Honoured 691

Chapter 691: The Night of the Bloody Invasion Interlude - Fall of an Emperor [3]

Rhadamanth Di Gardia had his usual expressionless face as he watched the scene unfold and the woman who was standing beside him leaned forward to him.

"Your Highness, we are running out of time."

Rhadamanth gave a nod and glanced at Zhou Shan "Zhou Shan, we have upheld our end of the agreement. Now it is time for you to fulfill yours."

"We are in a hurry."

Zhou Shan who had been admiring Hanyue’s beauty, turned to look at Rhadamanth and nodded his head "Yes, yes... I do remember my part of the deal..."

"The Key of the Hemlock Graven."

The key required to bring out the full potential of the weapon Brynnhilder, which was given to the Jade Eclipse Dynasty family.

The Jade Eclipse Dynasty kept that in a safe vault, which can only be assessed by the members of the Royal family.

Zhou Shan walked to Rhadamanth and raised his palm, as a metallic box engraved with jade appeared on his palm.

As he extended his hand, Rhadamanth took the box and opened it.

Inside, nestled within layers of velvet there was a crimson-red key... a small, intricately crafted artifact, shimmering with an almost ethereal glow, pulsing faintly. Find exclusive stories on Freewebnovel

Rhadamanth examined it wordlessly, and a moment of silence passed before he gave a slow, approving nod and closed the box.

He handed the relic to the veiled woman beside him "This concludes our arrangement."

Zhou Shan, pleased with himself, chuckled lightly, his eyes glinting with ambition.

"Yeah. That settles it."

Rhadamanth’s gaze flickered around and he asked "Would you require my men’s assistance in stabilizing the Dynasty? Surely, an event of this scale will stir... resistance."

Zhou Shan let out a low chuckle, shaking his head. "Oh, please. Do you take me for an idiot?"

He gestured vaguely toward the corpses and weeping royals, his smile widening.

"I’ve spent years planting my people in every crevice of this kingdom. Every general, every noble, every minister worth a damn is either loyal to me or will be dead by morning."

"Besides, I don’t need outsiders meddling in my empire. I’ll handle the cleanup myself."

Rhadamanth observed him for a moment, then gave a slight nod "Very well."

With that, he turned around, his crimson cloak billowing behind him as he made his way toward the entrance.

His followers also walked out of the room with him.

One by one, the vampiric forces released their grip on the remaining royals, abandoning their captives as they too exited the hall.

The Jade Empress, however, could no longer hold herself together.

The moment the last vampire left, she collapsed to her knees, her trembling hands reaching for the lifeless body of the Emperor.

"Dear... No... NO..."

Tears streamed down her face as she cradled his cold body, her shoulders shaking with unrestrained grief.

The other princes and princesses stood frozen, their faces drained of all color and their minds were numb from the horror of what had just transpired.

But through the chaos, Zhou Hanyue stood completely still.

Her emerald eyes burned with rage, yet her body refused to move, locked in place by the sheer weight of what she had just witnessed.

Zhou Shan glanced at Zhou Hanyue "I'll give you a day, Hanyue."

"One day to accept me. One day to accept your place by my side."

He took a step forward, his eyes turning dark with amusement "You don't really have a choice, anyway."

Her breath hitched, her stomach twisting in disgust looking at the smile on his face.

"After that..." He tilted his head, his grin widening. "The wedding will proceed."

Zhou Hanyue's breath came in ragged bursts and her mind screaming in refusal, her hands trembling with barely-contained fury.

Her wedding?

To him?

But before she could react, Zhou Shan leaned in slightly, his next words sending a chill down her spine.

"As for your dear husband… don’t worry."

His smirk deepened "He’ll die on the battlefield soon enough."

Zhou Hanyue’s entire body froze, her eyes widening in horror.

"No…"

Zhou Shan, ignoring her distress, straightened his posture, stretching his arms as if this had all been nothing more than a tiresome formality.

"Well then," he said cheerfully.

"I have a Dynasty to stabilize. I have to summon the sects, inform the neighboring kingdoms of their new Emperor…"

But then his gaze narrowed slightly "And in the meantime. Don’t do anything reckless."

"The entire palace is surrounded by my men now. You can’t escape."

But then he smiled and waved his hand playfully "See you tomorrow, my dear fiancée."

...

Stepping out of the grand throne room, Zhou Shan sighed heavily.

The scent of blood still lingered in the air, the echoes of the Jade Empress’s anguished cries fading into the distance as he descended the steps leading into the palace’s central courtyard.

The red portals still hung high in the sky, their pale glow casting shadows across the massive pavilion, where rows of armored guards... not the imperial guards of the previous reign, but his own private militia stood at attention.

Before him stood Mo Zhen, his right-hand man.

To the left, a group of nobles and officials, those who had pledged loyalty to Zhou Shan long before his betrayal... stood in silence, their faces betraying a mix of fear and greed.

Zhou Shan paused, glancing over the sea of his loyal subjects, and inhaled deeply.

Then, with a slow smile, he spread his arms wide.

"Well… gentlemen, we did it."

He let his words hang in the air for a moment, savoring the sight of his gathered forces, the culmination of years of careful manipulation, of strategic betrayals, of pulling invisible strings behind the scenes

The nobles forced out uneasy laughter, as if still unsure whether they should cheer or shudder in the presence of the new tyrant.

Mo Zhen cracked his knuckles, an eager grin spreading across his lips "So what now, Lord Shan? Are we going to start carving up the Dynasty?"

Zhou Shan chuckled, lowering his hands "Not yet. First, we solidify our rule. The people will resist. The sects will hesitate. The neighboring kingdoms will send envoys, pretending to negotiate while sharpening their blades behind our backs. We need to be… prepared."

His eyes darkened slightly "Execute every noble who refuses to kneel. Publicly."

A chill ran through the crowd as the nobles exchanged uneasy glances.

"Burn their estates to the ground. Take their wealth, their artifacts, their cultivation manuals, and distribute them to those who support us."

Mo Zhen smirked "A show of force?"

Zhou Shan grinned and stepped forward as he placed a firm hand on his shoulder. "A reminder... A reminder of who holds power now."

Mo Zhen let out a deep chuckle before looking at the troops and yelling "You heard Lord Shan! Round up every noble house still clinging to the old regime! If they don’t swear fealty by sundown, we’ll decorate the capital with their heads!"

with a nod, Zhou Shan ordered "Find out which generals and commanders remain loyal to the Jade Eclipse Sect,"

"Send them a warning. If they do not submit… kill their families first. Then send their heads back as gifts."

"As you command, My Lord."

Zhou Shan’s lips curled upward.

He had spent years watching from the shadows, waiting for his brother to make a mistake, waiting for the perfect moment to strike.

And now-

He had it all.

Still, he wasn’t finished.

He turned toward the assembled generals and loyal sect masters who had backed his coup, who had once served under the Jade Eclipse Sect but had since grown bitter in its shadow.

"Summon the Sects. The ones who have already agreed to my rule… and those who will be forced to."

"It’s time for them to recognize the new Emperor of the Jade Eclipse Dynasty."

The sect leaders nodded hastily, already moving to send word across the capital.

Zhou Shan’s gaze flickered toward the palace gates, where the forces of the vampiric star were beginning their withdrawal, Rhadamanth Di Gardia and his warriors vanishing into the night with their prize in hand.

It didn’t matter.

Because in a day she would no longer be a princess.

She would be his.

He had waited years for this moment.

And nothing... would stop him now.

Chapter 692: The Night of the Bloody Invasion [8]

"Let the heavens themselves bear witness—CRIMSON ECLIPSE!"

The sky trembled as the massive crimson seal pulsed like a living creature, its sheer presence casting a bloody glow over the battlefield.

The air felt thick, saturated with an overwhelming pressure as the three Elders channeled their combined might into the technique. Continue your journey at Freewebnovel

Ji Shuang narrowed her eyes, utterly unfazed by the apocalyptic force converging above her.

BOOOOOM!

A deafening explosion erupted from the sigil as its center split open, unveiling a swirling abyss of pure, condensed blood energy.

SWOOOSHH From within, an enormous, nightmarish figure emerged... a towering giant of scarlet flesh and bone.

Its massive eyes, burning like twin suns, locked onto Ji Shuang with an otherworldly hunger.

It was no ordinary technique. It was an execution.

With a single earth-shaking step, the Crimson Colossus descended upon Ji Shuang, its clawed hands stretching toward her like the hands of fate itself.

The air screamed under its weight, and the battlefield quaked as if the world itself would be torn apart.

Yet, Ji Shuang merely exhaled, her breath crystallizing into ice in thin air.

She floated in mid-air casually as the behemoth’s hand came crashing down upon her.

BOOOOOOM!

The impact sent a cataclysmic shockwave across the battlefield, sending the disciples and vampires flying like leaves in a storm.

Silence.

Then—

Ssshhhhkk!

A thin line of violet light split through the giant’s palm, trailing upward with an ethereal hum.

And then, in an instant-

CRACK! BOOOOOOOM!

The Crimson Colossus was cleaved in two.

Its massive body disintegrated into a fine crimson mist, torn apart from within by a force it couldn’t comprehend.

Ji Shuang hovered amidst the dissipating destruction, her outstretched fingers humming with astral energy.

Elder Salix’s face paled. "What the fu-"

FWOOOOOM!

Before his words could even finish leaving his lips, Ji Shuang was upon him.

Her hand thrust forward and a blinding spear of violet lightning shot through the Elder’s chest, skewering him mid-air.

"ARGGG-" His body convulsed violently, his mouth opening in a silent scream as his soul was instantly incinerated.

Then, without so much as a glance, Ji Shuang clenched her fist-

BOOM!

Elder Salix’s body exploded into nothingness, erased from existence before his ashes could even touch the ground.

Elder Veron, witnessing the sheer brutality, took a step back as his face twisted in fear and disbelief. "This… this. She’s a—"

SHOOOM!

A violet streak cut through the air, and in the blink of an eye, Ji Shuang was in front of him.

His pupils shrank in horror and her fist crashed into his sternum.

BOOOOOOM!

Elder Veron’s body didn’t just break... it detonated outward in a burst of shattered bones and misted blood, sent hurtling through the sky like a meteor, leaving a burning trail behind him.

Ji Shuang didn’t spare him a second glance.

Only one remained.

Elder Mirthal.

Her trembling hands clutched at the sky, attempting to finish the sigil’s final incantation. "C-Crimson Eclipse… Judgment of the Ancients… Grant me th—"

Ji Shuang lifted her palm and a thin arc of astral energy zipped forward.

SLEESH!

It struck Elder Mirthal between the brows.

The sky itself fractured.

BOOOOOOOOOOOM!

A massive explosion of violet and white light erupted from Elder Mirthal’s body, expanding outward in a cascading wave of annihilation.

The air twisted and screamed and the clouds above split apart as if the heavens themselves were struck down by divine wrath.

The once-grand seal in the sky crumbled, breaking apart like brittle glass.

And the battlefield fell still.

The surviving vampire forces trembled.

Many collapsed to their knees, unable to comprehend what had just happened.

The mighty Elders, the pillars of their Staris being erased so easily.

Ji Shuang slowly lowered her hand, her cold violet eyes sweeping across the battlefield.

The battlefield still crackled with residual energy, but Ji Shuang’s gaze remained steady.

She had already torn through the first wave of Elders, but she could sense the remaining ones lurking in the chaos, desperately trying to recover or flee.

Elder Kaelith tried to blend into the darkness and tried to escape from there.

Ji Shuang simply extended a hand and illuminated the entire battlefield with a single pulse of violet lightning.

"No…" Kaelith barely had time to whisper before the lightning engulfed him.

"RRUURRGGGHHH!" His body twisted violently, and he disintegrated from the inside out, his scream never reaching the air before he was reduced to nothingness.

The last two Elders, Sorin and Valmora, exchanged glances.

They had witnessed enough.

Without hesitation, they turned, and their figures blurred into streaks of bloodlight, attempting to escape.

Ji Shuang sighed and with a flick of her wrist, twin arcs of frost and lightning lanced forward.

THRASHH The first struck Sorin mid-flight and his body froze instantly, the momentum of his escape shattering him into icy fragments before he even touched the ground.

Valmora barely managed to summon a defensive barrier before the second arc reached her.

For a moment, her crimson shield resisted... but then a deafening CRACK echoed across the battlefield.

The barrier shattered.

Ji Shuang appeared before Valmora in a blur of speed and the elder’s eyes widened in horror as Ji Shuang’s hand pressed against her chest.

"You should’ve run faster."

A pulse of violet energy surged from Ji Shuang’s palm.

BOOOOM!

Valmora’s entire torso exploded outward as her lifeless body collapsed to the ground in a smoldering heap.

And just like that, the last of the Elders were gone.

Her gaze flickered around the battlefield and saw the Vampire forces getting destroyed.

...

sleesh Zhao Tian dashed through the battlefield as his blade cleanly sliced another cultivator’s head as his lifeless body tumbled to the ground.

Amidst the chaos he has managed to kill most of the evil cultivators who are disguised as disciples.

But there are still some.

His eyes glowed faintly, and he instantly appeared in front of two disciples.

Before they could even react, his blade whistled through the air with a burst of flames as it cleaved through the two men’s torsos.

SLEESH

As he continued his rampage, he sensed another presence approaching him, and he turned his head to look at Li Jia, who was coming towards him in this storm.

"Jia?"

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"Jia?"

Zhao Tain muttered in surprise, looking at Li Jia who was dashing towards him.

Hurriedly reaching Zhao Tian, Li Jia jumped into his arms as her hand shot up around his neck.

"Tian!"

Li Jia clung to him tightly, her breathing ragged from the frantic flight across the battlefield.

She buried her face into his shoulder, fingers clutching the fabric of his robes like she never wanted to let go. "Tian!"

Zhao Tian was about to respond, but his eyes narrowed.

WHOOSH! A figure shot toward them... an evil cultivator in disguise, using the chaos to strike at him while he was distracted.

The man’s blade glinted under the dim crimson sky, aimed straight for Zhao Tian’s back.

VRMMMM!

A pulse of spatial energy erupted from Zhao Tian’s body, and the cultivator’s body twisted unnaturally.

His limbs bent at sickening angles, and his body crumpled as if squeezed by an invisible force.

A horrible, wet CRACK echoed, and in the next instant, his flesh was reduced to pulped remains that scattered into the wind.

His eyes squinted in thought ’My understanding of space energy... again evolved from the battle.’

But he had no time to dwell on that.

"Tian," Li Jia whispered, pulling back slightly and her eyes filled with concern. "Let’s leave… please. Let’s go now."

Zhao Tian sighed, reaching up to gently tuck a loose strand of her hair behind her ear. "Jia, the entire sect is under attack,"

"I can’t leave now. Here everyone’s fighting..."

Li Jia’s eyes trembled. "What about you?!" she blurted out, panic lacing her voice.

"What if something happens to you? What if you—"

Zhao Tian cupped her cheek, silencing her with a reassuring gaze. "Nothing will happen."

"Go back to the artifact. If things turn dire, I'll return too. But right now, I need you to be safe."

She bit her lower lip, torn between staying by his side and following his request.

Her heart told her to refuse and wanted to fight beside him, but the rational part of her knew she would only be a distraction in this chaotic battle.

After a moment of silence, she gave a heavy nod. "Tian… promise me," she whispered, her fingers brushing against his.

"Promise me you'll come back."

Zhao Tian smiled, his eyes filled with warmth even in the middle of the carnage. "I promise."

Li Jia exhaled shakily, then surged forward, wrapping her arms around his neck once more.

She pressed a desperate kiss against his lips as if trying to pour all of her emotions into that single moment.

Then, reluctantly, she pulled away.

Her eyes lingered on his for a moment longer before she turned, her figure weaving through the battlefield as she flew toward the edge of the sect's territory.

Zhao Tian watched her go, his fingers curling around the sword as he turned back toward the chaos.

The battle was far from over.

...

Selena's blood mist swirled violently, distorting the air around them.

SPLASH!

Dozens of crimson tendrils lashed out like whips, cutting through the air with deadly precision.

Yan Zijin, however, didn’t bother dodging.

With a single step, she propelled herself forward, shattering through the blood mist with sheer force.

Her fists glowed with energy, and BOOM! She slammed her palm forward, dispersing Selena’s attack like a cloud of smoke in the wind.

Selena clicked her tongue, irritation flashing in her crimson eyes. "You’re such an annoyance," she hissed and her body flickered as she shot upward, creating distance.

In the sky, a massive crimson sigil burned and rotated like a grinding wheel of death.

The sigil pulsed with raw blood energy, sending a deafening WUUUUUUUUM! through the battlefield.

Then, with a single snap of her fingers, Selena commanded the sigil to blood fire.

FWOOOOOOM!

A torrent of blood lances rained down toward Yan Zijin like falling stars.

Each lance carried the weight of an entire mountain, warping the space around them as they descended with horrifying speed.

Yan Zijin, however, rolled her shoulders, loosening her body, before taking a deep breath.

CRACK! The ground beneath her shattered as she pushed off, meeting the attack head-on.

With a single punch, she shattered the first lance.

BOOM! The second was deflected with a kick, sending it spiraling into the ground, carving a deep crater.

The third was caught mid-air as Yan Zijin grabbed the lance and swung it like a club, smashing through the remaining projectiles.

Selena gritted her teeth, sweat forming on her brow. "You brute…" she muttered under her breath.

Yan Zijin was tearing through her strongest techniques without even using elemental energy—only her sheer combat prowess.

But Selena wasn’t finished.

She raised her hand, and SHLURP! the blood mist around her condensed into a pair of scythes, spinning like circular blades.

In the next instant, her body flickered to Yan Zijin.

"DIE!"

SLASH! SLASH!

The scythes whistled through the air, aiming directly for Yan Zijin’s neck. But before the attack could land—

Yan Zijin turned at the last moment, catching the twin scythes between her palms.

The impact sent a shockwave through the air, causing the clouds above to part from the force.

Selena’s eyes widened in disbelief. "Wha—"

Before she could finish, Yan Zijin’s knee slammed into her stomach.

THOOOOM!

Selena’s body rocketed downward, slamming into the ground below like a meteor.

Dust and debris exploded outward as a massive crater formed from the impact.

Yan Zijin landed gracefully, her cold gaze peering down into the dust-filled crater.

But she wasn’t arrogant enough to believe it was over.

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DRIP… DRIP…

From within the crater, pools of blood began to rise.

A moment later, Selena emerged and her body was trembling, but her eyes still had the rage.

"You… really piss me off," she whispered, wiping the blood from her lips.

Yan Zijin cracked her knuckles "The fight is taking longer than I expected. I should kill you soon and go for the next..."

Selena’s gaze quivered "…Hah. You really think you’re winning this?"

Yan Zijin’s eyes narrowed in confusion. Hm?

Selena took a slow step back and the blood mist around her began to retreat, swirling around her body in a protective cocoon.

Yan Zijin raised an eyebrow...Selena wasn’t preparing for another attack. She was… retreating?

Selena clicked her tongue. "Seems like our time here is up."

Yan Zijin lunged forward, but—

SHOOM!

Selena’s body exploded into a surge of blood mist, vanishing completely before Yan Zijin’s attack could land.

Yan Zijin came to a stop, standing amidst the battlefield, and she let out a deep breath, calming the energy in her body.

Selena had escaped.

But the battle wasn’t over yet.

Yan Zijin turned her gaze toward the Jade Eclipse Sect, where Ji Shuang was still fighting the Vampire Elders, and where Zhao Tian was cutting through the hidden evil disciples.

She rolled her shoulders "I will clear the remaining pests then."

...

As the battle surged on, Ji Shuang slaughtered all of the Elder Council.

Suddenly the sky rumbled, and a new arc descended down from the swirling red portals in the sky.

Ji Shuang turned her gaze to the sky and muttered "Rudamanth Di Gardia…"