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Chapter 317: Cryonex Descended (part 2)

The demonic palm, fueled by Cryonex's formidable cultivation, continued its descent, eclipsing the city in darkness. The ground trembled as the massive hand approached the defensive array, threatening to shatter the last line of defense that stood against the demonic horde.

In the city below, the people, previously encouraged by the steadfastness of their defenders, now watched in horror as the colossal black hand descended, casting an oppressive shadow over their homes. Fear spread like wildfire through the streets, and despair settled among the citizens like a heavy fog.

"What is that?" a frightened voice quivered in the air. Panic rippled through the crowd, and anxious murmurs filled the city. The ominous silhouette of the demonic hand intensified their collective dread, leaving them helpless against the impending calamity.

A middle-aged woman clutched her child tightly, her eyes wide with terror. "We're not going to make it. They were supposed to protect us," she whispered to a neighbor, whose face reflected the same mixture of fear and disbelief.

The once hopeful atmosphere in the city now hung heavy with despair. People looked to the sky with desperation, hoping for a miracle, as the colossal hand loomed ominously overhead. The city, once a haven, felt like a fragile sanctuary on the verge of collapse.

"Why did this happen?" a man cried out, frustration and despair lacing his words. "We trusted the cultivators to keep us safe!"

A wave of blame and anger swept through the crowd as they grappled with the impending doom. "If they let us into Skyhaven City, we wouldn't be facing this!" a woman accused, pointing an accusatory finger towards the cultivators who had ordered them to stay in the city.

Another voice chimed in, "They're probably safe up there, while we're left to face demon's wrath!"

The blame intensified, and the once-respected cultivators found themselves surrounded by a sea of accusing eyes. The citizens, feeling betrayed and abandoned, vented their frustration at the very individuals they had relied upon for protection.

A seasoned cultivator, overhearing the despairing murmurs, tried to calm the distraught crowd. "Hold on! The commander and the cultivators are doing their best to protect us. Have faith in their abilities!" he shouted, attempting to instill a sense of hope.

Yet, as the massive demonic palm drew nearer, optimism dwindled, and blame began to spread like wildfire. A man pointed an accusatory finger at the cultivators who had remained outside the city, "This is all because those so-called protectors didn't let us into Skyhaven City! Now look what's happening!"

The crowd, desperate and searching for someone to hold responsible, joined in the blame. "If we were in Skyhaven City, we'd be safe by now!" a voice shouted, echoing the sentiments of many. The once united front against the demonic invasion now crumbled into internal strife.

Amidst the escalating chaos, the commander, drenched in sweat from the relentless battle, exerted every ounce of his strength to halt the colossal hand's descent. With a resounding boom, a surge of brilliant light erupted from his form, illuminating the night sky. The commander's figure, outlined by the radiant energy, stood as a lone beacon of defiance against the impending darkness.

"One minute left, I just need one minute," the commander thought, his gaze focused on the overwhelming task before him. The cultivators who had hurriedly sought refuge inside the city turned their eyes back to witness their leader's valiant struggle.

The citizens, torn between despair and lingering hope, watched as the commander channeled his cultivation techniques to create a barrier against the encroaching hand. The air crackled with the clash of energies – a testament to the commander's determination to buy time for those seeking refuge.

However, the disparity in power became increasingly evident. Cryonex's might proved insurmountable, and the commander, despite his unwavering resolve, found himself reaching the limits of his strength. Fatigue weighed heavily on his shoulders as the oppressive force of the demonic hand threatened to crush his defenses.

As the commander neared exhaustion, a voice echoed in his mind – a familiar voice that cut through the chaos. "I'm done, commander. Thank you for buying us time." It was Wei Lin, one of the cultivators who had remained outside the city. The commander's eyes widened with realization, a mixture of gratitude and sorrow flooding his senses.

In that moment of acknowledgment, the commander, fueled by a surge of determination, redoubled his efforts. His sword glowed with an ethereal light as he pushed against the overwhelming

darkness. The citizens in the city, witnessing the valiant struggle, held their breath, their collective hope hanging in the balance.

Yet, the commander's strength reached its inevitable limit. The demonic hand, an unstoppable force, closed in. In the final moments, as despair threatened to consume him, the commander heard Wei Lin's voice once more, a gentle farewell that whispered through the recesses of his mind.

As the colossal hand engulfed the commander, a poignant sense of accomplishment resonated within him. He had given his people a chance, a fleeting moment of reprieve. The citizens, though gripped by sorrow, recognized the sacrifice made on their behalf.

The once-blaming crowd fell into a solemn hush, their resentful murmurs silenced by the sacrifice they had just witnessed. The city, now overshadowed by the colossal hand, bore witness to the commander's last stand. The unity born from desperation and despair transformed into a collective acknowledgment of the price paid for their survival. The commander's sacrifice, a poignant display of heroism, left an indelible mark on the hearts of those who now faced an uncertain future.

However, amidst the solemn realization of the commander's sacrifice, not all hearts in the city resonated with empathy. As the colossal hand loomed ominously over the city, casting shadows of despair, dissenting voices pierced through the collective grief.

"What now... Now the commander is dead, we are next that is going to die," one person proclaimed, his voice a bitter echo of impending doom. The acknowledgment of the commander's sacrifice failed to quell the rising tide of fear and resentment within some hearts.

"Bastard, how dare you," another voice spat out, directed at no one in particular. The bitterness in the air hung like a heavy fog as frustration and grief collided in a cacophony of discord.

"I don't care anymore. This land is over anyway, might as well die early than suffer, haha," a cynical laugh cut through the despondent atmosphere, reflecting the resignation of one who had surrendered to hopelessness. The acceptance of impending doom resonated with a few, their spirits broken by the magnitude of the unfolding catastrophe.

As the city teetered on the brink of despair, a subtle tremor coursed through the air. The attention of the citizens, previously fixated on the tragic spectacle above, shifted as they sensed a change. A soft hum resonated through the surroundings, and the defensive array that had stood as the last bastion against the demonic hand began to undergo a profound transformation.

The array, a tapestry of various protective formations, had initially been a mosaic of distinct patterns seamlessly stitching together. However, at this critical juncture, a mesmerizing phenomenon unfolded. The intricate patterns of the array, each representing a different school of cultivation, began to merge and intertwine, fusing into a unified whole.