower?"

"We increase their resources to ensure they become 4-B and higher pilots," someone suggested. "Those who cannot be promoted can be turned into teachers if they have the talent." As of now, puppets cannot completely replace pilots for many reasons, including costs, cultural acceptance, and, more importantly, higher-level puppets require souls and cannot be easily manufactured.

"Do we need to vote?" someone asked.

"No need since we all agreed."

"Let's do it to make it more formal."

"But who will supervise this election? The Great Guardian is not here."

"We should probably elect a representative to lead these meetings."

"Do we do it now?"

"If so, I want to be the leader."

"Me too."

"I don't trust your judgment, so I want to be the leader."

"What did you say?"

"Don't think I don't remember how bad your grades were when we trained under the Great Guardian."

"You! That was the past."

"Enough," someone yelled. "We can ask the guardian to hold elections, but for now, we still are discussing important matters."

"Yes, let's get back to the main topic. Lang Xi, did you discover anything else from the data?"

"There are a few more things," Lang Xi nodded. "The bases with the highest efficiency in hunting their cultivators are the ones that used poison-based armors and assassin-type armors?"

"Those guys that play dirty?"

"What do you mean by this?"

"I didn't mean —"

"That is the point I'm making," Lang Xi cut this argument. "We must use all means available to use to kill our enemy. That's how cultivators fight, and that's how we need to learn how to fight."

"I guess that makes sense."

"Pilots that include body refining into their training regimen are much higher caliber," Lang Xi continued. "Lastly, the best performance armors are the Flesh Armors created from the cultivators' bodies." Everyone was quiet.

"What? Scared?" Du Cong sneered. "Since they see us as commodities, we can do the same to them."

"He has a point."

"I know, but it's not easy to adapt to the cruel nature of this world."

"The Great Guardian's training warned us of this — you guys just didn't pay attention."

This conversation was about to turn into another argument when everyone suddenly received an email — to be exact, it was two, all from Wang Wei. The first had this subject title: How To Incorporate Pilot and Puppet. Low-level puppets have a core that needs to be controlled by a puppeteer near it. If they need to be automatic, the puppeteers can program directions into the puppet, but its actions are still limited.

Higher-level puppets need to have consciousness, meaning they must have a soul or some level of spiritual power — that's why they are so challenging to make or why they are so expensive. Wang Wei's suggestion was to use Earth's Neural Link Technology; he suggested these mortals found a way to link a pilot's mind/soul to a puppet to replace their individual soul. With this technology, pilots can control the puppets from afar, thus reducing their casualty. Of course, this approach does not mean there will be no casualty. The soul backlash is enough to kill many pilots, and this is a world where curses and karma techniques exist.

"I'm always in awe of the Great Guardian's wisdom," one leader praised before checking the second email. Everyone's eyes shrunk as this one is about the new position of [High Chancellor] to lead this council. Wang Wei laid out rules for the election. However, the election won't happen for a while now. How these 3 million leaders respond to the upcoming catastrophe will help them in their election.

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Wang Wei calmly observed these leaders. Their failure was expected and could have been even more severe. The rumor about the effects of mortal blood on the plague has spread, but Wang Wei and the other lineages have reacted swiftly, killing anyone who tried. Previously, they would only capture and seal anyone with the plague, hoping to wait until they had a cure to heal these people. However, as soon as the news spread, they changed their tactics.

Wang Wei allowed some small fries to bypass their defensive lines as a test for these mortals.

'I just need to slowly increase the strength of these cultivators,' Wang Wei analyzed. 'That also means it won't be long before the first confrontation between 7-A pilots and Law cultivators.'

Wang Wei waited three months until he allowed the first Law Cultivator to bypass their blockade. During this time, these mortals have fought countless cultivators and created many new tactics. Although more than 50 billion people died in just three months, they killed hundreds of cultivators, including many in the Primordial Spirit Realm.

Wang Wei calmly watched the battle. The mortals were suffering a devastating loss.

"The pilot can no longer bear it," Wang Wei commented. The Law Soul was responsible for building the 7-A armor, but a pilot was still required. However, even if the armor was designed for mortals to use, not just anyone could control an armor with the power of law embedded in it.

7-A Pilots are the elite among elites — their minds have been trained to bear the burden of the law. Unfortunately, their control over the law is subpar compared to a cultivator whose soul is countless times more powerful than theirs.

Additionally, the armor designs were flawed as they failed to consider the environment. In the current battle, the repeated use of the law has created an area infested by, well, the power of law. It makes sense since the power of law could be considered the highest form of energy or power, so when one or more people use it in an area, its power will become concentrated.

Such a change is nothing to a cultivator with a powerful soul, but the same cannot be said for those 7-A pilots. Their frail mind and soul already had to bear such a burden with their armor's law, so this law zone became a nightmare for them. The result was that the squad composed of 20 of the best 7-A pilots from all bases were massacred by this one cultivator.

The leaders quickly gathered to find the source of the problem before coming up with solutions. They summoned their best rune engravers and armor makers to attend the meeting. Soon, many solutions were discussed, including better training for 7-A pilots, linking their souls to bear the brunt of the power of law, and adding more souls into the armor to relieve the burden.

"These guys are thinking like cultivators when they should be thinking like scientists and engineers," Wang Wei muttered before sending them another message. He suggested these people stopped focusing too much on armor after the law level. Instead, they should build 7-A battleships that ordinary, enlightened humans can operate.

Their tactics should change to a few 7-A Pilots holding the cultivator long enough for their fleets — which should be composed of countless 7-A battleships — bombard the cultivators into oblivion with their cannon that contained the power of law.

"Cultivation Civilization prioritized individual power, but the strength of your mortal civilization is community," Wang Wei uttered. "Heavenly Dao has broken the rules and allows you to mass-produce weak artifacts, so use it wisely."

Whether it's armor or battleships, they are at the bottom of the barrel compared to the things Artifact Refiners make. However, their advantage is that they are cheap and can be mass-produced. That's why Wang Wei suggested they change their ways of fighting to resemble modern warfare from Earth.

Chapter 1405 Civilization War: Rapid Escalation & Development (I)

A monk dressed in a black robe with the character [pain] engraved on his bald head. The monk held prayer beads on his hand and he recited sutra, but anyone who saw him would not think he was some divine or enlightened monk.

On the contrary, his body's aura was cold, indifferent, and full of resentful souls—this man was an evil monk. People who claimed to be evil monks, meat-eating monks, flower-stealing monks, and others have always existed in the upper dimension.

During Maitreya's reign, Buddhism prospered, and these people were labeled heretics, but it was hard to eliminate them — until she became one of the suns. With her immense power, these blasphemous monks were hunted down like mad dogs. In fact, she did not even have to spend too much time on them; with one thought, she could take control of the word [monk] and eliminate anyone who dared sully it.

This evil monk should have been long eradicated from this world, so why was he still alive? If there is one thing cultivators are great at, it's finding a way to survive. After Maitreya's sublimation as a sun and once she started eliminating these people, these evil monks ran to Taoism to find refuge.

Supreme Unity knew these people could have some effect on Buddhism by ruining their reputation, so he provided them with asylum. Maitreya was not happy and wanted to retaliate. Sadly, Supreme Unity did not care as much as she did about Taoism's reputation. This decision was among the first signs of cracks between the two suns.

The Suffering Monk waited in a dilapidated temple until two people appeared: a woman and a man. Their slightly red eyes and the fact they covered every part of their body were indications that they had the plague.

"Donors, you're finally here."

"Suffering Monk, are you sure your news is true?" the woman asked with a grating voice. The man did not speak but intensely stared at the monk.

"Donor, I'm sure you've heard of the rumors."

"These rumors also said nonsense like mortals now have the power to kill cultivators," the woman sneered.

"That is also true," the Suffering Monk responded.

"Let's go," the woman said to her partner. "I told you this was nonsense."

"Donor, death is looming over you, but you don't seem to be in a hurry," the Suffering Monk said with a smile, showing his black teeth. "However, that's fine too. You can slowly wait for your demise as pain and suffering slowly take your mind and spirit. When the suffering is too much, maybe you will have a chance to break the shackles of your soul and achieve nirvana." The mad monk laughed out loud with a creepy and haunting voice.

"Honey, we don't have anything to lose," the man finally said. "Why don't we try it?" He did not want to die, so even if he felt he was making a deal with the devil for his soul, he still wanted to try.

"This monk doesn't look trustworthy," his wife said through divine sense.

"I know this, but I'm confident we can kill him as long as we work together."

"...Alright." The plague was rapidly spreading through their bodies and souls, meaning they did not have long before they lost their minds or consciousness and died.

"Lead the way," the man said.

"Donor, you've made the right choice," the Suffering Monk said with a wide grin. "Now, follow me, and don't stray too far." The monk mobilized his law to tear open the void, and the couple followed. The three spent two weeks traveling before reaching their destination: a large area where more than 30 mortal dynasties lived, prospered, and competed against one another.

Wang Wei had more than a thousand screens before him, observing and analyzing. As soon as these three reached their destination, he was alerted and briefly glanced over them. He was about to ignore this group before he suddenly paused, looking at the monk.

'Is this how they bypassed our blockade?'

All the factions involved were serious about this blockage, and without Supreme Unity's direct interference, he could not understand how it happened. However, Wang Wei now had a theory. Some of these evil monks, with the proper technique, disguised themselves as true monks to bypass their blockade.

'This bastard truly knows how to best utilize all his pawns,' Wang Wei complained and praised. Supreme Unity had many pawns, many of whom he knew, but he also labeled some useless. However, no pawn is useless if the chess player knows how to use them.

'Lesson learned,' Wang Wei thought before focusing on the task at hand. 'It's been 5 years of constant training, so let's see how you guys do with this group.' It's been 5 years since the bases' first battle with cultivators, but a hundred years have passed for them due to the Time Array. Wang Wei felt it was time for a new challenge.

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"We're here," said the Suffering Monk.

"And you're sure their blood is enough to cure the plague?" the woman asked.

"Not cure, but slow down its spread," the monk corrected.

"That's enough for us," the man nodded.

"They are also here," the monk suddenly said.

"Who?"

"The mortals."

More than a thousand lights descended from the sky, revealing this enormous ship surrounded by more than 20,000 smaller ships.

"What are those?" the woman asked, looking at these strange-looking black ships. She did not have the words to describe them, but if she had, she would say they were sci-fi-like.

"Haven't I told you? The mortals' defense force."

"You're telling me they've built such artificer wonders?"

"It probably wasn't them," the man said. "These top lineages probably gave it to them as protection."

"That makes sense, but how did they control them?" The man shrugged, not knowing the answer.

"Let's prepare for battle," the Suffering Monk said excitedly. Battles and wars are one of this world's primary sources of pain and suffering, so he enjoys them thoroughly.

Inside the largest battleship:

"Commander, what should we do?"

Commander Shi Ping did not immediately answer. Instead, he glanced at the monk. His intuition was telling him something was off with that monk.

"What is the level reading of these three?" Shi Ping asked.

"Level 7."

He frowned, and after a brief analysis, he relayed his orders: "First, charge the [Annihilation Cannon] and activate the Guardian Shield." Everyone looked at him, not hiding their surprise. None of these orders were standard and seemed extreme for the situation. However, he was the commander, so they had to listen to him.

"Start the initial bombardment," Shi Ping nodded. "But don't forget we are facing a monk, so activate the highest spiritual mind protection." Everyone in the command room or other battleships heard and executed his orders. These ships immediately started bombarding these three cultivators.

At first, the couple did not take it seriously until they felt the slight power of law from these cannons. Their expressions twisted, and they hurriedly used their own laws. The woman released a tempest of flames while the man played with black winds. Only the monk remained calm as his body released a black aura that easily blocked these attacks.

"Target these ships," the woman said, and everyone rushed forward.

"Wind and Flame Dao and a possible body refiner monk," Commander Shi Ping commented. The monk's situation was still iffy, but he remained Shi Ping's primary concern.

"Target the woman with our Water Cannons and the other two with Lightning." The battleships immediately changed tactics, using their element counter for these two. Such a quick decision made reaching the ships more challenging for these three. However, they still made slow progress until they arrived less than 3 kilometers.

The Suffering Monk punched forward to manifest a towering black fist. The ships reacted swiftly by activating their shields, but this attack destroyed more than 20 ships, killing countless people. The mortal's rune technology had significantly advanced, but the Soul Link technology Wang Wei proposed hadn't been developed to be used in all their ships, meaning these ships contained many humans helping control them.

Commander Shi Ping remained calm. He had experienced countless expeditions in the past 5 years, and death has become one of his eternal companions.

"First, release the mist, followed by Puppet Legions," Shi Ping ordered. "Command them to use Tactic 6Y4 for the woman, 9J8 for the man, and 13K9 for the monk."

The battleships opened a few latches, releasing more than millions of puppets. Although most of them were 6B puppets, there were a few 7 A as well. Without hesitation, these puppets rushed to their target.

The couple glanced at each other before nodding simultaneously. They immediately used their "famous" combination attack: Wind Flame Tornado. An enormous spiral flame engulfed these enthusiastic puppets, eradicating hundreds of thousands of them. However, such an enormous casualty could not deter these mindless creatures. They had one objective and would not stop until they had accomplished their task.

Chapter 1406 Civilization War: Rapid Escalation & Development (II)

These puppets seemed endless as no matter how many these three killed, more and more kept coming. "Something is wrong," the woman said. They've killed so many puppets, but the number never disappears.

"You're right," her husband agreed. "Monk?"

"We are in an illusion."

"What?"

"The first wave of the enemy were actual puppets, but afterward, most of them were illusions.

"Damn it, why didn't you say anything?"

"And rob you of an opportunity of enlightenment through pain? Donor, why would I do such a thing?" The Suffering Monk looked at him, genuinely puzzled why he asked such a stupid question.

"Damn it, I forgot these evil monks are all psychopaths," the man said to his wife through divine sense.

"Now is not the time to argue with him," his wife placated him. "Let's deal with the illusion first," They each took out an artifact, a cauldron with sand, and an incense burner. The man put the incense burner into the sand, immediately releasing a strange aroma that filled the surroundings. Sunlight descended from the clouds as most of the puppets disappeared.

Boom!

"Watch out," the man yelled as he condensed his black wind into the densest shield he could manifest. While the puppets distracted these people, the ships had enough time to power up their cannons for one massive and mighty attack. What's more, Commander Shi Ping used one of the most destructive elements: lightning.

The result of this attack was a hole in the man's chest, and the woman was missing her left arm.

"Confirm injuries in two of the targets."

"What about the monk?" Shi Ping asked.

"He appeared intact."

The commander squinted. Despite the man's heart being obliterated, the commander knew this was not a severe injury. As law beings, Tier 7 cultivators do not have major weaknesses in their hearts and brains. Their souls are the crux of their survival. Of course, these cannons used the power of law, meaning they would still be injured and weakened.

"Prepare to deploy the Law Domain at a moment's notice," Shi Ping commanded.

"Sir, we are using a tremendous amount of power and energy," someone warned. Ultimately, their creations were not as perfect as artifacts, meaning they had limitations. The commander had already ordered the activation of the Annihilation Cannon and the Great Guardian Shield, which were the two other things that required the most energy. Now, he activated the third most consuming thing. At this rate, this ship won't last long.

"Just do it," Shi Ping said. He was one of the best commanders in all the bases, and the reason was due to his observation skills and intuition. He knew something was wrong with the monk, so he prepared early.

"As you wish."

...

The woman regrew her arm, and the hole in the man's chest closed, but their expression was pale. However, the battle had just started. Fifteen 7-A puppets surrounded the team, with each allocated five puppets, and that's not mentioning the other pilots and puppets working with these 7-A elites.

The 6-B and lower squads immediately suffered tremendous casualties at the hands of these three, but with their sacrifices, the 7-A puppets barely managed to hold against these people.

"I've had enough of these things," the woman suddenly yelled as she activated her Proving Dao Artifact — a red necklace. The ability was ordinary as it simply boosted her Flame Spells and Techniques, but that was enough for her.

[Heavenly Flame Spear Rain]

The woman conjured millions of flame spears and dropped them on the legion. She wiped out countless puppets and even a few hundred ships with one attack. However, her action was her undoing. The 7-A puppets resisted, but as soon as they died, the five of them exploded into a Water Barrier Seal.

The woman was caught off guard, and the barrier surrounded her, sealing her into a vast ocean of water, a counter to her Flame Dao.

"No," her husband yelled as he rushed toward the seal. However, before he could touch it, an invisible puppet appeared behind him and plunged a dagger into his brain, directly killing him. All the puppets then focused on the calm monk while the surviving ships annihilated the Water Barrier Seal alone with the woman.

'So, the mortals have developed to this level,' the monk thought calmly. It was now evident that he was not taking his fight seriously.

"Don't you care about your comrade's death?" said one of the puppets.

"It's not this poor monk's fault they could not find enlightenment amidst their suffering," the monk replied while calmly looking at this puppet. "You must be the commander of that giant ship."

"Monk, leave this place, and we will pretend nothing happened," Commander Shi Ping uttered.

"Unfortunately, this poor monk hasn't seen your true limit yet."

Commander Shi Ping immediately stopped communicating and ordered: "Launch the domain. Tell all other ships to activate the Light Rainbow Maneuver, and everyone will have 30 seconds to evacuate."

People were shocked, but considering the worry in the commander's voice, no one objected. The other ships were also surprised, but they followed orders. They activated the domain and the protocol for the maneuver before proceeding to an evacuation area that teleported them to Shi Ping's ships.

Meanwhile, the Suffering Monk suddenly felt his surroundings becoming murky, making it hard to move and breathe. The law of Pain embedded in his flesh had considerably weakened. 'A domain? They've come so far?' He could see these ships were resonating their laws to change the environment into a domain that boosted their attacks.

'I guess that's good enough.' The monk's aura suddenly increased.

"Commander, the target's energy level is now 8." Everyone looked at him in shock. They did not expect the commander to predict the enemy was Tier 8 instead of 7.

"Fire," Shi Ping ordered, and the sky turned bright with all these cannons firing simultaneously. Such a devastating attack could annihilate any Tier 7 cultivators except for these geniuses or people with higher artifacts. However, it was useless to the monk.

He first rushed to the main ships where Commander Shi Ping resided, but the monk targeted the remaining vessels after realizing it would take some time to destroy the Great Guardian Shield. He turned into this black light, destroying one battleship after another. These rune ships' protective shield was a joke to the monk.

"How long has passed since my order?" Shi Ping asked.

"5 seconds."

Shi Ping clenched his hands before ordering: "Activate the Light Rainbow Maneuver."

"But sir, we still have 24 seconds of evacuation."

"We will all be dead in 24 seconds," replied with gritted teeth. The technicians were quiet before executing his orders. The surviving ships suddenly accelerate faster than the speed of light, heading directly to the monk. They crashed at unimaginable speed, and they exploded upon contact. The sight of so many speeds turning into golden lights and forming a rainbow was indeed beautiful, but none of the survivors would appreciate such a sight.

Shi Ping calmly watched this unfold. He knew the weight of his decision, but he had to do it. He observed for the right moment and used his authority to fire the [Annihilation Cannon].

The monk was occupied by these suicide ships. Their destructive power was nothing for a body refiner like himself, but their speed was beyond his reaction time. Then, his danger sense suddenly activated, and he wanted to move out of the way. Sadly, this attack was space-based and locked him.

Boom!

The Annihilation Cannon was the greatest accomplishment of mortal civilization in spatial technology. Wang Wei and many other guardians had to preach to them before they could develop it as a trump card. With one attack, the surrounding space will collapse, releasing terrifying, chaotic spatial energy that can slice through laws and domains.

Shi Ping calmly watched as the monk's ruined body floated in the void, still showing signs of life. He was not surprised since the latter was a body refiner. He ordered the surviving ships to surround him and seal his body and soul.

'His capture should make up for some of our losses,' Shi Ping thought. However, although this was logically true, he did not think so emotionally. They lost too many lives to kill this one man.

"Report our losses."

"We came with 12,600 ships; now, only 123 remain operational."

"What about our loss of life? You know what, don't tell me," Shi Ping said. "Deploy the Salvage Team to recuperate as many resources as possible, followed by the Transportation Crew. They need to control these dynasties and evacuate our compatriots."

Many lives were lost in this fight, but once they evacuated everyone from this area, their base would have new blood to train and develop. Shi Ping left for his quarters and immediately took a gourd of wine to drink.

Was it a good thing they saved these people? It appeared so, but once they returned to the base, these mortals would be trained as soldiers before being sent to their deaths. Ultimately, the same fate awaited most of them.

"Let's not think about this," Shi Ping uttered before gulping his wine.

Chapter 1407 North and South

Wang Wei nodded in satisfaction after seeing Commander Shi Ping's battle. The man made all the correct choices, so although this battle was tragic, he still won beautifully. 'Their civilization is already Tier 8, and they have almost cracked Tier 9 rune technology.'

The mortal civilization would not accept staying at Tier 8 and has been studying how to create puppets, armor, and even Tier 9 battleships. They couldn't recreate the Origin System's Dharma Body — at least not yet — so Wang Wei suggested they go the path of domain evolution. In many cultivation systems, domains are the foundation for a [World of Law], and that's the path these mortals chose.

Their idea is to follow the same method of Law Resonance between ships or puppets to create a domain. However, they will instead increase the number of ships, and if they arrange them using knowledge about arrays, they could build a world of law, allowing them to confront Tier 9 cultivators.

They have made great strides in this technology, but Wang Wei also encouraged them to try alternate methods, for example, the path of pure energy. If these mortals can condense and control enough energy, they can injure Tier 9 cultivators; in other words, he encouraged them to learn from the Pure Qi cultivation system.

They were very receptive to this idea. The Eternal Ascension World is full of the incredible energy called [Dao Qi]. It's everywhere in the environment, and it is more versatile than Spirit Qi. With access to such a great energy source, why not use it? So, after the suggestion, these rune engravers immediately started.

Unfortunately, they soon realized that controlling such vast energy was quite challenging once the level was high enough to hurt Tier 7. So, someone suggested turning all the Qi into pure physical matter for better control. This suggestion resulted in the design of a puppet bigger than the observable universe. Wang Wei was shocked once he saw the design; these mortals went and invented Gundams. Fate was an interesting thing.

Wang Wei looked at the meeting of all the lords. Over 4 years ago, Du Cong won the election and became the High Chancellor. Since then, he has reduced his presence before these mortals.

'Soon, I won't have to worry too much about you,' Wang Wei thought, nodding in satisfaction. Did he understand that Grand Dao was playing him so he could use more ideas from Earth to develop these mortals? He knew, but that would not stop him from doing it. Grand Dao's move is a double-edged sword. These mortals can be of great help to Wang Wei in the future, especially since he knew he might be responsible for the All-Haven Fate Calamity.

Grand Dao might use his ideas in other Chaos Worlds, but the mortal civilization in the Eternal Ascension World is the original version, and they will be one of Wang Wei's greatest aid/weapons.

Wang Wei waved his hand to dismiss most of the screens before him, leaving one map that showed how far this plague had spread. He sent the information about evil monks to Buddhism, hoping that would help.

"Sage Pure Flame, where are you?" Wang Wei uttered. The crux of solving this matter is this bastard, but he is so slippery. He has shown up a few times in the past years, but no one has been able to catch him. Wang Wei raised his palm, summoning the Heaven Secret Crystal. If everything fails, he'll have to use this crystal to find Pure Flame, but he felt it was a waste to use something so valuable on that bastard.

Wang Wei closed his eyes to access his Soul Network and communicate with others while also monitoring the situation. The world continued to evolve, and 20 years passed. The mortals finally developed their 9-A humongous puppet and made great strides in their World Law. Their war of civilization with the cultivators continued and was reaching the point where Wang Wei and the others would only protect them from Tier 10 and above cultivators. Meanwhile, this plague curse continued to spread, sending the entire world into a panic state.

"There is no need to hesitate," Wang Wei said as he held the crystal. If there is any more hesitation, the situation will reach an irreversible state. However, just as he was about to activate it, he felt a slight change between Heaven and Earth. Wang Wei immediately observed but found nothing. He tried a few calculations with the same result.

"What just happened?" Whatever event has occurred or is occurring is enough to affect Heaven and Earth, meaning it's of great significance. However, it also seems the people involved have blocked the world's secrets to prevent others from spying.

Wang Wei's communication talisman vibrated, and he activated it, showing an image of Red Mask. "Did you get any news?"

"A coup is happening in the Great Chu Divine Court."

"Oh? Who is so brave? Is it the Third Prince?"

"That's right."

"Interesting. I wonder where he got the confidence to fight against Shu Ren from. Did he know he was currently in a weakened state? Did you reveal the news?"

"Yes."

"But you didn't tell me?"

"Apologies, my lord. My original intention was to work with the Third Prince, and once everything was set up, I would bring it up. However, it seems he cut me off and found another partner."

Wang Wei groaned. Red Mask has developed this bad habit of doing things before reporting. She probably thought she was taking loads from Wang Wei's shoulder and reducing his stress, but all he sees when she does this is that she's creating unknown variables that he may not be aware of.

"This is the last time I will say this — don't act on your own again," Wang Wei warned. "Any other time, I would appreciate your initiative, but not now — understand?"

"Yes, lord," Red Mask replied as she knelt on one knee.

"Anything else you did you didn't report?"

"I've made contact with Shi Ruolan — she is our inside contact in Great Chu."

"Her? Such a name brings back memories," Wang Wei commented. "I thought she was a secret child."

"After she proved the Dao, the Earth Emperor brought her back to the palace," Red Mask explained.

"He probably wanted to monitor her better," Wang Wei sneered. "What's her current strength?"

"She's still a Great Emperor."

"As expected," he nodded. "Can you get a visual on what is happening?"

"I'll try my best."

Wang Wei had to wait for half an hour, but soon, he saw a projection of what was going on in Great Chu. The Third Prince, a suave young man with bright red hair and black clothes, led an army to attack his father's palace. The Imperial Guards tried their best to defend the palace and prevent the prince's entry, but they were outmatched military-wise, and that's not mentioning the people secretly supporting this coup.

Wang Wei watched as the third prince slowly and methodically eradicated all of the palace's defenses before heading inside.

"How are you!" roared an indignant voice. Shu Ren finally showed up. The prince calmly looked at the hooded man next to him.

"He's indeed weakened."

"But he is still a Paragon."

"It doesn't matter," the hooded man replied. "My plan was never to kill him in a direct frontal confrontation."

"Well, I'll trust you again."

The hooded man flew toward Shu Ren. "Who are you?" the Earth Emperor asked.

"Don't you remember me, your majesty?" The hooded man revealed his appearance.

"Prime Minister — no, I should call you Paragon Jimin."

"There is no need to be so cold," Jimin said casually. "After all, I've served you for many years."

Shu Ren looked at his son and snorted coldly: "That's your confidence? A newborn Paragon that has fallen down from his realm?" However, the third prince simply smiled at him; he had this demeanor that everything was under control.

"Alright, enough chit chat," Paragon Jimin said. Over the years, he was able to return to the peak of the Empyrean Realm. The lock did not affect him since he was not cultivating but regaining his strength. However, although his cultivation was low, he could still sublimate himself and return to his peak for a short period.

Jimin's aura increased, and he immediately fought with Shu Ren. Their battle lasted for an hour, and despite his weakened state, Shu Ren had the advantage during most of the battle. However, it appeared that Jimin's goal was to hold him off for as long as possible. Once that was done, he evacuated along with the prince.

"That's it?" Wang Wei thought, feeling there was more to this than meets the eye, and he was right. A few minutes later, a terrifying vision enveloped Shu Ren's territory, followed by the third prince's voice echoing between Heaven and Earth:

"Emperor Shu Ren is cold, cruel, and heartless. Instead of focusing on the prosperity of his people, he abused his right to rule, doing everything possible to keep his power — he did not even spare his children.

"Heaven and Earth above, I, Third Prince Shi Nianzu, see his nature and cannot accept the decline of Great Chu, so I decide to take things into my own hands. I will build the Southern Chu Dynasty, hoping to free my people from suffering."

As he uttered these words, the Qi Luck Dragon of Great Chu suddenly roared in pain before being divided into two.

Shu Nianzu floated from the hair, his hand holding the Luck Condensing Artifact of the former Great Chu Divine Dynasty. A gentle smile hung on the corner of his mouth as he watched the newly formed Qi Luck Dragon of his Souther Chu Dynasty.

"Your majesty, please fulfill your end of the bargain," a voice suddenly echoed beside him, almost ruining Shu Nianzu's happiness.

"Don't worry, Prime Minister, I'm a man of my word," Shu Nianzu nodded as he handed the Dragon Seal to him while looking him in the eyes. "Don't forget your part of the agreement."

"I won't." Paragon Jimin took the artifact and immediately absorbed much of this dynasty's luck. He first focused on the residual luck from the Northern Chu Dynasty before continuing to the South when someone stopped him. His aura rose exponentially, and in a matter of seconds, he healed the previous backlash for forcefully sublimating, and he returned to his original cultivation state.

"He's here," Jimin said. How could Shu Ren allow his dynasty to be divided into two? He could have accepted the previous rebellion if his rebellious son had just taken a few of his subordinates and left the dynasty. But the bastard stole his Luck Condensing Artifact and divided his luck into two.

"Are you sure you can kill him?" Shu Nianzu asked.

"Alone, not at all, but with this..." Jimin summoned a golden sword.

"A sword of destiny?"

"The era of the seven moons is coming to an end, and destiny is against them," Paragon Jimin sneered before rushing toward Shu Ren. The Earth Emperor was already weakened after trying to save Shu Shu; his situation worsened after his first fight with Jimin, and now, the latter had a sword that countered.

After ten minutes of fighting, Shu Ren tried to run away, but Jimin was prepared and blocked the area. Then, after another 20 minutes of desperate fighting, the Earth Emperor lost one life. Jimin took much of the latter's destiny but did not absorb everything. According to his agreement with the third prince, he returned some of it to make up for the luck he absorbed from the Southern Chu Dynasty.

"Our agreement is finished," Paragon Jimin said.

"Thank you," Shu Nianzu said as he received the Dragon Seal. "Are you sure you don't want to stay? The position of Prime Minister can still be yours."

"I'm honored by your offer, but I'll have to decline," Paragon Jimin stated before disappearing, making Shu Nianzu shake his head. His mother approached him a few seconds later.

"He left?" the Empress asked.

"Yes."

"Then, how will we protect the dynasty without a Paragon in charge?"

"We'll have to rely on destiny," Shu Nianzu replied as he looked at the sky. The Empress knew her son had some alternative plan, but since he didn't want to mention it, she wouldn't ask.

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Wang Wei calmly experienced Shu Ren's death, and he squinted his eyes. "It's time to put the final nail in the coffin." He summoned two people: Mongke and Jia Ping. Mongke was still in the Barbarian Race and would take some time, but Jia Ping soon arrived.

"Your opportunity has arrived," Wang Wei declared before pointing at him to condense a Future Buddha Self, except it looked like Jia Ping instead of him. "This technique will allow you to acquire the strength of your future self for a short period, but to ensure the backlash is not too severe, the strength can only go to 90%. You'll also have to team up with Mongke."

"I understand." Wang Wei dismissed him before closing his eyes.

...

Shu Ren returned to his secret hideout. After losing a life, he only had one left, and he debated whether it was wise to use it on Shu Shu — especially since it may not even save her. As he was hesitating, he sensed something and rushed over — Shu Shu had opened her eyes.

"Your majesty? Where am I? Why are you so pale?" Shu Shu asked in a soft voice. Shu Ren opened his mouth but did not know what to say.

"Did something happen to me?" Shu Shu said. "My creator did say I couldn't leave the seal. I always knew this day would come."

"Shu'er, don't worry, you will be fine," Shu Ren said, holding her hand. She smiled gently at him.

"My greatest joy was meeting you, your majesty," Shu Shu said as she raised her weak arm to caress his face. "My biggest regret is also meeting you. I would not want to experience The pain of separation in a thousand lifetimes."

"Please don't say such inauspicious...words." Shu Ren realized Shu Shu's body was rapidly disappearing. He gritted his teeth and immediately used the technique again, linking their [Existence].

"Your majesty, please don't," Shu Shu said with tears streaming down her angelic cheek. "It is too late for me, so don't put yourself at risk for my sake."

"I said you will be fine, then you will be fine." Shu Ren no longer had any more hesitation and thoroughly used that technique. He sacrificed one more life to extend her time. However, Shu Shu's words were correct. The collapse of her [Existence] was too far along the process. Shu Ren watched as the rate of her body disappearing drastically reduced, but it was still disappearing nonetheless.

'What should I do?' Shu Ren thought, trying not to panic. But as he looked into her eyes and saw her life force rapidly disappearing, his heart beat uncontrollably. Suddenly, as if by divine intervention, Shu Ren had a brilliant idea.

'Her [Existence] contained a flawed perfection, and my 33 Nether Hell is also flawed. If I link her [Existence] to the Nether Hell, could I use her perfection to perfect the Nether Hell, and in return, the Nether Hell will also complete her imperfection?'

This idea was bold and out of the box, but it may be the only way to save Shu Shu. Better yet, Shu Ren will kill two birds with one stone by completing the Nether Hell and becoming a true Earth Emperor.

Shu Ren no longer hesitated and immediately teleported Shu Shu away. He used his control of the Nether Hell to link the two together. 'It worked?' Shu Ren thought, not entirely too sure. He closed his eyes to sense the change in this dimension.

'Yes, the rules are being perfected, and Shu Shu's [Existence] has stopped collapsing. No, she's slowly getting better.' Shu Ren had a brilliant smile on his face. However, a terrifying aura appeared in the sky before he could celebrate for long. A man wearing black Emperor clothes with dragon designs looked at Shu Ren furiously.

"You idiot!"

"Ying Zheng!" Shu Ren yelled. He was in such a hurry that he forgot his traitorous third son had gained some control of his Nether Hell by aligning himself with the Great Qin Dynasty.

Ying Zheng ignored this idiot and pointed at Shu Shu. However, before he could succeed, three people showed up and blocked him: a man with four arms, Jia Ping, and Mongke.

"Your majesty, the Human Emperor, it's an honor to meet you finally," said the four-arm creature.

"Brat from the Dao Opening Sect," Ying Zheng said coldly. "This matter does not concern you."

"Doesn't it? I've spent much effort ensuring he can complete this Nether Hell perfectly."

"Wang Wei," Shu Ren said with gritted teeth. The latter might be using another body, but he would not forget that detestable soul aura.

"So, Shu Shu, was all your doing?" Shu Ren asked, his hands clenched tighter than a dragon's jaw. However, Wang Wei did not even glance at him. Shu Ren was nothing but a pawn; now, he was no longer helpful.

"This is my last warning," Ying Zheng said coldly.

"Your threat means nothing to me," Wang Wei said as he started his work. He used his control of Shu Shu to accelerate the completion of this Nether Hell while taking control. Ying Zheng's face turned ugly as he fought back. He had been secretly infiltrating this place for too long, meaning he had more power than Wang Wei.

However, the 33 Nether Hell had an instinct to be completed, and Wang Wei used that instinct to take more power rapidly.

"You bastards!" Shu Ren screamed before flying toward Wang Wei.

"Shu Ren," Mongke said as he blocked his way. "When you forced me to run away from my clan, I swore an oath that I would rip your head from your body. Today, I'm here to keep that promise." The Barbarian King teamed up with Jia Ping to kill the final moon of this era.

Meanwhile, Wang Wei was deep in his competition against the Human Emperor. Although initially behind, he rapidly gained momentum and soon took control of 40% of this place, while Ying Zhen had 60%.

The Human Emperor looked at him coldly before a decisive light flashed in his eyes. "Earth Sword," he uttered as a black sword with the power of Samsara materialized in his hand. He struck down, cutting the Nether Hell into two, with his 60% control and Wang Wei's 40%.

"I'll remember you," Ying Zheng said as he left with his part of the Nether Hell.

Chapter 1409 The End of the Seven Moon Era

Wang Wei looked at this piece of the Nether Hell, thinking what to do with it. 'I should be able to complete it easily if I ask Xun Junyao's help. Then, maybe I can use it to create a body and return to my peak.' However, he immediately shook his head; it would be a waste to use this thing to make a body. Additionally, a body made from the Nether Hell would be too unbalanced toward his Samsara Dao, which was not conducive to his future.

'Shu Ren probably wanted to sacrifice this thing to the Underworld to receive the title of Earth Emperor,' Wang Wei thought. 'Ying Zheng probably has the same idea, but he's dreaming. If the Yama Kings despised me and almost rejected my application, I doubt they would take too kindly to someone as cunning and famously cruel as Ying Zheng.'

Wang Wei played with the Nether Hell that he had shrunk into a small cube. 'I don't care for the [Earth Emperor] position, but it would be funny for me to achieve Ying Zheng's path of transcendence after he spent countless yuan epochs scheming.'

Wang Wei has no plan to achieve transcendence through the [Human, Earth, Heaven Emperor] method. However, he did not mind doing it after achieving transcendence in another manner as it should boost him in the Transcendent Realm.

'Then, it's decided. I'll just follow their plan,' Wang Wei decided before his body suddenly paused: 'What if there is a better way.' He was inspired as he remembered a unique creature called Deva. He once read a theory in Wu Hong's library about the early development of Samsara.

Once any creatures died, they were reborn according to the Six Paths of Samsara: deva (gods), Asura (demigods), Humans, Animals, Hungry Ghosts, and Hell denizens. Over time, the Six Paths of Samsara no longer served as a way to determine how someone did in their previous life but as racial identities.

For example, if humans lived incredible lives doing good, they would no longer be reincarnated as Deva or Asura but as humans blessed with immense luck and good fortune. The animal path is no longer a punishment but a way for the demonic race to reincarnate.

'However, this original system is not totally abolished,' Wang Wei thought. 'Once someone dies and has great merit, they will have a chance to reincarnate as their former race or as a Deva.'

Heaven and Earth bless the Deva race. They are born immortal, and until adulthood (which takes around 2 to 3 million years), no Tier 10 or below power can harm them, including Great Emperors. Additionally, the Deva race is the original holder of the Emperor Bone physiques, as Heaven and Earth will lower a Heaven Will for them after they become Quasi-Emperors. The only difference is that their Heaven Will has no blessing to increase their chances of becoming Eternal Emperors.

'Few people reincarnate as Devas because of how high the requirements are and due to strong racial identities,' Wang Wei thought. 'However, this does not matter. What if people with good karma and merit had another option — the Western Heaven.'

Yes, Wang Wei's idea is to turn the 33 Nether Hells into the Western Heaven and sacrifice it to the Underworld. That way, when people die, they have another choice instead of constant reincarnation. They can live in a paradise where they are constantly happy and life is easy.

'This is a great idea. The Yama King should not only reward me with the True Earth Emperor Position, but Heavenly Dao should also reward me with a ton of merit,' Wang Wei thought before

his lips started to twitch. Although this was a great idea and contribution to the world, doing so also meant he was playing into Grand Dao's hands.

'Forget it. It's better that I do it knowing I'm being manipulated than being blind,' Wang Wei reassured himself with this clumsy excuse. His focus shifted to the battle before him. Jia Ping was already out, but it was apparent from his expression that he had successfully passed his trial to sublimate his Double Pupil.

"Why is he being so extreme?" Wang Wei asked as he observed Mongke's situation. The bastard was burning his [Existence] to increase his strength, ensuring he had the power to kill Shu Ren. "At this rate, even if he killed him, his cultivation will also fall to Emperor Realm, and maybe less."

Wang Wei frowned, considering whether he should intervene. He did not care for Shu Ren's luck and destiny since Heaven and Earth granted him the achievement of killing him once he used the Life Extension Method to save Shu Shu.

'Forget it, this seems personal,' Wang Wei thought.

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"You're mad," Shu Ren yelled as Mongke pummeled him with punch after punch. He tried to resist using his body and countless spells, but the young Barbarian King's fists destroyed anything that came at it as it had only one mission — pummel this man to death.

"Mad?" Mongke said with cold eyes. "The Barbarian Clan is a proud warrior race, and we consider it a great shame to run from battle or death. The day you pressured our clan, I was prepared for my death."

Bang! Mongke kicked him in the face.

"Do you know why I abandoned everything I believe in and ran away?" Mongke asked rhetorically. "I saw my father, the indomitable man with an unbreakable spirit who raised me since my mother's death, knelt before me, begging that I run away.

"The Tribe's priest, a woman who is the embodiment of wisdom and leadership, knelt before me, asking that I abandon my pride and run.

"My wife, my other half, the woman who is my anchor, the woman who is braver than me, crying and asking me not to be stubborn and to think about the clan's future instead of my pride.

"Do you have any idea the gut-wrenching pain I felt that day?"

Mongke slapped him on his face, breaking a few teeth. He looked at Shu Ren with gritted teeth.

"You know the worst part about all of this? You were such a disappointment. I spent years thinking of the day I would be able to kill you myself, building you up as my ultimate target. But then, I came to find out you were nothing but a pawn that was manipulated and discarded."

Shu Ren's body visibly paused after hearing these words. Mongke took this opportunity to rip his arms off and inject his Willpower Manifestation to prevent his regeneration.

"If you were a true warrior, then killing you would have been worth all my pain and suffering. But you were a disappointment until the end of your miserable life."

Shu Ren's eyes lost some luster as he reminisced about his life. He was once at the top of the world, but was that true? The people of the world despised and cursed his existence every day, and more importantly, he went from being Ying Zheng's pawn to Time Eater to Supreme Unity and, in the end, even Wang Wei's. He lived for so long and amassed immense wealth and power, but what did he do with them? Absolutely nothing that the world will remember fondly, and that is if they remember him at all.

'The only time I was truly happy was when I was with Shu Shu, but even those moments were not real,' Shu Ren smiled wryly. Mongke looked at him coldly before ripping his head off and destroying his soul. He looked at the head with cold eyes, preparing to turn it into a trophy to wash the greatest shame of his life.

"The era of the Seven Moons is over," Wang Wei muttered as he looked at the sky. The roar of a dying dragon echoed between Heaven and Earth, followed by golden auspicious visions. Then, 13 dragons manifested in the sky in different corners of the world, symbolizing the return of the destiny of the 13 Overlords.

"Interesting," Wang Wei commented as he realized the dragon for Buddhism and Taoism was so much grander than the others; this vast difference should bring enough pressure to these Overlords in the upcoming catastrophe.

Wang Wei raised his head to look at the lock. "If not for that thing, this period would be when all these people in Limbo started reviving themselves."

Now, no one is brave enough to try to resurrect, assuming the lock did not block all resurrection. These people can only use their limited interference from Limbo to make their moves on the chessboard.

"I'll be returning to the clan to heal," Mongke said.

"Take care," Wang Wei nodded.

"Thank you for giving me a chance at revenge."

"I promised you, didn't I?"

"You can contact me if you need anything," Mongke said finally before disappearing. Wang Wei took Jia Ping away to the Dao Burial Ground since he couldn't move to retreat before returning to his hideout. He discarded the four-arm flesh puppet he was using as his soul returned to his body. However, before he could even breathe, he received an emergency communication.

Chapter 1410 Invader & Hurry

Wang Wei frowned after hearing these words. He knew the existence of the bases could not be hidden forever, but according to his calculations, it should have taken a lot longer. He no longer hesitated and sent a projection.

A handsome man with luscious black hair and golden eyes floated above the sky, observing the base with amusement, interest, and hidden greed. As soon as Wang Wei appeared, his aura suddenly changed to become arrogant and noble.

"Are you the owner of these mortals?" asked the golden-eye man. "Hand them over and how you cultivate them to be so wise, and I'll offer you a decent price."

Wang Wei looked up and down at this man: "A God?"

"Oh? It seems you have a good eye."

"Are you from the Divine Faith Heaven?" Wang Wei continued.

"Also knowledgeable," the God said with a frown, realizing he was not dealing with an ordinary person. "Who are you?"

"Wang Wei, Dao Opening Sect."

The God paused; it was apparent the wheels were moving around his mind. "You know, it's taboo to lie about being part of the Overlords? Now that our destiny is back, there are consequences." Wang Wei did not say anything else as a marking with four stars appeared on his forehead. The God looked at it, trying to control his emotions.

"Fellow Daoist, my name is Divine Zhu, and it's an honor to meet you," he said before saluting. "Our two factions have been in corporation for many years." Wang Wei wanted to roll his eyes. The relationship between their faction was neutral. The Divine Faith Heaven's primary source of confrontation is competing with Great Qin for mortals and Buddhism and Taoism due to their use of faith.

"I know what you want, but the answer is no," Wang Wei said directly. "Leave this area at once."

Divine Zhu's pleasant expression became stiff. "Fellow Daoist, it's only a few mortals. We can negotiate a fair price."

"You heard what I said." Wang Wei understood why this bastard desperately wanted the mortal civilization development method. These mortals have longer lifespans and happier lives, and the enlightened ones have high spirit powers. If they become believers, the amount of faith/incense would be so high and pure that no God could resist.

Divine Zhu became cold, "Do you want to ruin our faction's relationship over these ants?"

Wang Wei looked him in the eyes and released his killing intent: "Leave while you still have your dignity and limbs." Divine Zhu's soul and body felt chill, and he almost trembled. However, his pride as a God forbade him from revealing fear before an enemy. So, Divine Zhu took one last look at him and these mortals before teleporting away.

Wang Wei calmly watched him fly away. "The tree has bore fruit, and now is the time to harvest," he sneered. Now that mortal civilization was cultivated to Tier 9, it was time for Grand Dao to spread the result, and the first attempt was made by this bastard God.

Wang Wei knew, in fact, that the spread was inevitable. He shared the method of cultivating a Tier 4 mortal civilization with many people in the lower dimension so these people could start from this aspect. He was never worried because he knew he would always have the advantage for a multitude of reasons.

The first is culture. The cultivation world is exceptionally conservative, not liking changes to the status quo. Their immortal lives and god-like strength ensured they kept society similar for trillions of years and more.

Cultivators like benefits, so they will adapt to a certain extent when needed, but unless they fully commit, their mortal civilization will only be a shell of the one Wang Wei cultivated. He has already predicted what will happen once this information is leaked.

The constant worship will mean that the civilization that the Gods cultivate will lack any innovative spirit. Why create new runes when you can pray for answers? Their god doesn't give them an answer? That's fine. Anyways, their lives are already filled with gods in their minds, so why is there a need to innovate? There is also the fact that these enlightened humans, who are the core for developing civilization, are wise creatures, meaning their faith in Gods is not the best since they understand Gods are just powerful cultivators.

The mortal civilization created by dynasties and empires will have another issue — they are too self-reliant. If the mortals do not need their ruling dynasty for anything, then they become a liability. How can the dynasty use them to control the rise and fall of their Qi Luck? Not to mention, weak dynasties without any immortal powerhouses could not build a mortal civilization since the mortals now had the power to overthrow them.

As for other factions? Wang Wei was not worried about them. Their innate disdain for mortals would not allow them to cultivate a proper civilization. Wang Wei predicted top Paragon Lineages

and many other Overlords would develop the most basic of civilization simply because the civilization is a high pool of talent for their faction to discover geniuses.

In Wang Wei's mind, he had only a few competitors in the training of mortal civilization. The first one is his wife. She's wise and a visionary, meaning she can see far ahead the benefit of genuinely cultivating these mortals, and as the person with ultimate power in the Origin Seal Continent, she can do what she pleases with no one objecting.

The second opponent is Maitreya. She's wise enough to see the benefits and, like Wu Hong, has ultimate power over Buddhism. Maitreya is the true enemy, given how influential Buddhism is. Wang Wei also added Taoism to the list as a maybe. After Supreme Unity is gone, Taoism will return to its original track, and Wang Wei feared they might cultivate a proper civilization just for the sake of keeping appearance against their competitor, Buddhism.

Finally, the last opponent is Emperor Kong. His main goal is to enlighten all sentient beings, meaning he will have a key mindset to train a proper mortal civilization: show the mortals respect for their craft and achievement. The academy is the best environment to nurture the academic minds of enlightened humans.

Of course, despite calling these people competitors, Wang Wei would not take them seriously. The crux of this civilization is the idea from Earth, and he's the only source. With such an overwhelming advantage, how could these people compete with him?

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'If I remember correctly, the first Primal of the Divine Faith Heaven is from the Deva Race that I was just thinking about. Is this a coincidence, or am I being paranoid?' He contemplated this question from every angle, and it seemed to be a coincidence, but he kept his suspicions. Wang Wei started overseeing the relocation of not just this base but all three million of them. He did not want to take the risk. He oversaw everything and increased the protection he previously provided to them. Although he knew this would only delay the time the information leaked, he would accept any advantage.

"I can no longer hesitate," Wang Wei said as he opened his eyes in his hideout. He summoned the Heaven Secret Crystal and sighed deeply before activating it — it was now a priority to find Sage Pure Flame and end this plague curse.

Wang Wei did not know what to expect since this was the first time he was using the crystal. He found himself floating in this endless void with stars shining around them. After a brief observation,

his expressions show a look of understanding: "Are those stars physical embodiments of truths? Interesting." He focused his mind on indicating the truth he wished to acquire — the location of Sage Pure Flame.

Wang Wei expected the crystal to lead him to one of the stars that contained the answer he wanted. However, he was wrong. The thing brought him to a specific area of this endless dimension. Wang Wei was puzzled, so he approached a random star, and as soon as he got close, it turned red. He chose a few more, and the result was the same.

"So, the truth around Sage Pure Flame is hidden by someone with a myriad of falsehoods, and if I want to find him, I must search for the correct star," Wang Wei summarized before smiling wryly. The good news is he now had concrete proof that Supreme Unity was manipulating fate and the secrets of Heaven and Earth. If he did not enter paranoid mode and did not rely on these things, he would have been long dead.

"The bad news is it'll probably take a while before I find the right star," Wang Wei sighed. The situation outside was volatile, and time was not on their side. Who knows what might happen if he takes too long searching for Sage Pure Flame?

He disconnected from the crystal to leave some preparation in the outside world, like a clone, to keep an eye on the overall situation. Only then did he return to track down that bastard.