

Chapter 771 - Scorched Earth

Welcomed by the sight of scorched earth, burnt air, and distinct silence, Wei Wuyin's heart stirred with turbulent emotions. The stark contrast of circumstances and utter absence of life on Blueglow left him with one thought: "Where is she?"

Before leaving for the Battlefield, Bai Lin had accompanied him to the planet. However, he was unaware that organic beasts were disallowed from entering the Battlefield until after he obtained Jing Jiu's memories. Supposedly, only certain beasts refined through unique spiritually tethering cultivation methods, so-called Spirit Beasts, were allowed.

However, these types of beasts were strictly limited to those with outrageously powerful Spiritual Strength or cultivators that have delved into the Spiritualist path.

Panicked, he lifted his head and sent his spiritual sense hurling upwards towards the sky, intending to sweep the entire Dark Void to the limits of his range. No longer requiring his four Astral Souls to be sealed, he had a monstrously powerful spiritual sense alongside his spiritual strength.

Boom!

His closed eyelids fluttered as his expression changed. A deep sound resounded from above, causing the sky to ripple out ceaselessly as if a pebble had crashed against a watery surface.

"An array? A sealing array?!" Wei Wuyin immediately realized that the entire planet of Blueglow had been enveloped by a thick spherical array that prevented the passing of spiritual senses or physical bodies. This array was extremely complex. Furthermore, it was mystic-level, so he was unable to immediately sense its presence. If he had his Celestial Eyes, or even his eyes available, he would notice the crisscrossed net of golden light enveloping the entire planet.

Just as Wei Wuyin was about to test out some things, a clarion cry resounded that shook the fixed space and caused the entire planet to quake uncontrollably.

KREE!

A smile of delighted surprise formed as his head shot downwards, feeling the presence of Bai Lin! Her aura was as clear as the solar stars in the night sky. He was startled that he was unable to sense her presence initially but pleasantly surprised that she was still here. If something happened to Bai Lin because of his reckless decision to breach the planet, he would have...

It's best to not think about it.

He stood where he was as the earth cracked and faint scarlet-gold flames erupted outwards. They were Nirvanic Flames! These flames swirled about him and emitted no heat towards himself, yet the environment suffered from its intensity. Its ability to distinguish from friend and foe, transitioning between gentle emissions and burning heat, was as terrifying and miraculous as he remembered, knowing they each wisp and flicker was similar to Bai Lin's own flesh and blood, fully within her control.

Boosh!

From a few tens of meters away from him, a geyser of scarlet-gold nirvanic flames burst out from the earth. The clarion cry of Bai Lin resounded once again, filled with jubilant emotions and traces of exhaustion. This caused Wei Wuyin to frown for a single moment, but his expression eased into a smile as Bai Lin's figure came into his senses.

She escaped the earth and the flames gathered together until her white and golden feathered body manifested in its entirety. Wei Wuyin was startled to realize that he could not accurately view Bai Lin's Fire Phoenix Form with his spiritual sense despite its power. This was the first time this had happened, and he was once again reminded how immensely essential his Celestial Eyes had been to his cultivation and perception of the world.

With it, even unseen divinities were unable to escape its gaze.

When Bai Lin fully manifested, her twenty-two-meter-tall body of grace and beauty landed next to Wei Wuyin. "You're back!" She sent a mental transmission. When she landed, her legs were somewhat unsteady, but she still moved her head towards Wei Wuyin with undisguised joy.

Wei Wuyin walked forward and caressed her head, moving downwards to her neck and eventually pressing his hand against her chest. The feathers that brushed against his hand felt slightly different. He didn't hesitate to integrate his spiritual sense into her physical condition.

"You're injured?" Wei Wuyin's voice went down a few octaves.

Bai Lin didn't try to hide anything, immediately complaining: "Those bastards tried to remove me from the planet!" She lifted her elegant neck upwards, and her golden eyes flickered with animosity and violent killing intent. It was so intense that the surrounding fixed space shook a little.

Wei Wuyin frowned, interfacing with Mark of Eden within his heart. Instantly, strands of lifeforce were extracted, sent into Bai Lin's body, and the damage she suffered had almost instantly been repaired. Her nirvanic flames immediately grew more radiant, and her golden eyes emitted a brilliance of nirvana.

To injure Bai Lin, a cultivator must be at the Demi-Mortal Lord Phase or use an extremely powerful formation or array.

Kree!

Bai Lin released a cry of enjoyment as her body began to rapidly refine the lifeforce given to her. As a Genesis Beast of the Fire Phoenix Bloodline, injuring her was difficult, but she could use the Nirvanic Flames to refine lifeforce or other essences to convert into lifeforce for herself. That stockpile of refined lifeforce was how she triggered her next Nirvanic Transformation.

However, even if Wei Wuyin gave her endless lifeforce, she still needed sufficient power to survive the Nirvanic Transformation as well, so pushing forward without restraint could produce disastrous and eternal consequences.

"Tell me what happened," Wei Wuyin said as he felt deeply relieved. Bai Lin's injuries were not minor. She had suffered severe internal damage to her true body, her blood energies were not just drained but overly stimulated, and she had hidden herself away.

Bai Lin's eyes flashed with pure violence, but she soon calmed down as she lowered her head and body, expediting the healing process. "When you left..."

Two days prior.

The cylindrical pillar of cascading light reversed, taking Wei Wuyin to the Battlefield, and leaving Bai Lin alone on the ground, fissures permeating where she had just crashed. There was a forlorn look in her eyes. She sincerely hoped that Wei Wuyin had received her final words telling him to be safe.

Bai Lin lifted herself upright, staring at the boundless sky and the Dark Void beyond it. She let loose a soft, gentle cry outward. This was the first time she was genuinely unaware of where Wei Wuyin had gone off to. Even in the Myriad Yore Continent, when she spent almost a decade alone, she had always known where Wei Wuyin was or where he could be.

Now?

She was ignorant; worries and concerns for his well-being sieged her heart. While she was confident of Wei Wuyin's abilities, she had just been introduced to the world of Ascended beings. She was fully aware that Wei Wuyin was currently like an ant before these existences. While he had his means, his life could be forfeit before these beyond Mortal Limit beings.

All she could do now was wait. So wait she did.

However, the forces of Blueglow had been alerted by their imposing descent. Due to Wei Wuyin's pressing urgency to not miss this opportunity due to further delays, they shattered the planetary defensive array guarding Blueglow. The weaker forces were appalled by this, instantly sending messages to the strongest force on the planet—Skytaint Mystichall.

Their reactions were extremely rapid, with the Mystic Star Phase cultivator, Exalted Skytaint, overseer of the planet and leader of the Skytaint Hall, descending imposingly upon the area. The sightings of a white and gold feathered beast was reported, and he had the means to scour the entire planet with his spiritual sense.

He quickly discovered Bai Lin with relative ease. When he arrived with his entourage of combat-type Skyships fitted with all sorts of weapons that might give cultivators at the Second Stage of the Mystic Ascendant Realm, Soul of Mysticism Phase, issues, he didn't hesitate to surround Bai Lin.

He first lobbied out questioning announcements towards Bai Lin, even attempting to find the cultivator who owned this beast, yet Bai Lin gave him a brief and dismissive glance before she returned to waiting with her eyes closed. Meeting repeated failures in his attempt to sound out Bai Lin's purpose, he decided to draw out the owner.

"Fire upon that beast!" Exalted Skytaint ordered. The skyships powered up, fueling their ships with high-end astral stones and launching beams of destructively blue light. They pierced through the air and caused the environment's hue to gradually become more blue. The sound of these beams was far lighter than the deep, thrumming sound of Mystic-level Cannon, indicating their inferiority.

Suuu! Suuu! Suuu!

Bai Lin's response was simple: She batted her wings towards those beams, using her small body to crash against those thick beams of light. Her actions were met with ridicule by those who launched the attacks, feeling as if Bai Lin was bound to be obliterated. However, the next scene caused their jaws to drop to the floor!

Bai Lin deflected the beams of light with her wings covered in scarlet-gold flames, sending them curving like an arc into the distance! After her swift reply, she gave them a soft, disdainful cry and went back to patiently waiting. Several loud explosions erupted out, and a few of these beams landed in populated areas hundreds of miles away, causing untold devastation.

The chaos and mayhem caused made the crew and Exalted Skytaint as pale as ash. An Ascended beast?! Exalted Skytaint's expression became slightly ugly, but he realized this beast was far beyond his means to deal with, and if its owner was similarly terrifying, this situation could lead to disastrous consequences. For fear of his life and authority, he unhesitatingly sent a message up the chain, immediately contacting the Spirithall responsible for this planet—the Spiritwalker Hall.

And this action led to an escalation far beyond anything they could've ever imagined. An escalation that would lead the once lush and bright planet of Blueglow to become scorched and barren.

Chapter 772 - Fire Phoenix Appears!

Intricate and orderly, these two words were the perfect description of the Ninestar Starfield's societal structure, heavily placing emphasis on the number nine. Whether it was the number of Sainthalls, Solar Stars, or how they determine the passing of time and calendar dates, nine was quintessential to their society.

The Ninestar Starfield had nine total governing leaders that ruled Nine Domains: the Soul-Rising Domain, Soul-Falling Domain, Soul-Creation Domain, Soul-Eruption Domain, Soul-Destruction Domain, Soul-Enlightening Domain, Soul-Rumble Domain, Soul-Martial Domain, and lastly, the strongest of the nine domains, the Soul-Saint Domain.

These governing leaders were termed Sainthalls, and they each had Earthly Saints at their helm. Furthermore, the starfield's multileveled societal structure was divided into nine, from the highest and strongest Sainthall to the lowest Genesishall. However, the importance of nine did not cease there.

Each Sainthall ruled a Domain which had nine State Regions ruled by Lordhalls, forces that were controlled by elite Demi-Mortal Lords, and each State Region was a multi-planetary environment with exactly nine planets, and each of these nine planets were ruled by a Spirithall, forces that were controlled by elite Soul of Mysticism cultivators. The division still wouldn't stop, with the Genesishall each ruling one of nine areas of one of the nine established towns.

If someone were to observe this designed structure, they might be in utter disbelief how everything was perfectly curated to fit the number nine. Intricate and orderly, but clearly obsessively pushed.

Despite this, they were still widely considered by many as the second strongest starfield in the Grand Cyclic Stellar Region, only inferior to the Aeternal Sky Starfield and their Supermassive-sized Mystic Radiance Belt.

The planet Blueglow was situated in the Soul-Rising Domain, governed by the Soul-Rising Sainthall, within the State Region of the Essencequake Lordhall, regulated by the Spiritwalker Spirithall, and assisted by the nine Mystichalls, the most important of them was the Skytaint Mystichall.

Therefore, when the Skytaint Mystichall sent out a panicked message regarding the white and golden feathered beast that easily shattered their planetary defenses, breaching their territory and seemingly unwilling to leave, the hall that received this message was the Spiritwalker Hall.

The Spiritwalker Hall was not located on the planet. They ruled it from a small-sized World Realm that was tethered to one of its nine lunar satellites. The environment of that World Realm was far more suitable for cultivation, and they sent out Envoys such as Exalted Yu, the middle-aged Mystic Star Cultivator that had met Lin Xianxei and Lin Ming, to handle external matters.

Most Spirithalls did not act in this manner, staying upon their assigned planet and acting as the true governing force, but the Spiritwalker Hall had proxied their authority to the Skytaint Mystichall, hence why the power on the planet was unequal amongst Mystichalls, an unusual occurrence, yet expressive of the freedom these halls have over their assigned territories.

The World Realm was called the Utmost Spirit Realm, and it was roughly the size of the Myriad Yore Continent, being relatively small, yet it was populated by hundreds of millions, as had the Myriad Yore Continent once been. Within this world realm, a grand azure palace was situated at its center. There were serpent-like spiritual lights coursing through the walls, being extremely animated and lively as they swam about like fishes.

Outside of an abnormally large, metallic door within the palace, three figures stood protectively around in the hallway; their eyes reflected a variety of emotions. At times, these three figures would glance at the door briefly with complex emotions.

One of these figures was a middle-aged man dressed in grey and blue robes. The man had long hair tied into an orderly bun and a thick horseshoe mustache with signs of greying. This was none other than Exalted Yu, an Envoy of Venerable Spiritwalker!

The other two figures were two females. One was dressed in palatial robes, carrying a naturally pale countenance and a pair of solemn blue-colored eyes. She was quite pretty with long black hair, but her blue eyes induced a chill in all that saw her.

The other was ordinary-looking, middle-aged, and dressed in a modest dress that concealed every detail of her body. Her dark brown eyes and brown hair caused her to be unable to stand out amongst a crowd, yet she carried a serene, motherly aura about her that made it hard to feel ill-will against her.

BOOM!

"Ahhhhh!" A feminine scream filled with anguish and pain resounded alongside an explosion of power from the room behind the door, causing the three Exalted beings at the Mystic Star Phase to tremble. Their gazes reflected various emotions, from concern, to hope, to indifference. The last of which belonged to the glacial-eyed woman.

The middle-aged woman with an aura of motherly warmth couldn't hold her thoughts in, "Do you think Hallmaster Spiritwalker will succeed?" Her words carried with it a desire to be consoled, and with her bearing and aura, few would reject the opportunity.

Yet the brown-haired female wasn't affected, "Just wait and see." Her reply lacked any form of emotion, seemingly uncaring or outright confident that the Hallmaster will succeed.

Exalted Yu softly inhaled and exhaled out, trying to dissipate the tension built within his heart. Yet he was unable to ease it, so he decided to speak: "The Hallmaster has gained the assistance of one of the strongest Earthly Saints in the Aeternal Sky Starfield, the Guardian of the Elements—Han Yuhei—to help her perfectly refine Mystic Origin Liquid into her Spirit of Cultivation, an amazing acquisition she obtained from the Golden Life Pavilion after it was sold by Highlord Huang Xiaoming. She also got three Demi-Mortal Lords, two from the Tang Clan and one from the Golden Life Pavilion, to operate the Mystic-Integration Bodily Essence Formation, allowing her body and physique to be perfectly primed and adapted to the infusion of Mystic Intent.

"Since she succeeded in the latter, and had made ample preparations, more than I've seen before in my entire lifetime, she should succeed. She will succeed." Exalted Yu's words seemed more to console himself rather than the middle-aged woman. However, his tensed fists that revealed protruding veins betrayed his turbulent emotions.

The Hallmaster's success was of paramount importance. She had been preparing for the Third Ascension for over two thousand years. They weren't even born yet when she started making preparations, compiling wealth and resources, so they could only wait in hopes of her success.

The screams and explosions never ceased. The rippling of mystic power was apparent, and if the entire palace hadn't been thoroughly reinforced prior, the entire thing would have collapsed in on itself. This continued for an hour without end. Those shrieking howls only grew more and more bloodcurdling, making these Mystic Star Phase experts' expressions become grim and tense.

Twiing!

Suddenly, the middle-aged woman received a spiritual transmission as her spatial ring lit with radiant spiritual light. This drew away the focus on the group as they looked her way.

The middle-aged woman felt that curious gazes, and she faintly smiled apologetically. She had informed her subordinates not to message her for anything during this crucial period, yet they still disobeyed. While she was annoyed inwardly, her outward reply was still that warm smile.

However, her expression stilled and grew increasingly unnatural. She turned to Exalted Yu, "It's about a gold and white feathered avian beast that has wings of scarlet-gold flames."

Exalted Yu was taken aback that she was directing those words towards him, but then his eyes revealed a dawn of realization. "The Fire Phoenix?!" He hollered out in shock, his eyes bulging a little. Roughly half a year ago, a flaming bird had been sighted by flying in the Dark Void. A few Mystic Star Phase cultivators had observed its form and noted its appearance, including the scarlet-gold flames and its extremely large, twenty-two thousand meter-sized form.

It was almost impossible to miss.

From various reports, a base of Trueborn had been eliminated by this Fire Phoenix for unknown reasons, including its existence. Immediately, various figures tried to find it, including a variety of Heavenly Seers but to no avail. They didn't know if it was due to its power being extraordinary or being hidden away by some powerful means, but they couldn't grasp any details about it.

Still, the scene of the Trueborn's Shadow Egg being destroyed was viewed through special temporal reviewing spells, allowing the majority of the Ascended beings in the Ninestar Starfield to be aware of its existence. There were even rumors that Trueborn was actively seeking it out, wanting to capture it for their own goals or vengeance. This clandestine organization that remained silent and hidden was taking an active role!

Considering its power, many speculated that it was at the Soul of Mysticism level, amongst the elite of the elite. When Exalted Yu's thought leapt to the Fire Phoenix, his heart raced. He had only casually mentioned a bird of flames after hearing Spiritwalker talk about the beneficial potential extracting its Nirvanic Flames and Bloodline had towards increasing a cultivator's lifespan. As Mystic Star Phase experts, they needed to recoup 800 years of lifeforce to obtain another shot at ascending fully, but that was much easier said than done.

"What about it? Do you have news?!" Exalted Yu anxiously asked. The entire Ninestar Starfield was looking for this beast, so he was feeling agitated.

"AHHHHHH!" The screaming in the room intensified, clearly reaching a climax! This caused the trio to grow silent. An extended period of time passed before the intermittent screams ceased, the explosive booms ended, and the ripple of mystic power settled down.

Exalted Yu gulped, his fists tightened to their limits, and his eyes focused heavily on the door. Was it a success? Was it a failure? His aged heart could barely take it. And it wasn't just him, as personal disciples of their Hallmaster, if she became a Demi-Mortal Lord, her lifespan would rapidly explode, and she could easily obtain with her newfound power and status or sacrifice her personally refined lifeforce to allow them a chance to assail their Second Ascension once more.

Her success was tethered to their future. How could they not be anxious? Even the glacial-eyed woman had ripples within her gaze, the indifference vanishing gradually, replaced with the light of hope.

An hour passed with no response.

Then...

Creak!

The metal door opened! Their eyes unhesitatingly focused on the figure behind this movement. Even Exalted Yu had forgotten about the news of the Fire Phoenix, solely focused on the outcome of this moment!

When it opened, a beautiful woman with brunette hair and scarlet highlights was revealed. She was dressed in vermillion red robes with white trim, and at her heart area was the character for 'Tang' written in golden characters. There were traces of sweat formed on her forehead, and her breathing was disorderly.

The beautiful woman looked at the three figures who stared at her with intense anxiety. She revealed a smile, "Your master, Highlord Spiritwalker, wishes to see you."

Exalted Yu's eyes widened slightly as he realized the meaning behind that smile and those words. He hurriedly bowed and said with all his heart, "Thank you, Highlord Scarletflame." The glee in his voice was unable to be concealed, and he didn't want it to be.

It didn't take long before the three paid their respects to the Highlord, giving abundant thanks, and venturing into the room.

The Demi-Mortal Lord from the Tang Clan, Highlord Scarletflame, frowned slightly as she watched them enter. She glanced at her spatial ring that flickered with faint spiritual light, her eyes glowing with greed. "The Fire Phoenix is still here?" She didn't hesitate to send out a message to her clan.

After doing this, she went back into the room with a smile and gently closed the door.

Back at the Tang Clan, several Voidships were being primed and deployed to the edge of the Ninestar Starfield via Void Gates, no matter the cost.

Chapter 773 - The Tang Enters Ninestar

"What is it doing?" A group of cultivators was huddled together upon a large-sized Skyship, acting as the vehicle for tens of thousands of crew, all being operated at peak efficiency. At the bow of the ship and head of this particular group was the Skytaint Mystichall's Exalted Skytaint, including eight others. They all had auras that indicated that they were beyond Mortal Limits.

The individual who asked that question was a decently handsome cultivator that had an outward appearance of an early twenties mortal. His glistening skin and vibrant eyes indicated a sign of youth and life, yet his status as a Mystic Star Phase cultivator indicated his lack of it.

Exalted Skytaint furrowed his thick eyebrows until they were nearly vertical, unable to hide his increasingly tense heart. It had been almost two hours since he sent the message to the Spiritwalker Spirithall, yet he received no response. While he was notified by those in that Utmost Spirit Realm that Venerable Spiritwalker was in seclusion, this was still a troubling matter.

A beast, of unknown origins, had descended upon Blueglow. It had a strength that far exceeded his own. Even the ships, cannons, and planetary formation weren't capable of dealing any damage. It could obliterate the planet if they weren't careful.

"Maybe it's trying to rest? Should we try to tame it?" A Mystic Hallmaster guessed, trying to break this uncomfortable stalemate.

"You go and do that. We'll watch," the young Mystic Hallmaster mockingly suggested. This caused the one who spoke to send a glare, clearly frustrated by this little brat's attempt to joke around at such a critical moment.

"The beast isn't something cultivators at our level can hope to tame. A single mistake and our lives would be over; no one will approach it. Maintain the engulfing net, ensure it doesn't escape or do anything abnormal," Exalted Skytaint had to take charge. While his personal strength and legitimately

bestowed authority wasn't much higher than those present, the Spirit Hallmaster had given him this leadership position to oversee the planet.

The other Mystic Hallmasters looked at Exalted Skytaint with complex emotions. This was a delicate situation with far too many unknowns. To think such a powerful beast had gone under the radar, even entered their territory without scrutiny. If its wild, truly wild, this could easily turn into a massacre.

They prayed that this creature didn't decide to unleash a little rampage out of boredom. A few looked at the white and gold feathered bird that was exceptionally beautiful and gulped. A wisp of fear settled in their hearts, becoming full-blown seeds being germinated by their negative thoughts.

"Go!" Exalted Skytaint urged.

After a few starts, they rushed off to fly towards their respective Skyships. They would surround the beast in the hopes of containing it. In the worst-case scenario, they'll be forced to escape the planet. They had already placed their loved ones on the Skyships in these two hours. None of them knew what would happen, so they hurriedly took every precaution.

Exalted Skytaint stood alone at the bow of his Skyship, his expression gloomy, and his eyes carried a dark, fearful light.

"I have a bad feeling about this..."

The Tang Clan's Voidships numbered fifteen, and they were fully outfitted with Combat-type modifications and formations. They were weapons of war. There was a supply of mystic stones being brought in small, specialized silver boxes that allowed transport through Void Gates. The intense spatial fluctuations emitted from these boxes produced ripples in fixed space endlessly.

They were all stationed outside the Ninestar Starfield's territory, at the very edge of its borders. They hadn't breached yet, seemingly awaiting for something specific. After all, such a fleet of ships was close to initiating all-out war.

At the head of this fleet of Voidships was a slightly larger Voidship painted entirely scarlet-red. There was a hundred-meter-sized spiritually projected character that seemed to be set ablaze, burning wildly above the Voidship, yet the character remained perfectly clear. It formed the character: "Tang."

"Why?" A voice, majestic, imposing, powerful, and world-shaking, echoed throughout the Dark Void. The Voidships even trembled slightly. This voice was masculine in nature, deep and unfathomable. While it was merely one single question, the threatening intent within it was extremely clear.

"..." The Tang Clan's Voidships remained silent for several minutes. If one were to observe this from afar, one might feel as if the Tang Clan was purposefully ignoring this voice.

"Why?" The voice asked again. Yet this no longer felt like a question but a demand. The power contained within it was at another level, and the Dark Void started to twist and distort; a ferocious power was warping the area. Even the Voidships were creaking and bending oddly.

"Enough!" A voice filled with an empirical air resounded, feminine and sharp. Suddenly, a figure shimmered into existence beside the flaming character. Clearly, they had just arrived via a Void Gate, and their aura was vibrant.

It belonged to a woman dressed in an imperial hanfu in red and black, and adorned on its long outer skirt was the image of Zhuque of legends—a Vermillion Bird. Six mesmerizing tails accompanied its red feathers with traces of gold.

The woman was extremely gorgeous, carrying a unique charm and air that alluded to an elite bearing. Her long skirt fluttered in the Dark Void, a location without wind, as she stared violently at the empty space ahead, slightly inside the borders of the Ninestar Starfield.

She didn't speak again as she brandished her right sleeve with a cold harrumph. An object shot forth and became a comet of light that pierced the Ninestar Starfield's territorial border with ease.

When it reached no more than a few inches in, it came to an abrupt halt. The object was engulfed by a sphere of light that reflected the starry skies. It carried a boundless prestigious aura. After a while, the object vanished without warning.

"...Two weeks."

The voice said, its tone carried less weight and strength to it.

The beautiful woman snorted coldly, brandishing her sleeves again as she shot towards the Voidship at the head of the fleet. When she softly landed, those onboard all simultaneously kneeled, greeting with immense respect and veneration in their voices: "Matriarch!"

The woman stood at the ship's bow, ignoring those who kneeled. She looked towards the Ninestar Starfield; her eyes flickered with immense greed and desire. *'A real fire phoenix!'*

"Onwards! Chart a course to Soul-Rising Domain's Planet Blueglow!" Her orders were clear and reached the ears of every last crewmate. They immediately went into overdrive as they proceeded to act. It didn't take long, merely three minutes or so, before all the Voidships were moving and breached the Ninestar Starfield without any hesitation.

In the Endless Prosperity Domain, the Grand Horse Realm, there was an idyllic paradise that resembled an immortal's garden. There was a glistening and sparkling waterfall that seemed to generate rainbows, the lush greenery couldn't be any healthier, and strong, stable mountains surrounded a lake.

In this location, two figures were seated on impromptu seats forged from boulders. An aged old man sat at one end; his greying hair and age spots were as noticeable as possible. Across from him, a beautiful young woman with hazel eyes and navy flecks. Her enchanting brows were furrowed as she looked at the board game between them.

The two seemed to be in the process of a long, extended, and difficult match between them. These two were none other than Ma Zheng and Xue Yifei. When Xue Yifei moved, picking up a piece, and placing it down, the air within the world swirled a little.

Ma Zheng's lackadaisical eyes revealed a wisp of surprise, clearly beset by shock at this move of hers. However, just as he was about to immediately take advantage of this move, touching the piece and lifting it, his eyes widened slightly. He looked to Xue Yifei and his heart quivered. He was caught in a trap! With a heavy sigh, he placed his piece down.

Just as Xue Yifei moved her hand with a faint, knowing smile, Ma Zheng pressed against his king piece and tilted it downwards; he surrendered outright.

"Haaa...this is the seventeenth consecutive time I've lost to a junior. What would the world say if this were to get out? That maybe I'm too old?" Ma Zheng jokingly said, carrying a wry smile.

Xue Yifei didn't answer, merely giving a soft smile in response. This elicited another sigh from Ma Zheng, but this time there was appreciation and admiration within it. "Where did you learn to play so well?" This Xue Yifei might be beautiful, but her style filled with traps and trickery was quite vicious.

Xue Yifei's eyes glazed over for a moment, remembering that handsome visage that rivaled immortals of legend. "From him," she answered truthfully. She always knew how to play, but it was when she played against him that her playstyle evolved, and she became even more skilled.

"Oh?" Ma Zheng was taken aback, but when he thought about it, he laughed. "I didn't know he played, but I guess it makes sense."

Xue Yifei recalled her memories on the Myriad Monarch Main Planet, where she and Wei Wuyin spent the most time together. Before he left for the Gateway Door to explore its secrets, she'd only seen him once in the Four Extreme Continent that had miraculously appeared in the Everlore Starfield, but it's been nearly seven years since.

Twiing!

Ma Zheng received a spiritual transmission, his spatial ring glowing slightly. When he received it, his expression changed. "The Fire Phoenix appeared?"

"A phoenix?" Xue Yifei's eyes brightened when that word was said. According to what Wei Wuyin said once, he had a beloved crane that went through a tribulation to bring out the full potential of a fruit called the Golden Phoenix Fruit. Hearing about a phoenix shortly after thinking about him, how could she not be excited?

Ma Zheng frowned slightly, looking at Xue Yifei. "It's nothing; Venerable Ma Sujiang just learned that there was a unique beast in the Ninestar Starfield."

"Ma Sujiang?" Xue Yifei's expression slightly changed, but it soon eased. After being attacked by Ma Sujiang, she always felt a feeling of caution towards that woman.

Ma Zheng knew about their history, even having to interfere to halt it from escalating. Considering that Ma Sujiang was his last daughter, he tried to ease the tension between them. He explained: "Venerable Ma Sujiang went along with Highlord Silverstrike to help with a Mystic-Integration Bodily Formation, but she caught wind of this piece of news there. She asked if we should mobilize our forces."

Xue Yifei's expression changed.

Ma Sujiang added, "But since it's a Fire Phoenix, there's no way the Tang Clan would hold back. Highlord Vermillion, the Matriarch of the Tang Clan, will certainly not let this go under any circumstance. She'll pay any price for it, so it'll be pointless unless we want to go to war against the Tang Clan.

"Considering the news of a Fire Phoenix has circulated for so long, they'd likely made all sorts of preparations to capture it.

Xue Yifei's expression changed once again, this time darker.

Ma Zheng noticed this reaction, frowning as he inquired: "Are you okay?"

Xue Yifei had to steady her breathing, her thoughts became a little wild. She reminded herself that this Fire Phoenix wasn't likely to be Wei Wuyin's, but her feelings remained unsettled.

Unable to contain herself, she immediately explained: "I can't say for certain, but my fiancé has a phoenix-like beast. Could it be him?" There was no news of Wei Wuyin, besides the arrival of an unknown Soul of Mysticism expert that mercilessly crushed his opponent in the Golden Life Pavilion's challenge that represented him.

When Ma Zheng heard this, he didn't dismiss it, but took it seriously. "This Fire Phoenix is said to possess the strength of a Demi-Mortal Lord, and it emerged without warning. It's highly possible to be a Void Beast that traversed the Dark Void from beyond the Stellar Region. What do you think are the chances of this beast being his?" His tone deepened and his eyes focused on Xue Yifei's expression.

Xue Yifei struggled inwardly, but she relented and told her honest estimate, "Before, I was less than ten percent certain, but if it's a Demi-Mortal Lord with unclear origins, then I'm at least seventy percent sure!"

"..." Ma Zheng's breathing halted. He looked Xue Yifei in the eyes for a long, very long moment, trying to assess her confidence. The implications of this were massive. When he resumed breathing, he made a decision.

He sent a spiritual message to Ma Sujiang.

Yet a few minutes later, he received a three-word reply: "It's too late."

Planet Blueglow was evacuated by Highlord Scarletflame, her means were swift, precise and stealthy, avoiding disturbing Bai Lin's rest. In a few minutes, billions of cultivators of all ages and cultivation bases were taken away and sent elsewhere.

In the shortest possible time, only Skyships of the Mystic Hallmasters and Bai Lin remained. The latter lightly slept, awaiting for Wei Wuyin's return.

The Tang Clan's fleet arrived.

Chapter 774 - Vermillion Bird & Fire Phoenix

"...Are they this scared of me?" The changes on Blueglow did not go unnoticed by Bai Lin. While she was in a resting state, she was not asleep and ignorant of her surroundings. The constant vanishing of life auras was keenly noted. Even the Skyships that observed her from afar had distanced themselves.

To evacuate the entire planet due to her, a seed of pride emerged in her heart. There was also a little wisp of vigilance that flitted through her golden eyes. As a Genesis Beast, her instincts were particularly strong, and she felt the exceptional life aura of a single person flashing about, moving other weaker life auras about.

It was the most potent life aura Bai Lin had ever sensed before, and this was a cause for some concern. Even those from that egg-like structure weren't close to this level of life-based vibrance. That said, she wasn't afraid. After refining those Ascended beings, Bai Lin had fortified her bloodline energies and stabilized her lineage cultivation at the Second Stage of the Nirvanic Rebirth Realm.

She even had access to a few more bloodline abilities unique to her current stage. She hadn't had the chance to test them out yet, merely pieces of details in her memories, so if the opportunity presented itself, she wouldn't back down in a fight.

"But what if the planet is destroyed and he can't find his way back?" Her thoughts diverted to Wei Wuyin and the cascading beam of torrential light that took him away. If the planet was destroyed, would he return here or somewhere else? Her thoughts, while uneducated in the functions of the Stellar Transit Light and its formations, was perfectly warranted. If the planet were destroyed, Wei Wuyin would've become a passenger without a destination.

If he was lucky to enter after, he would've been sent to the nearest available destination. If he was unlucky and was in the Stellar Transit Light just before, he would've kept going in his determined direction until the energy of the Stellar Transit Light dissipated, whereby he'd be dropped off then and there.

"..." The growing concern for this possibility kept bombarding her mind. It was as if something was thoroughly telling her that the devastation of the planet would result in disastrous circumstances. However, despite feeling an urge to depart elsewhere, she couldn't bear to leave. After a brief internal debate, she decided to hunker down and await his return, even if it took years or decades. After all, didn't he do the same for her?

They've never abandoned each other before, and she wasn't going to start now.

The Ninestar Starfield was becoming turbulently active after news of a fleet of combat-type Voidships bearing the Tang insignia, one of the Eight Noble Clans of the Aeternal Sky Starfield, had entered their territory widely spread to almost every corner. There were whispers of confusion, speculations, and even the possibility of war circulating.

It stirred the nest even more than the rumored appearance of the Fire Phoenix's sighting in the Soul-Rising Domain. However, this rumor slowly became an accepted fact among the Ascended beings and talented, well-informed elites after numerous sources verified the fleet of Voidships cruising towards the Soul-Rising Domain. This enlightened almost everyone as to why the Ninestar Starfield had allowed this.

The Tang Clan was extremely well-known for being a paramount clan of fire-attributed cultivation. They adopted the Vermillion Bird, a legendary being of exceptionally rich and renowned history, as their idol and symbol of power. Even their Matriarchs and Patriarchs over the years have adopted the title Vermillion as their Daoist titles regardless of their cultivation base.

A Fire Phoenix and a Vermillion Bird were said to have an mystical and rich history together. According to some stories, the Fire Phoenix was a direct descendant of the primordial origin of all avian creatures having mated with an Immortal Solar Demon, the largest Solar Star in existence. The Fire Phoenix later mated with a strange floral demon that only bloomed during the summer season of the Immortal Realms, thereby producing the Vermillion Bird.

In other stories, the Vermillion Bird and the Fire Phoenix were both equal in birth, originating from the primordial origin of all avian creatures as identical twins born on the same day, indistinguishable from each other. The former was taciturn and diligent; the latter was playful and lively.

One day, while flying freely through the Realms of Gods, the Fire Phoenix was said to have mocked the Divinity of Fire for being too hot, saying it couldn't live as fire and that it'd rather die if it had. After telling the Divinity of Fire that its existence was unbearable and that it should extinguish itself for the sake of others, it flew off chuckling in its jubilant excitement.

The Divinity of Fire grew enraged at this, so to punish it, the Divinity of Fire refined the bird with an immortal stone and an essence of itself, forcing the bird to become the living embodiment of immortal flames, constantly subjected to being incinerated into ash and reborn without end as a punishment for its mouth. It was only after its mother descended, coming to an agreement with the Divinity of Fire, that the Fire Phoenix would only forcefully suffer this punishment nine times. From then on, Its true body was no longer flesh, just flames.

Both stories were outlandish, yet it was merely two of many mythological stories of their origins. All this aside, there was a verifiable and undeniable connection between the two beings.

The Endless Prosperity Domain, Grand Horse Realm.

Xue Yifei and Ma Zheng were seated across from each other, but they both had complex expressions.

"What do you mean it's too late?" Xue Yifei asked anxiously. She didn't know why, but after thinking more about it, she felt a stronger sensation that the Fire Phoenix was the same being that Wei Wuyin once talked about, and this caused her heart to grow taut with worry. What if Wei Wuyin was there?

"...I don't know the exact details, but it seems the Tang Clan..." The old Ma Zheng started speaking but halted himself mid-sentence as his expression grew even more solemn. This situation could rapidly escalate. If only he knew this before! Now that he thought about it, both Wei Wuyin and this Fire Phoenix's location were unable to be gleaned upon by Heavenly Seers!

If Wei Wuyin was carrying something that disguised himself from their prying eyes, then it made sense that the Fire Phoenix would be under the same protections.

"Why does the Tang Clan want the Fire Phoenix?" Xue Yifei asked after hearing about this illustrious Noble Clan with heavy connections with the Imperial Clan itself. She was now well-learned about the

intricate dynamics of the Aeternal Sky Starfield's sixteen mystic forces. The Tang Clan is deeply intertwined with the Imperial Clan, many of their beautiful female members serving as wives and concubines to many upper-echelon figures, including some princes.

Most importantly, one of the Tang Clan direct lineage descendants had married as an official wife of the Aeternal Sky Divine Emperor, which later gave birth to one of his most beloved princesses known! Their connections ran abnormally deep in that pool of authority—inseparable.

Ma Zheng heard Xue Yifei's question and frowned. "Long ago, phoenixes and dragons were not as rare as they are today. The Desolate Dragnet Stellar Region was but one of the many regions ruled by beasts; even phoenixes had their own stellar region that they dominated. According to certain records, a war between beasts occurred and wiped out over 99% of the beasts' population with indiscriminate ferocity. I'm unsure of the exact details because this happened hundreds of thousands of years ago, long before my own birth, but these beasts all severely deteriorated soon after.

"Their territories were marked as desolate, uninhabitable for cultivators. The ancient recordings that detailed this was from a nearly extinct race within our own stellar region. There are only some bloodline remnants left, but they aren't pure. This race was said to be giants in form, human-like in appearance, boasting terrifyingly powerful bodies as cultivators. When the Tang Clan originally formed tens of thousands of years ago, they had an exceptional genius who found a unique cultivation method left behind by this ancient race in one of these desolate regions.

"It was called the Blazing Unity of Twin Flames, and it was divided into two parts: Vermillion and Phoenix. The Vermillion version, I have never read myself, only heard rumors as the Tang Clan is extremely secretive, but the Phoenix version, I've not only extensively read but tried to extrapolate some of its essence to cultivate myself." Ma Zheng paused here, his brows furrowed even deeper as he recalled such an ancient memory that carried heavy disappointment.

Xue Yifei's heart fiercely pounded. She was receiving a history lesson that she hadn't expected, and it revealed a few extremely terrifying details! However, during the first half of Ma Zheng's words, her mind felt that memories in her Spirit of Cultivation had been triggered awake. She couldn't help but press against her chest as it sped up.

Ma Zheng continued, "The Vermillion half of the cultivation method focused on refining a physique. The Blazing Unity Physique, one of the strongest physiques known in the entire stellar region. Those who cultivate it seldom fail their Third Ascension, and even if they did, they have a strange spell that allows them to survive without refining Mystic Origin Liquid. This is rumored to be why the Tang Clan currently has the highest number of Demi-Mortal Lord figures as a single power in the entire Aeternal Sky Starfield, outside of the Imperial Clan, of course.

"I don't know how it is cultivated, but it's said that they found a Vermillion Bird's ancient burial ground and it contains their bones." Ma Zheng stopped here, his eyes wistful as he drifted in thought.

Xue Yifei settled her heartbeat down. "What about the Phoenix half?"

Snapping back to reality, Ma Zheng coughed a few times before heaving a breath of relief. "It's said that Fire Phoenixes have perfect control over their flames, being direct extensions of themselves, allowing them to burn what they want and only what they want. A strange will of sorts. The Phoenix half states

that the Essence Blood of a Fire Phoenix contains the will of the worldly fire, capable of harnessing this unique Intent. If cultivated in accordance with the method, one can comprehend the Nirvanic Flames Intent, something that exceeds the Fire Intent, integrated with life, death, and annihilation laws of the world itself."

Xue Yifei jolted in disbelief, "Unique Intent?" She had learned much since entering the Grand Cyclic Stellar Region, so she knew that the Material Dao, like actual materials, were divided into levels of low, mid, high, and apex. The Apex-level Intent was the strongest of that type of Intent, such as Absolute Zero Ice Intent and Absolute Hot Fire Intent.

She had never heard of this type of unique Intent before.

Ma Zheng coughed a few times again, his eyes growing emotional, "This type of unique Intent isn't the same as the others, because while they can fall into classifications of normal Intent, divided into Seed, Awakened, and World Heart, it's been infused and modified thoroughly by strange laws and worldly forces. They are, however, unable to be comprehended from the world unlike all things within the Material Dao. The Nirvanic Flames Intent, for example, can only be comprehended from the Essence Blood of a Fire Phoenix and only if one has cultivated the correct physique to handle its overbearing power."

"Like the Blazing Unity Physique?" Xue Yifei asked.

"Like the Blazing Unity Physique," Ma Zheng smiled. "But it doesn't end there, the Nirvanic Flames are beyond Mortal Limits, so mortals can't harness its power. At least that's what the cultivation method itself said, I can't be certain. Still, it states that the Essence Blood contains the mysteries of the Mystic Dao. If one can extract it, refine it, and diligently cultivate with it using the method, one has a chance of gaining insight into the Awakened Mystic Intent, reaching...reaching..." Ma Zheng slowed down here, his breathing growing more and more tired. Despite sitting down, his expression gradually grew pale.

Xue Yifei saw the exhausted and sickly state Ma Zheng was in, knowing that his life was approaching its end. She bit her lower lip anxiously as she waited for him to regain his breath. This extended period of discussion must've exhausted him greatly.

Only after a few minutes did Ma Zheng regain a somewhat healthy complexion, breathing out heavily as he closed his eyes. He continued with a hoarse voice, seemingly willing to stop without finishing his words: "They can reach the Earthly Saint Phase! There were also other benefits noted in the method, alluding to it allowing those who cultivate it to reach higher phases, but I can't be certain if its true. No one can. Not even the Golden Gate Pavilion verified it. They once said that the secrets of cultivation are the most difficult to glean."

Xue Yifei now understood why Ma Zheng said the Tang Clan couldn't be stopped. If she was them, she would mobilize all of her available forces to capture the Fire Phoenix alive. She wouldn't even allow others to interfere. Who knew if an Demi-Mortal Lords, or even Earthly Saint level figures, might scheme against her in the shadows.

"But...if this is the case, will the Ninestar Sainthall allow them to take it? Why don't they capture the Fire Phoenix themselves?" Xue Yifei felt that there was more to this story left unsaid. Because, from her

point of view, she would unhesitatingly destroy the Fire Phoenix before allowing it to fall into another forces' hands. Even the other fifteen mystic forces should intervene, right?

Ma Zheng sighed. "This actually has to do with an agreement made long ago. But it doesn't matter; no one will stop them, not even I can."

Xue Yifei frowned, "But does anyone want to see them fail?"

Ma Zheng coughed once, swallowing a little and saying smilingly, "Everyone wants to see them fail."

Kree?

Bai Lin released a low, gentle cry as she lifted her neck towards the sky.. The outline of over a dozen voidships reflected in her golden eyes.

Chapter 775 - Into Fire, Take Flight!

"..." Bai Lin slowly rose to a standing position. A distinct glimmer of vigilant light flickered within her golden-colored eyes. Her bestial instincts flared as an acute sensation of danger impacted her senses. Her feathers lifted slightly in a primed state, and her chest heaved out a steady, forceful breath.

Bai Lin might be a beast, but she didn't lack the slightest bit of intelligence or awareness if one compared her to humans, demons, elves, or beastmen as a Genesis Beast. The abnormal developments occurring within her perception were indicative of an imminent threat. It wasn't just her body that felt it; her bloodline, and her mind was fully alerting her of this crisis.

She internally struggled as her eyes moved to the spot where Wei Wuyin had been whisked away, once again recalling that urge to depart from the planet. Her chest expanded and decompressed, releasing out another heavy breath. She calmed herself down, looking upwards once again.

Bai Lin had to reconsider her earlier decision, thinking not what she wanted, but what Wei Wuyin would do in her position. Her own desire was to stay and teach these individuals a lesson, but she was fully aware that there were certain cultivators that she couldn't fight against. She was too young, too inexperienced.

If Wei Wuyin was here...

"He would retreat, observe, and decide in a safe position." Bai Lin knew Wei Wuyin far better than anyone currently living in this world. He was meticulous and careful. If he went into battle, he was certain of his enemy and even more certain of himself.

Facing a prepared enemy was his fear, but being unprepared himself was his greatest fear, so he avoided engaging while in such a disadvantageous position of ignorance. She was facing an unknown enemy of unknown strength, and their vibrant life auras weren't indicative of strength. An aged Demi-Mortal Lord might be a dimly lit candle, but its flames could burn through solar stars. On the other hand, an aura filled with energy and vitality could be weak and inexperienced. Her life aura sense couldn't accurately determine their strength.

After a moment of fierce inner struggle, she settled on departing a safe distance until she understood what was happening, why, and who. Or, she'd wait in the Dark Void until that cascading beam of light returned, carrying Wei Wuyin with it. Either way, the Dark Void was her favorable environment as a Genesis Beast.

She opened her wings.

A few minutes earlier, on the Tang Clan's lead Voidship was the Tang Matriarch alongside eight other figures. Five females and three males were within the group of eight, all of which sported the 'Tang' embroidered character somewhere on their unique attires, colored entirely in vermilion red.

Amongst this group of nine was none other than Highlord Scarletflame, the one who helped Spiritwalker in her ascension attempt. She seemed to be a little pale, yet her eyes were exceptionally vibrant and effusing desirous light. She wasn't the only one.

All nine of them were floating slightly above the Voidship and had eyes that betrayed their intense emotions of greed, joy, curiosity, and thoughtfulness. Their gazes were fixated on the planet with a faint blue glow enveloping it, peering into it until they observed the cautious-looking Bai Lin.

"It really is a Fire Phoenix!" Highlord Scarletflame delightfully exclaimed. Her spiritual perception funneled through her eyes could observe the ample fire-attributed energies coursing within Bai Lin's body, and her image wasn't an exact match, but damn-near close to depictions of phoenixes!

"She's twenty-two meters." The one who stated this obvious fact cautiously was none other than a Highlord Solarflame, a Demi-Mortal Lord of the Tang Clan. He was relatively young-looking with clear skin and a scholarly demeanor that exuded an intelligent nature.

"Second Nirvanic Rebirth?" Highlord Darkflame, a female Demi-Mortal Lord of petite build and with a chill-inducing pair of eyes, questioned. Yet after the words left her lips, her joy diminished considerably. There was now a hint of caution within. She wasn't alone in her thoughts. Besides Highlord Solarflame, Highlord Scarletflame, and the eternally dignified Tang Matriarch, the other four had subtle changes in their expression.

"Have we not prepared enough?" Highlord Scarletflame hurriedly tried to reassure them, wanting to remind them that, including the fifteen Voidships that had just entered the starfield, they had two other Voidships that came alongside herself and Highlord Brightblaze, another female Demi-Mortal Lord of the Tang Clan.

Additionally, they had eight hundred Starlords, fifty Mystic Star Phase experts, and eighteen Soul of Mysticism cultivators. The Tang Clan had fielded over eighty percent of its strength in this operation. They made ample preparations, from talismans, arrays, to special cannons designed to counteract their target's abilities. If this wasn't enough, they simply weren't destined for this.

"We are prepared, but a Second Nirvana Reborn Phoenix is recorded as having the strength that reaches the Demi-Mortal Lord level. Killing one might be easy; capturing one alive..." the scholarly man, Highlord Solarflame, calmly said.

"That's only a fully matured one. This one seems very nascent in age." Highlord Scarletflame judged, directing those words to Matriarch Tang. She was clearly worried that this operation might experience a

delay or that the clan would ask an Earthly Saint to intervene to prevent unexpected developments. This would severely harm their interests and gains.

"You can tell the age of a phoenix? When did your ocular spell reach such a level?" A pretty female cultivator with sharp eyes and thin lips mocked. She was Highlord Lightblaze. A Fire Phoenix was filled with lifeforce that was accumulated to tackle the next Nirvanic Rebirth, so it was foolish to state that the Fire Phoenix was young as a

Fire Phoenix's size didn't change based on their age but the number of times Nirvanic Rebirth had been experienced.

Highlord Scarletflame gave her a glance, ignoring her as she returned to the Matriarch. This beautiful woman that possessed an exceptionally elite bearing of authority and prestige was at the head of this group of nine. She commanded them all; she made the decisions.

"What about the Earthly Saint?" Highlord Solarflame inquired. This caused everyone's expression to change slightly. The Fire Phoenix had taken down a Shadow Egg of Trueborn, and a Second Nirvanic Rebirth Fire Phoenix wasn't sufficient to cause its collapse, especially if it was a chick. Moreover, the Heavenly Seers and Oracles were unable to glean any insight of its whereabouts or origins, signaling that it was being shielded by a powerful expert.

"If he or she reveals themselves, there will naturally be someone to handle them," the Tang Matriarch calmly stated. Her confidence was unwavering and her determination was set. The Ninestar Sainthall didn't allow foreign Earthly Saints to enter their territory, and she had already determined their stance on this foreign invader hiding within their territory without announcement. Furthermore, there was no way she could retreat at this opportunity. None of them could.

If they showed...

"It's going to move!" Abruptly, Highlord Scarletflame exclaimed anxiously, her aura of a genuine Ascended being at the Third Stage erupted, sending an imposing power into the artificial atmosphere. The two males yet to be mentioned, remaining silent as the others discussed, Highlord Autumnflame and Highlord Blackflame, both unleashed their auras simultaneously.

The Tang Matriarch's eyes glistened with a ferocious determination. She lifted her hands, prompting the other Highlords to sport intensely solemn expressions. The time limit to assess had expired.

"We can't let it reach the Dark Void; delay her on the planet, do not destroy it. We'll need twenty-three seconds to establish the net." Her orders were sent through spiritual transmission, so it was received and understood in less than a millisecond. Scarletflame, Autumnflame, and Blackflame were already prepared for this; their bodies shot downwards towards the planet at blitzing speed.

The others vanished like shadows, taking command of other ships as orders were issued and Voidships were pushed into extremely rapid movement. They intended to surround the planet. The Tang Clan Matriarch's Voidship didn't move. There was a large-sized cannon of aquamarine color that started to glimmer with light. It pointed directly at the planet with the help of three Soul of Mysticism Cultivators.

Woosh! Woosh! Woosh!

Three Highlords penetrated Blueglow's atmosphere, flying towards Bai Lin. Bai Lin's eyes widened slightly at this scene. These cultivators finally acted! She batted her wings, causing the ground beneath her to morph inwards from the force, and she, like a missile, exploded upwards towards the three fearlessly! Her body caught fire.

FIRE PHOENIX TRANSFORMATION!

She didn't hesitate to unleash her strongest state! Her body morphed into the embodiment of fire, twenty-two thousand meters in height and an even wider wingspan! She covered the skies, taking flight towards the three.

The three Highlord's expressions changed slightly, but they remained collected and focused. The fire phoenix approached them, seemingly intent on engulfing them in its fiery body, yet the three Highlords split off without needing to delay with any communication. They were incredibly fast, and Bai Lin's pupils contracted from their speed!

Before she could breach into the upper atmosphere and enter the Dark Void, the three Highlords positioned themselves in a triangular formation with her as the center, and each formed a single, strange hand-seal. Their hands manifested strange mystical runes of cyan-colored light. They flowed throughout their hands in a mystical manner.

「Mystic Spell: Spirit Binding Chains」

The three Highlords released terrifying spiritual light from their bodies that rapidly consolidated and condensed into eight incredibly thick, cyan-colored interlocking chains each, tethered to their backs, and they shot forth with astonishing speed. Like slithering snakes, they went above, below, around, and through Bai Lin's flaming body.

Before she could react, her fiery form was ensnared by these chains. A spirit restrictive power coursed through these chains into her! They were set on binding her, and they could! She violently thrashed in mid-air, causing her flames to grow lively with the intent to burn these chains into spiritual ash, yet she discovered these things were incredibly resilient to her nirvanic flames. She couldn't burn them away in a short period of time.

"Down!" Highlord Scarletflame took the lead, shouting an order as she slammed her palm towards the ground. The other two followed suit, and the chains tightly wrapped around Bai Lin began to tighten and sink downwards back to the planet.

Kree!

Bai Lin was astounded that these chains could bind her fire phoenix form, finding this incredulous, yet she calmed herself rather quickly! She might be young, but she had fought alongside Wei Wuyin numerous times and had developed an impeccable sense of battle and urgency.

「Fire Phoenix Bloodline: Nirvanic Outburst」

Her flaming body began to swell as she was dragged downwards, and the aura within her went into total chaos. The three Highlords' expressions became urgent as they felt a strange sensation enter their senses, one of danger.

Highlord Scarletflame was the first to react, her hands formed another hand-seal and the spiritual chains attached to her back detached, and she, without hesitation, retreated back into the Dark Void! She was remarkably swift and decisive.

Highlord Autumnflame and Highlord Blackflame were taken aback, but as Demi-Mortal Lords with their cultivation, how could their reactions be slow? The former hastily released his chains with a similar hand-seal, outwards and escaping into the Dark Void! The latter formed a hand-seal, but when his chains sought to detach, he felt his entire being freeze! His mind, body, mystic power, and soul!

「Spiritual Spell: Fixed Soul!」

Almost instantly, a burst of powerful spiritual strength erupted from Highlord Blackflame, and he broke free from this spiritual binding, but his return of awareness was welcomed by a maelstrom of incoming nirvanic flames! He was engulfed! Swallowed whole!

Kree!

An entire hemisphere of the planet was drenched in Nirvanic Flames from Bai Lin's explosive outburst, causing its blue glow to vanish, replaced by a scarlet-gold hue! Bai Lin's fire phoenix form shot out from the sea of flames, seeking to escape into the Dark Void.

But, just as she reached the very upper limits of the planet's atmosphere, a Voidship of considerable size met her gaze. Her pupils expanded as she felt her entire body tense and her nirvanic flame seemingly quiver.

Then, twenty-four spiritual chains shot forth once again from all angles, capturing her form once again!

The Tang Matriarch looked at Bai Lin with a calm gaze as if everything was well within her control and considerations. She waved her hand, "Fire!"

The large-sized cannon started to release scintillating azure light!

Chapter 776 - Into Fire, Dousing Flames

"...!" Facing the scintillating azure light tinted by an aquamarine hue, Bai Lin's flaming heart clenched and her eyes contracted unnaturally. A swell of cautiousness emerged as she hurriedly attempted to react by batting her wings with extreme force. Yet the spiritual chains enveloped her, both around and through her fiery form, kept her in position no matter how much power she mustered!

She was unable to escape!

The perilous sensation of danger elevated as the large cannon spewed out a flood of liquid light that inundated half the planet, Bai Lin's twenty-two thousand meter-sized body, and the three Highlords.

Kree!

A cry of pain resounded within the liquid light.

The liquid light lasted for a mere second before vanishing. The planet remained unharmed, so did the three Highlords who seemed to be utterly focused while holding a specific hand-seal. Their spiritual strength poured ceaselessly into the spiritual chains manifesting from their backs, plunged downwards

towards the planet. However, the planet was now tainted with a rich watery aura, infused with a strange type of water energy.

Boosh!

A heavy thud resounded. The planet shook for a brief moment.

The three Highlords all had pale expressions. It seemed that despite the azure liquid light blast lacking direct offensive power, it had siphoned something from them, causing their auras to dwindle. The worst of the bunch wasn't the already pale Highlord Scarletflame, but Highlord Blackflame. The latter had been hit by a two-combo assault of the Fixed Soul Spell and then world-incinerating Nirvanic Flames.

If it weren't for his fire-attributed physique, including all the fire-attributed protective armaments and treasures they were all wearing, he would've suffered severely debilitating injuries at least or been turned into burnt ash at worst. His expression wasn't just downright ashen pale, but his clothes were also burnt asunder with only an aquamarine-colored skin-tight latex-like garment covering his body from neck to toe.

"The Dousing Firestorm Cannon's power is quite..." Highlord Autumnflame was horrified by the utter lack of fire energies within his body and the world. The Dousing Firestorm Cannon was a niche weapon at the high Mystic-Earth grade that used extreme water to counteract fire. It was originally developed by an enemy of the Tang Clan that was eradicated in the early years of their development.

The information detailing the existence of the Dousing Firestorm Cannon had been concealed by the Tang Clan, including its designs, to prevent it from every being used against them. Despite this, they studied the designs and refined it for their own purposes. Specifically, the generations of Vermillion, the leaders of the Tang Clan, had held it in reserve to fight against any coup d'etat attempts. Fortunately, it had another use.

"..." The other two Highlords were also terrified by their internal situation. Their innate fire energies had vanished entirely, especially since they were at the epicenter of the blast and hadn't defended against it. Their cultivation bases would suffer considerably for this, requiring decades to regain what they lost, but it was the only way to ensure that Bai Lin didn't escape the range of the blast. A sacrificial piece, if you will.

Of course, the compensation promised by the clan was more than enough to lose this cultivated energy. Additionally, if they obtained the Fire Phoenix blood essence, their cultivation bases would surely improve, and the chances to become an Earthly Saint would skyrocket. It would be worth it. It would all be worth it.

The Tang Matriarch observed all this from her Voidship, her expression dignified. While her beautiful features exuded calm, her tensely clenched right fist betrayed her tense emotions. She knew this wasn't over.

Kree!

Just as she thought, the clarion cry of a phoenix echoed throughout the world as Bai Lin's flaming figure came into view. She was smaller, considerably so, yet her Fire Phoenix Transformation was in full force as the taint of aquamarine light enveloped her.

Highlord Blackflame's expression was unfathomably dark, his eyes suffused with a cautious glint. The current Fire Phoenix was a shadow of its former self, only about three hundred meters in size, but the golden-colored eyes of the beast were lively and strong! He was in complete disbelief.

They were all Highlords, genuine Demi-Mortal Lords who've cultivated Fire Mystic Souls, and they had lost all of their innate fire energies, decades of cultivation, and suffered some internal damage, yet the fire energies within Bai Lin was still blazing strongly!

Highlord Autumnflame was the first to question this, his expression reflecting his shock. "How is this possible? Wasn't this beast at the Second Nirvana?!" His question was echoed in the hearts of all observers. The Dousing Firestorm Cannon could severely weaken a fire-attributed Earthly Saint if hit point-blank like this! The Dousing Firestorm Cannon used an untold amount of water-attributed materials at the mystic-grade, and they didn't have enough for a second shot!

Even the Tang Matriarch was shocked; she hadn't expected Bai Lin to still be in her fire form after. The three Highlord hurriedly poured more of their spiritual strength to restrain the Fire Phoenix. Despite its smaller size, the twenty-four chains were tethered to Bai Lin without fail.

"Kree!!!" Bai Lin was enraged. The aquamarine light attempted to invade her body, douse her inner fire, and cancel her transformation, but her bloodline energies were rampantly fighting against it! She was eradicating the extreme water energies in the air, pushing her own fire energies outward with tremendous effort!

While Bai Lin was livid, her heart was seized by fear. She had never encountered such means before, recalling that Wei Wuyin's worst fear was facing a prepared enemy, but his greatest fear was being unprepared himself! She finally felt the logic behind such reasoning and why Wei Wuyin adopted such a cautious personality!

Fortunately, she wasn't an ordinary Fire Phoenix, and while she might be at the Second Stage of the Nirvanic Rebirth Realm, her bloodline energies, innate fire energies, and physical energies were all refined thoroughly by the outrageous amount of eighth and ninth-grade alchemical products provided generously by Wei Wuyin. Furthermore, she had devoured and refined enormous quantities of Terra-Mystic Ore at the peak Mystic-Earth grade to fuel her second rebirth.

Her fire energies were anything but ordinary, and her foundation was not something ordinary Second Nirvanic Rebirth Fire Phoenixes could compare to. Be it quantity or quality of fire energies; she was flushed with fortune. Her golden-colored eyes flared with blazing fiery light as the aquamarine light was instantly eradicated within a hundred miles.

"What?!" The three Highlords were outright terrified. They were currently restraining this Fire Phoenix with their unified spiritual strength, and it had just been hit with a point-blank shot of a Dousing Firestorm Cannon, but it could still emit such potent fire-attributed power? Enough to flood the world once again with it?!

Highlord Blackflame licked his dry lips as the moisture in the air evaporated. While he was weary, the greed in his eyes was readily apparent and inextinguishable. "It's not an ordinary Fire Phoenix!" He shouted deeply with elation. The other two Highlord's expressions noticeably changed. Highlord

Scarletflame's eyes became abnormally bright. The stronger this phoenix was, the greater its blood essence will be.

"Proceed with the Eternal Shackles!" Highlord Scarletflame immediately transmitted to the other two, her hands changing as she began to rapidly execute a series of hand-seals. Each hand-seal caused her body to emit one-inch-sized mystic runes that slithered across the spiritual chains connected to her back. They swam like eels towards Bai Lin.

The other two performed similar actions with faint smiles of excitement. Their first tactic wasn't meant to defeat Bai Lin, and that was because they were well aware that Fire Phoenixes had a unique ability that they could deploy, making killing one extremely challenging and capturing them even more so.

It was meant to force Bai Lin to initiate that ability. Unfortunately, they had failed, and the Fire Phoenix seemed to still have some strength to muster in resistance. While trapped, they had to avoid truly lethal attacks to prevent the planet's destruction. If they destroyed the planet or entered the Dark Void, then capturing this Fire Phoenix was a foregone dream after that ability was used.

But they predicted that something might go wrong with their first tactic, and while it wasn't exactly as they thought it would turn out, the situation wasn't far off from what they had expected. Everything was still well within their margin for calculated error. They would proceed with the second stage of their plans!

Bai Lin's eyes widened as she saw the slithering mystic runes approach. She felt a threat emanating from them, realizing that if these things entered her body, she might never be able to escape from these godforsaken shackles!

KREE!!!

「Fire Phoenix Bloodline: Nirvanic Segregation」

Chapter 777 - Into Fire, Scorched Earth

The fire energies within the world that clashed with the remaining extreme water energies started to vibrate rapidly as the ambient heat intensified. The worldly reaction prompted the three Highlords' expression to simultaneously tense; their eyes flashed as Highlord Scarletflame hurriedly shouted: "Nirvanic Segregation!"

As if they were completely aware of Bai Lin's following action, they concisely reacted, reinforced their wills, and then pumped out over ninety percent of their spiritual power into the chains intermixed heavily with their mystic power. They all settled on a single specific hand-seal and deeply growled as veins popped on their faces, grotesque and throbbing!

Bai Lin's explosive cry was followed by her three hundred meter-sized fiery form quivering and trembling endlessly, shrinking and expanding at odd angles at a rapid rate that it seemed she resembled a heart pumping blood. The chains tethered to her form shook, but they were thoroughly attached.

The Tang Matriarch left fist tightly tensed. She took a very minor step forward, contemplating intervening immediately, but she held off in the end and retracted her step. Her eyes flickered with undisguised concern, "She can still use Nirvanic Segregation in her state!" They had only exchanged a

few moves with this Fire Phoenix, yet the more they saw, the more abnormal they realized she was from the detailed records of those ancient beings when Fire Phoenixes were at the height of their power.

She was even questioning the validity of those records!

The Tang Matriarch finished her thought: "Still, the Aqua Spirit Chains refined by these three should be enough to stall her." The Spiritual Chains ensnaring Bai Lin weren't just byproducts of the Highlords' immense spiritual power, but actual high Mystic-Earth grade armaments they had refined into their Mystic Souls alongside innate extreme water energies. Otherwise, the Nirvanic Flames would've long since incinerated them.

Bai Lin didn't hesitate to drive her bloodline energies to their maximal limit, bringing out one of her core abilities! With the chains shackling her, the slithering mystic runes intent on entering her body, and that Voidship that might be able to launch another attack at any time, she no longer felt the need to consider the personal cost to escape! If this continued, not only would she be captured by these unknown villains, but she would be forced to abandon Wei Wuyin!

Her golden-colored eyes barely contained her incredible resolve. It was unquestionable. It was inextinguishable. Memories were conjured within her mind...

Stab!

"Ha!" A silver-eyed youth exclaimed exhaustedly, sending the tip of his blood-drenched saber into a warm corpse. The youth stood upright with shivering legs, his head tilted back and his chest heaving violently. The smell of heavy, sweet blood suffused the very air.

"Lord Wei!" A male figure with blonde hair and green eyes strolled into view, announced his presence, arrived a few meters from the silver-eyed youth and respectfully kneeled tiredly before him. "The unit has captured the surviving attackers; what shall we do with them?"

The silver-eyed youth breathed out for a few seconds, turning his gaze towards a particular direction.

Bai Lin's eyes were focused entirely on the silver-eyed youth as the world in her view was littered with corpses of his enemies. Therefore, when those eyes of his that were as brilliant and gorgeous as the stars in the sky focused on her, her thoughts momentarily stilled.

The silver-eyed youth gave a faint smile, then lowered his head, his entire body lost its weakness, and he grabbed the saber with vim and vigor. It was pulled out of the corpse and an arc of fresh sanguine blood formed in the air, cleaning the saber of blood and revealing it sharpened form.

"Kill them all."

The blonde-haired male wasn't shocked by this response, nodding as he rose and sought to leave, relaying that order, but he halted for a brief moment with a befuddled expression. A question formed that itched in his heart, so when he turned, he asked: "Lord Wei, if you don't mind me asking...how did you do it?"

Their unit had been ambushed en route by an enemy that had countered them in every way, and even his opponent had means to suppress his Aquatic Qi. He was a goner, so was everyone else in the unit.

Yet somehow, in miraculous and bloody fashion, Lord Wei had turned it around with a few simple and direct actions and orders. Even now, he couldn't figure out how the enemy faltered so easily despite their excessive preparation.

The silver-eyed youth walked towards Bai Lin, a faint smile on his face, but the exhaustion within those eyes of his was present, yet it was strongly hidden behind a wall of self-confidence and firm willpower.

"Han Yu...we, not I, didn't do anything that we couldn't do; they, however, were prepared for everything that we should do. That's how we did it; that's why we're alive and most of them aren't." The silver-eyed youth said, petting Bai Lin as she let loose a soft cry of elation. But a warm spiritual sense invaded her body, clearly inspecting her internal injuries.

"..." Han Yu revealed a confused glint in his eyes, unsure what that meant.

"When you figure out what that means, you'll become an even greater fighter and a better tactician. No one, not even the most prepared enemy, will be able to gain an advantage against you. Especially if they're prepared." After saying this, the silver-eyed youth revealed a relieved smile.

Han Yu thought for a moment, realizing it was a little too profound for his thoughts. He left with haste, no longer dwelling. Regardless of what led to it, they had survived and claimed victory. As for their enemies? They were either corpses or at their mercy.

When Han Yu left, the silver-eyed youth closed his eyes, petting Bai Lin's neck with a quivering hand, "Plans are rigid. Choice is fluid." Those words lingered in Bai Lin's thoughts, and while she wasn't able to understand them, she felt that those words carried some importance.

Those memories resurfaced. In particular, those words of Wei Wuyin. She hadn't understood what that meant before or why Wei Wuyin wasn't direct with explaining, but as she recalled all the events that happened on that day, reminded of their perilous situation turned into a miraculous victory, and facing this terrifying situation, she was enlightened!

The reason why Wei Wuyin had overcome such a situation, claimed victory in the end, wasn't because he was so overwhelmingly powerful that his opponents couldn't react or respond, but that they had expected him to act and operate in a certain way. It was a flaw in their thinking; they were rigid. A direct result of their own formulated strategies and plans!

He didn't do anything that he couldn't do, but he did everything they hadn't expected him to!

Timing!

She grasped this profound detail of combat. Since those above were expecting her to act in a certain way, follow a certain planned route, then she would flip the script!

The Tang Matriarch was already shocked that Bai Lin was abnormal, feeling concerned about their plans, but as Highlord Scarletflame had mentioned before, they were fully prepared with various plans in place to subdue this Fire Phoenix. This was not a simple matter of spending a few weeks but an endeavor that had been devised for centuries.

They wouldn't fail.

Her inner confidence resurged.

They couldn't fail.

Yet as man makes plans, the Fire Phoenix laughs.

Abruptly, the temperature of ten thousand miles in every direction, even the Dark Void's chillness, was rising at an extremely rapid rate. The air distorted within the atmospheric environment of Blueglow and fixed space started to become hazy and indistinct in certain areas.

The Voidships had gotten into position and, with a few more seconds, were ready to deploy the array to entrap the Fire Phoenix, ensuring them the most favorable and advantageous circumstance to subdue the Fire Phoenix and claim it for themselves.

However...

Simultaneously, all the Highlords, including the Tang Matriarch, had their pupils contract! They directed their gazes towards the same location, noticing that the restrained Fire Phoenix that was struggling to escape, about to perform Nirvanic Segregation in a state as textbook as could be, had changed. The color of her flames was no longer scarlet-gold but dark red. She was burning her blood essence to stimulate her strongest state!

"IMPOSSIBLE!" Tang Matriarch's mind erupted in disbelief as she realized Bai Lin's near-suicidal actions, and her heart raced without warning as she hurriedly shot forth from the ship with haste. Her speed was exceedingly fast, and she arrived beside Highlord Scarletflame in the blink of an eye. Her beautiful countenance was incredibly pale as the spatial aura emanating from her body was extremely wild, fluctuating with tremendous power.

Highlord Scarletflame hadn't expected this, still taken aback by the abrupt rise in temperature and the dark red flames of her target. Her eyes widened as a hand unceremoniously grabbed her shoulder. She felt the chains vanish from her back, forcefully severed by a foreign power, and her vision blurred as spatial power enveloped her.

She had just expended 90% of her mystic and spiritual power using the Eternal Shackles, seeking to severely restrain Bai Lin for an extended period, perhaps sufficient enough to be captured; furthermore, all of her fire energies was extinguished, so she couldn't divert any of her attention or redirect her power, and neither could the other two. She was unable to do anything but watch.

The timing was horrendous.

Kree!

Without warning, Bai Lin's dark red flaming form expanded like a balloon, and then...

「Fire Phoenix Bloodline: Nirvanic Outburst」

BOOM!!!

In a matter of moments, the entire planet was flooded by dark red flames, including the two Highlords. And those two? With their fire energies gone, their mystic and spiritual power focused on restraining Bai Lin; they had no defenses to guard against such a violent, torrential flood of Nirvanic Flames.

The flames exceeded the atmospheric limits of the planet, reaching a few Voidships that were too close, that were too slow in their retreat, and they were enveloped in those dark red Nirvanic Flames fueled by Bai Lin's strongest energy source!

Everything was scorched.

Chapter 778 - Into Fire, Feigned Demise

Ignited!

For a very long period of time, the Ninestar Starfield had obtained its tenth Solar Star as the planet Blueglow caught fire, becoming a flaming dark-red ball of earth. It illuminated the Soul-Rising Domain of the Dark Void and was a sight that could be caught from millions of miles away. It was extremely fortunate that the myriad living beings on the planet were evacuated prior.

It was extremely unfortunate for the beings caught within it, all of which belonged to the Tang Clan.

The Tang Matriarch had returned to her Voidship with Highlord Scarletflame in tow, her breathing hectic and heavy. She hurriedly turned around and her eyes contracted as the heat became enough to distort her spiritual sense!

"She ignited her blood essence and used Nirvanic Outburst!" Highlord Scarletflame finally reacted, shouting as she cried out in horror as the flames illuminated her expression. She hurriedly ordered in a panic: "Activate the Blood Heart Suppression Array!" Just as she said this, her eyes became needlepoints as she realized the array to encapsulate the planet had yet to even be activated, but even more importantly: it was too late.

A swell of intense rage entered her heart, and she roared with reluctance: "This shouldn't have happened! It shouldn't!" Her thoughts were a mess as her cultivation base was at an all-time low, her body beset by a cascading wave of weakness. Furthermore, helplessness enveloped her heart.

The Tang Matriarch was silent. Her solemn eyes reflected the image of the blazing red planet that resembled a supermassive fireball. The entire planet was scorched—ruined for good. However, that was of little consequence. The issue was that the planet might be burnt to ash. If that happened, there would be no fixed points to establish the arrays.

Despite this unexpected wrench into their plans, she took this time to calmly assess the situation and inspect the state of her Voidships. A few were quite up in the dark red flames, but they had their own defensive protections that made it extremely difficult to be destroyed. They were Voidships designed for war, outfitted with means to protect against a Fire Phoenix. Besides exhausting copious amounts of water and ice-attributed essence materials and astral stones, they were relatively unharmed and retreated to a safe distance to observe the burning Blueglow.

After several minutes had passed, Highlord Scarletflame finally calmed down. "Thank you, Big Sis." She had dropped the formal title as she earnestly gave her sincerest thanks. The Tang Matriarch had acted swiftly, bringing her away in the shortest amount of time at the cost of self-harming her cultivation base. Even now, the Tang Matriarch's internal spatial energies were fluctuating wildly, yet she kept her calm visage.

The Tang Matriarch glanced at her, then sighed: "We lost two." After saying that, she began to relay further orders through spiritual transmissions.

"..." Highlord Scarletflame had a downcast expression. The two that were lost were obviously Highlord Autumnflame and Highlord Blackflame. While their positions were the most dangerous, they were the three with the strongest Spiritual Strength amongst the nine, excluding the Tang Matriarch. They had to take the risk to halt the Fire Phoenix's escape, and they all knew of the dangers in doing so.

It was a tragedy.

"...Why did the Fire Phoenix ignite her blood essence? I thought doing so was almost suicidal, and most Fire Phoenix's would resort to Nirvanic Segregation or Rebirth of the Phoenix before doing something so reckless...it doesn't make any sense. It was clearly about to execute Nirvanic Segregation!" Highlord Scarletflame ground her teeth with these questions.

"..." The Tang Matriarch kept silent, but her eyes also contained the light of numerous questions. A Fire Phoenix was a being notorious for their abilities of defying death. They had numerous tools to evade predators. For example, the Nirvanic Segregation was an ability of a Fire Phoenix, allowing them to split its flaming body into hundreds of miniaturized versions of itself and attempts to escape.

As long as one escaped, the rest would evaporate and integrate with the void in a strange, unfathomable manner. They would then reconsolidate on the safe version and restore itself with some time. It was a miraculous ability afforded to fire phoenixes who were said to have no substantial form during their transformation, consisting purely of flames.

They had a counter to this. In fact, it was the very spirit chains that they deployed. The Aqua Spirit Chain was a variation of the Core Spirit Chain. These chains had a unique ability to affect the spirit and all connecting components of said spirit within a certain distance. As long as they had attached one of the smaller versions with the Aqua Spirit Chains, they could suppress the Fire Phoenix entirely.

This might not be able to seal the Fire Phoenix permanently as it still had the Rebirth of the Phoenix ability, but it'll restrain it enough to allow them to establish the various arrays they prepared beforehand, such as the Blood Heart Suppression Array that'll further weaken bloodline energies and restrict the act of burning its blood essence. A scenario that they didn't wish to see.

As for the Rebirth of the Phoenix, it was the most frustrating ability of the Fire Phoenix, and the entire Phoenix race in general, and it was their ability to destroy their bodies and vanish from the world. It was a reset of sorts, a reverse of the Nirvanic Transformations they underwent to advance their own Genesis State.

They would enter the strange, unfathomable void once again and be reborn at their previous site of their first advancement. For Bai Lin, this would be the Everlore Starfield, yet the Tang Clan was unaware of where this site was, so if successfully used, they would lose it entirely.

While this was a heavy cost as their Genesis State would drop a single level, and regaining that level was several times more difficult, it was a life-saving, last-ditch effort. Typically, in records, the phoenixes would undergo their transformation in their race's core area, so their rebirth would be in complete safety.

Unless, of course, the entire area was conquered. At that point...

They had means to restrict the Fire Phoenix from escaping, all in the form of a specialized array designed to restrain its innate abilities, and this was why they couldn't allow it to enter the Dark Void. It was impossible to establish a domain-wide or starfield-wide array in such a short period of time, so they needed the planet and its axis to act as a boundary. If the Fire Phoenix performed Rebirth of a Phoenix in the Dark Void, they'd be at a loss and could only go home defeated.

In their original assessment, the ignition of blood essence might occur regardless of their arrays' successful suppression, so they had other countermeasures to execute, but this was supposed to happen only after foiling all other attempts made by the Fire Phoenix, not before they even established any arrays! How could they expect that?!

The ignition of one's blood essence was extremely harmful and almost downright suicidal for a Fire Phoenix. Not only would they be unable to execute other bloodline abilities for an extended period, but their accumulated life energies would also be severely depleted. It was typically the last resort used in the direst of circumstances!

After sending out orders and receiving status reports, the Tang Matriarch's expression darkened considerably. "We've suffered no losses of Voidships, but those caught in the flames have depleted their stores of resources, including the fuel used for the arrays. We're unable to continue." After saying this, she continued: "But it's inconsequential; the Fire Phoenix is certainly long gone by now. If it didn't execute the Rebirth of the Phoenix after such a hasty ignition of its blood essence, then it's dead..."

Highlord Scarletflame clenched her fists, teeth, and eyes. Her expression was filled with incredible pain, and even signs of tears were present at the corner of her eyes. She, no, they had lost their chance to obtain the Fire Phoenix. Even if the Fire Phoenix was alive, they couldn't divine its location through any means or methods, and there were no reports of its Fire Phoenix nirvanic transformations occurring in the Grand Cyclic Stellar Region.

This suggested that the Fire Phoenix had ascended to become a Genesis Beast outside the Stellar Region. With their attempt on its freedom and its subsequent weakened state, there was no way it'd reveal itself any time soon.

How frustrating!

HOW FUCKING FRUSTRATING!

The Tang Matriarch merely watched, but she was undoubtedly the most devastated out of them all. Still, she had to remain calm and be the leader and guide they needed. Amid their failure, they still had to move forward. However, a tinge of long-suppressed regret resurfaced within her mind. She should've never cultivated the Blazing Unity of Twin Flames! With her talents, she had a good chance to become an Earthly Saint without it.

The Tang Clan's members were all demoralized as they watched the planet burning and even shrinking ever-so-slightly as it was burning away. They had received orders to depart, return home in a defeated manner, and likely be subjected to intense ridicule by their peers. They had their grandest of futures in their grasp, yet it slipped away!

The Tang Matriarch gave one last glance to the planet. A forlorn glint flickered within her eyes as she looked away. She patted her little sister's shivering shoulder in consolation, "If the heavens allow, we'll have another opportunity."

Highlord Scarletflame was an illustrious Demi-Mortal Lord, and she had just escaped death, yet the tears she wanted to shed were filled with sadness. Was this it?

"Don't leave."

Abruptly, a voice echoed throughout the Tang Matriarch's Voidship, prompting her to turn towards the origin of the voice, finding a figure cloaked in a black robe floating within the Dark Void. Their figure was indistinguishable. Besides being humanoid, nothing else could be determined.

"Who are you?" Tang Matriarch stood firmly where she was, her aura seething, and her eyes honed onto the figure. Despite their indistinguishable physical characteristics, she was a mighty character that was quite familiar with mystic fluctuations. This was an Earthly Saint.

"Your target hasn't left; It's not dead, either." The figure spoke with a chilly tone; its voice was androgynous.

The Tang Matriarch was internally startled, but outwardly, she heavily frowned with suspicion.

But Highlord Scarletflame reacted differently; her teary eyes opened as she sought after her hope. She found the figure floating like a ghost with a long black robe that concealed every bit of their existence. Her thoughts were still vigilant, yet she asked: "What do you mean?"

The Tang Clan Matriarch interjected before the voice could elaborate: "We're leaving." This brought a terrifying shock to Highlord Scarletflame. Leaving? She hastily wanted to question this decision but was given a glacial gaze from the Tang Matriarch that silenced her words at the throat.

"Are you sure?" The figure asked.

The Tang Matriarch didn't answer, merely relayed confirmation orders to depart. The Voidships were already in motion to do so despite their reluctance.

"..." The figure swayed slightly, clearly a little shocked by the Tang Matriarch's decisiveness. However, it wasn't foolish enough to believe the Tang Clan nor its Vermillion was willing to escape, so it didn't hold back any information or delay its intentions. With a wave of its hand, a black light shot out of its hand and touched the barrier of the Voidship.

The Tang Clan matriarch's eyes flickered. She waved her hand, and the light was allowed entrance. When it arrived before her, it revealed itself to be a spatial ring. After briefly sweeping her spiritual sense through it, her eyes narrowed. She lifted her head to observe the figure.

"The Fire Phoenix isn't ordinary. Furthermore, you must be curious why it stayed on the planet after being surrounded? Or better yet, why it's even here?" The figure said.

"..." The Tang Clan matriarch didn't respond. Even Highlord Scarletflame was silent, realizing this situation was strange, and there was undoubtedly more to it. After a while, the Tang Matriarch enveloped the ring in bright light and flicked her finger, having it fly back to the figure.

"I see," the figure realized the Tang Clan wasn't willing to act as a pawn for another in ignorance. So it couldn't help but realize that if this figure wanted this, it'd be forced to reveal all of its information. "The shadow always gets vengeance, Vermillion."

After this was sent through a spiritual transmission, the bright light carrying the ring halted. Then, it returned to the Tang Matriarch. She gave the figure a heavy look, "We're taking its blood essence."

The figure merely responded with, "A fate worse than death. Befitting." Without warning, the figure vanished as a few auras descended in the area that were equally as unfathomable. Clearly, the figure had raised some warning bells from the nearby spectators of the highest level.

After an entire minute, the Tang Matriarch slowly breathed out, and a wisp of excitement emerged within her eyes. "Establish the arrays around the planet!"

Highlord Scarletflame was similarly excited to hear this, but she momentarily paused and said: "But you said we don't have enough materials left to do so. How..."

"We do," the Tang Matriarch looked at the ring.

Chapter 779 - Calculated Blow

The Soul-Rising Domain of the Ninestar Starfield was filled with a distinctive silence that was accompanied by the observation of the Tang Clan. There were numerous prestigious individuals invested in the outcome, including the Soul Rising Saint—the Earthly Saint of the Soul Rising Sainthall.

Watching from a hundred thousand miles away, the Soul Rising Saint was dressed in a long-sleeved, long-skirt, azure-colored outfit. She was middle-aged, with faint wrinkles at the edges of her eyes and mouth, alongside a pair of blue-eyes that resembled a peerless ocean. Her hair was black with grey-colored highlights, furthering her aged appearance, yet she wasn't ugly by any means. In fact, she was quite outstanding. A mature beauty, as some would say.

While she lacked a motherly warmth, she contained the wizened aura of wisdom and experience. Within those eyes of her seemed to contain untold stories of the ages, including a firm will forged by adversity and conquests.

She wasn't the only one observing from the Dark Void, fluttering with her own power without issue, as two figures were situated beside her as equals. Their auras weren't any less unfathomable.

To her right was an elderly man with brown-colored skin and golden eyes, and not just his irises, but his pupils and sclera were entirely gold. He wore a simple outfit colored burgundy, consisting of linen pants and a top. If one were to observe him normally, he might come off as a strange old man in retirement. Yet to cultivators, those eyes of his were quite alluring and out of place. Those in the Ninestar Starfield would immediately realize this man to be Soul Erupting Saint, leader of the Soul-Erupting Sainthall.

To her left was a middle-aged man dressed in all white robes with a sword sheathed at his hip. He had an air of an immortal depicted in mythological legends, being both handsome and elegant. He was barefooted with impeccably immaculate feet and nails. He was none other than the Soul Enlightening Saint, leader of the Soul-Enlightening Sainthall.

They watched the planet burn fiercely from a distance, maintaining a natural role as spectators.

"Seems like she was given the truth. How unfortunate," the Soul Erupting Saint said with an amused smile. Despite his words, it seemed he wasn't bothered by this event. At this moment, the mysterious black-robed figure had arrived and informed Vermillion, the Tang Matriarch, about the Fire Phoenix's current location and state. As Earthly Saints, they fully knew all details that were happening even from such a vast distance, including Bai Lin's actions and concealment.

"Should we?" The Soul Enlightening Saint indifferently asked, his hand touching his hilt. A faint sword keen was emitted that shook the world. While his expression or eyes revealed no killing intent, a bloody aura filled the air.

"..." The Soul Rising Saint was silent, her eyes faintly narrowed as she formed a faint smile. It was only after the figure departed with haste that her eyes relaxed, "Bothersome."

"Indeed," the Soul Erupting Saint echoed her sentiment. They were well aware of that individual's identity and purpose, including why they acted in such a manner.

"That little girl is a fool." The Soul Enlightening Saint's bloody aura vanished. While he wanted to act with clear intent, this wasn't his Domain to do so. There were certain restrictions in place, and he couldn't outright violate it for a disgusting bug.

"Indeed," the Soul Erupting Saint echoed his sentiment. Clearly, they were all synchronized in their thinking of events. He continued, "But she's a willing fool."

"She's bait. A fool's a fool," the Soul Enlightening Saint countered. They were all aware that this black-robed figure was clearly using the Tang Clan to lure out the one responsible for the Fire Phoenix. There was no way such an outstanding phoenix had cultivated itself to that level nor eliminated an entire Shadow Egg of Trueborn by itself.

According to their own information channels, likely purposefully leaked by Trueborn themselves, a Void Portal had been conjured during the fight, and that wasn't within a Fire Phoenix's powers. While they were incredible, to open a Void Portal exceeded their limits. Furthermore, it was done within the Starfield spatial restrictions.

There was certainly an astonishing expert behind this Fire Phoenix, but there was no way to locate or eliminate this individual, so they sought to lure them out. Perhaps even the three of them were within their calculations, as a foreign Earthly Saint operating within their boundaries was enough to get them to take action.

"I wish we could remove these scourges from our world," the Soul Enlightening Saint coldly added. He wanted nothing more than to attack, but this wasn't his Domain, and there were certain reservations he had, such as direct orders from the Ninestar Soul Saint who advised them against direct action for now. Otherwise...

The Soul Erupting Saint revealed a wry smile, "Don't we all?" The 'we' didn't just include the Ninestar Sainthall, but even the Imperial Clan and other top-tier forces of the various starfields wished they could eliminate these pests called Trueborn. Unfortunately, their strength and means were unfathomable, prompting caution from all parties. It was a vexing reality.

To add insult to injury, these individuals were a large source of strange materials that were extremely beneficial to cultivation. There was likely not a single Demi-Mortal Lord or an Earthly Saint that hadn't obtained a rare item that could only be procured from these individuals. Especially if they wished to keep their reputation intact.

"They're sealing the planet," the Soul Rising Saint stated. Her voice was soothing and calm, like a musical instrument that could elevate the soul after a brief tone. The three watched as the Tang Clan moved with renewed vigor and surrounded the planet, establishing array after array. After they hastily tried to execute a variety of fire-suppression functions that doused the raging flames until only scorched earth and a significantly reduced planet of size and quality were revealed.

Then, they hastily started to execute a variety of means and methods to extract the Fire Phoenix, but to no avail.

"Smart little thing; she entrenched herself in the planet's core after feigning her demise, throwing the Tang for a loop, then spread herself throughout with Nirvanic Segregation. She's hid well enough. Unfortunately, such tactics before certain beings are as clear as day." The Soul Enlightening Saint was surprised by Bai Lin's creativity. She nestled within the planet and refused to leave.

With the arrays using the planet as its focal point, they couldn't destroy it without causing their collapse. This would give her enough time to escape with Rebirth of a Phoenix. The Tang Clan surely wouldn't do such a disadvantageous act, so a tense stalemate was formed.

"Using their knowledge of her abilities to her advantage, how peculiar. If it wasn't for that bug, she would've faked her escape and hid away unnoticed. Who trained this beast?" The Soul Erupting Saint complimented while rubbing his chin contemplatively. The golden eyes within his skull became slightly more radiant.

"We'll likely find out soon enough," the Soul Rising Saint said with certainty. Like all the others, she was certain that this beast belonged to a being at the Earthly Saint level. The issue was that they weren't present. The Fire Phoenix was likely settled here while they handled other matters. According to reports, the Fire Phoenix had breached Blueglow with a companion—a male.

Woosh!

Suddenly, a figure shot towards the three's location with remarkable speed. The Soul Erupting Saint glanced at that direction with a shadow of an excited smile. When the figure arrived before them and respectfully bowed, he couldn't help but speak: "The last princess of the Ma Clan, it is quite the pleasure to see you again. As gorgeous as a rose, as always."

The one who arrived was none other than Ma Sujiang. She smiled at the undisguised compliment that hinted at his interest in her, and politely replied: "It is always an honor to meet the Soul King of the Soul-Erupting Sainthall." Afterward, she bowed to the other two and gave out impeccable greetings.

The Soul Rising Saint didn't bother to look at Ma Sujiang, merely observing the ongoing struggle between the Fire Phoenix and the Tang Clan. As for the Soul Enlightening Saint, he only said a few words: "Why are you here?" His tone wasn't polite, even faintly cold.

The Golden Life Pavilion might be the most prominent merchant organization in the Aeternal Sky Starfield, but they didn't operate freely in all starfields. While they had some established branches here and did some dealings, it was mostly the Nine-Gold Pavilion that handled the business side of the Ninestar Starfield.

Ma Sujiang wasn't surprised by this reception. If Ma Zheng, her father, were an Earthly Saint or leader of the Golden Life Pavilion, their tones would certainly be different, but they had neither an Earthly Saint nor majority power of the organization. To these Earthly Saints, the Golden Life Pavilion only afforded her the right to arrive and speak without being immediately dismissed.

Ma Sujiang didn't beat around the bush, knowing this was a pressing matter. "Soul Monarchs," she used the proper plural reference for multiple Soul Kings, a unique title for the Ninestar Sainthalls Nine Saints, "My father had just given me a piece of crucial information regarding the possible origins of this Fire Phoenix. Shall I relay this information?"

"Speak. Don't be coy with us, little girl." The Soul Rising Saint indifferently said. Her attitude was extremely clear. If it weren't for a certain subordinate of hers needing their help for their Third Ascension, she would have never let a Demi-Mortal Lord of the Golden Life Pavilion step foot in her domain, let alone this last princess of the Ma Clan.

Yet Ma Sujiang's words prompted both the other two Saints to glance in her direction, visibly intrigued by this development.

"Apologies for my rudeness," she hurriedly said before continuing: "My father has recently learned that there's a high likelihood that the Fire Phoenix belongs to none other than the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn."

"...!" The three Saints all reacted, turned to look at Ma Sujiang with shock visible within their eyes. "Where does this assumption originate from?" The Soul Rising Saint demanded an answer, her attention now fully focused on Ma Sujiang.

Ma Sujiang revealed a faint smile. *'You didn't care about me or my father, but the moment this name is mentioned, you perk right up? How amusing.'* Her scalding thoughts aside, she answered politely: "This information isn't entirely certain. However, it comes from a credible source."

The three fell silent. This was the same as saying nothing, but the Golden Life Pavilion's Ma Zheng wouldn't reveal this information without being more than sixty percent certain. His reputation was sufficient to back this. Still, this was the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn, a figure dipped in mystery.

According to the Golden Life Pavilion, he was an extremely young and talented Grand Mortal Sovereign Alchemist who invented the Neo-Dawn Eclipse Pill. They had already seen its miraculous effects first-hand, with at least one of their prospective Chosen or descendants receiving one of these products. Their talents bolstered by the Worldly Domain, and their cultivation bases rose rapidly as a result. It was heaven-defying, convention-breaking. To put it simply: it was everything it was advertised.

There wasn't a single power that wasn't trying to locate this mysterious genius of untold origins. The only clue was his presumed status as a Chosen of the True Element Sect, but few believed such outrageous claims. That said, the Ninestar Sainthall was the most informed about this figure due to their members acting as Dharma Protectors in the Demon War Realm for certain elites.

They had not only met this person, but they were aware that he had outrageous combat strength and talent, comprehending Elemental Heart Intent while simultaneously being a Mortal Sovereign Alchemist. This individual's innate talent, if the two were indeed the same, was unimaginable.

There were numerous questions swirling about his origins, yet no answers to be found. This was even more so after the Everlore Starfield was destroyed. And they couldn't act against their newly established planet and its inhabitants to obtain more information because if the rumors were true, then any harm befalling this lot could lead to tremendous repercussions in the future. The dilemma provided many headaches.

"Well, this just got a little more interesting," the Soul Enlightening Saint's eyes revealed an intense excitement. He turned towards Ma Sujiang and said with a narrowed eyes, "It seems that it's true that the Ma Clan has his wife."

"Concubine," the Soul Erupting Saint corrected. While they couldn't gather much information after the Everlore Starfield's devastation, after linking Wei Wuyin and the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn, how could they not discover that a recently declared Saintess on the Immortal Saintess Rankings was related to him? Their union wasn't a secret unlike with Na Xinyi, an unofficiated affair.

The Soul Rising Saint glanced at the two men for a moment, then turned her attention to Ma Sujiang. "Why are you telling us this?" Her eyes narrowed. She smelled a hint of a scheme. Ma Zheng should be fully aware that they couldn't interfere in this matter, yet this information was still given out.

Ma Sujiang gave off a mysterious smile, "My father simply wanted you to know this. Nothing more." After saying this, she bowed and excused herself, flying away without hesitation. The three watched as she departed with varying expressions.

The Soul Erupting Saint turned his gold eyes towards the planet, his current expression very difficult to determine alongside his thoughts. "Despite her beauty, she's quite vicious, don't you think? A good woman, haha." The Soul Erupting Saint suddenly burst into laughter, shaking his head with a soft sigh soon after. He looked at the Soul Rising Saint, a trace of pity flickered within his gold eyes.

"That's quite hateful," The Soul Enlightening Saint quietly muttered.

"..." The Soul Rising Saint's face was slightly dark, staring at the fleeing figure of Ma Sujiang with narrowed eyes. She wasn't so stupid to not realize what this meant or why it was done. There was no need besides ensuring that they were fully aware of Wei Wuyin's relationship with the phoenix at a crucial point, yet decided to simply watch despite obtaining this knowledge.

If there was the slightest chance that he became a figure as outstanding as the King of Everlore, this would forever strain their relationship or directly sever it. This was a calculated blow to their relations before they even had a chance to meet. This small move would undo all the goodwill they accumulated by purchasing that pill and its priority rights at an absurd price.

What made matters worse, they had some wiggle room to offer a slight hindrance to this operation for a heavy price. Ma Zheng was fully aware of this. Furthermore, Ma Zheng had done what he could to help the situation, informing them of their relations, and if true, the Saints next actions would be reflective of their valuation of Wei Wuyin. If they acted, it was a win for the Golden Life Pavilion, and if they didn't, then the Golden Life Pavilion had done what it could, yet they had sat on their laurels indifferently.

The Soul Rising Saint clenched her teeth slightly. A small move yet so incredibly potent. This was definitely indicative that this Fire Phoenix almost certainly belonged to that elusive figure. Otherwise, this gamble would only worsen relations between the Golden Life Pavilion and them without any pay-off.

WOOOOOOSH!

Suddenly, the Earthly Saints all turned to a specific location as a strange fluctuation caught their senses. A cascading beam of multicolored light impacted the scorched surface of Blueglow, directly ignoring the arrays and formations established by the Tang Clan.

"What's that?"

Chapter 780 - For Vengeance

The cascading beam of multicolored light that descended without rhyme or reason prompted numerous reactions, but the most noticeable was the Tang Clan's increased vigilance as they halted their attempts at extracting Bai Lin from the planet. There was a strange, intense tension within the world that was slowly increasing with every passing second.

Returning to a short period before the present, Wei Wuyin and Bai Lin were together on the scorched earth of Blueglow.

"Those bastards tried to remove me from the planet!" Her complaints were followed by her one-sided explanation of what happened during his absence, causing Wei Wuyin's expression to become slightly unsightly. To think that this development would occur in such a brief period of time.

He was ignorant regarding many intricate details, such as the Tang Clan's personal invested interest and why only they had acted in a foreign starfield, but from how they were so well-prepared, their intent was obvious. Still, it was odd that the Tang Clan, a Noble Clan with inseparable connections to the Imperial Clan of the Aeternal Sky Starfield was able to move such a strong force into the boundaries of the Ninestar Starfield.

It was quite perplexing. Unfortunately, his ignorance couldn't be solved at this moment. Moreover, he had more pressing issues.

"Will we leave?" Bai Lin's was brimming with violent intent, but she was well aware that Wei Wuyin's strength wasn't invincible. She had eclipsed him swiftly in this category, so staying to fight wasn't a logical course of action. In fact, she had almost forgotten about Wei Wuyin's strength and limits, still imagining him as that invincible figure that challenged the world and overcame every obstacle with wit and decisiveness until he returned.

Wei Wuyin frowned, his spiritual sense impacting the array as he considered various things with a flexible mind. Yet, as he recalled Bai Lin's severe injuries, his inner rage was unable to be suppressed. This wasn't the first time others have tried to capture Bai Lin in his absence or even in his presence, but this was the most dangerous development of them all.

First and foremost, he wasn't able to escape freely. He was still within the spatial restrictions of the Ninestar Starfield, so opening a Void Portal a large enough distance where Demi-Mortal Lords wouldn't notice was highly unlikely. When he sent Bai Lin through the Void Portal during her fight, it severely drained him to open a relatively short distance. This was absolutely crucial to consider when thinking about any plans he could muster.

Secondly, he didn't have personal strength or forces to deploy to establish a basis of power. At the moment, they were surrounded by a well-prepared force with little connection to himself. He was also Wei Wuyin, and according to Wu Yu, he was a notoriously desired figure. His freedom could be restricted if he revealed himself.

While the King of Everlore was capable of acting freely in his time without disturbance, their circumstances weren't the same, and who knew what he faced when his talent was truly revealed. Moreover, the King of Everlore was just an alchemist—he wasn't.

Lastly, that Trueborn organization was quite shady, and with such an imposing force moving out to capture Bai Lin, it was very unlikely they weren't currently observing the situation. This furthered the unknown variables. This all stemmed from his relatively incomplete information about these organizations and their stances, including their practices and intent.

The situation was already so complicated as is—with numerous vexing factors. But the core of it was simple: Bai Lin was assaulted. The rage in his heart was implacable. His calm visage aside, even his Astral Souls screamed for bloody vengeance. And they weren't silent about it. They roared, howled, cursed, and exchanged their own thoughts on the matter. Their thinking was synchronized: "Teach them a vicious, unforgettable lesson!"

"Master...?" Bai Lin leaned closer as she eyed Wei Wuyin with concern. She could feel it, the unbridled rage building up. Her heartbeat was accelerated as continuous streams of pure life force integrated within her body.

Wei Wuyin's breathing slowed as he started to think rapidly, consuming copious amounts of mental energy as he thought of multiple angles. His utmost priority was undoubtedly to remove himself from this passive position surrounded by numerous forces and unknown variables, but retaliation was a crucial event that must not only be considered but enacted. After all, he had means to escape if he truly decided to make some hefty sacrifices.

It's not as if he hadn't considered Trueborn and others intervening when they returned, but he had a fail-safe: the pellets. Moreover, he hadn't expected to leave the planet without Bai Lin.

'How unfortunate that my pellets were all used up in the Battlefield...' Wei Wuyin wouldn't have hesitated to unleash his fire-attributed pellets, knowing his Elemental Origin Intent could convert the violent fiery blaze into calm wind, granting him a pseudo-immunity from its effects. A devastating distraction and smokescreen.

'I don't have much time before they discover my presence and identity. It'll be hard to control how this unfolds then, so I need to be extremely swift with my decision.' His low cultivation base was the critical issue here. If he was an Ascended being, these issues would be a non-factor.

There was fluttering thoughts in his mind to rush through the tribulations at this moment and propelling in power, hopefully enough to possess enough strength to ensure his own safety. But he threw that thought aside almost immediately. Each breakthrough required subsequent consolidation and maximizing of his foundation to ensure that his Astral Souls antics wouldn't lead to his eventual suicide by tribulation or the upcoming Calamities of Hell. The Tang Clan wasn't worth such a sacrifice.

That being said, he was sure his Astral Souls would certainly settle down given this pressing situation, but who knew if this would have other consequences later on. After all, their actions in the early stages of the Astral Core Realm afforded them the rumored requirements to reach higher levels in the Mystic Ascendant Realm. He didn't wish to willingly throw away these benefits for a quick surge of strength. Moreover, he hadn't taken all products gated at the Sixth Stage yet.

Suddenly, Wei Wuyin's spiritual sense felt a series of unfathomable spiritual senses come into contact with his own, causing his eyebrows to twitch. He hastily halted them, preventing them from properly inspecting the situation for a brief period.

Outside the Dark Void, several figures exclaimed simultaneously.

"Oh?!" The Soul Rising Saint was startled. She glanced at the other two to see them exchange a look of surprise amongst themselves. They, too, were shocked by this development. "An extremely powerful spiritual sense is serving as an obstacle against inspecting the planet," she stated.

The Soul Erupting Saint slowly nodded, "Seems like that strange beam of light was the Earthly Saint descending from wherever they left to. It seemed very similar to the Void Voyage Sect's Rainbow Bridge."

The last speculation caused the Soul Enlightening Saint to frown, "The Void Voyage Sect..." This power was the most mysterious of the sixteen mystic forces of the Aeternal Sky Starfield, renowned for their astonishing spatial prowess and tools. This was more evidence further pointing towards the Void Voyage Sect's involvement with this matter.

Could the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn be a disciple of this sect or a descendant of a grand figure? If so, this situation would become even more complex than it already was. The Soul Enlightening Saint was extremely tempted to have a battle of spiritual sense, but then he'd be interfering with the arrays, and that'll violate some agreements. He could only look to the Soul Rising Saint as this was her domain.

"...We'll wait and see." The Soul Rising Saint said as they retracted their spiritual sense and observed with ocular spells. Unfortunately, the mass of spiritual strength was like a concrete wall. While they could breach it with their spiritual powers, they restrained from doing so without provocation.

The black-robed figure was also surprised by this development. Shockingly, he wasn't alone. Beside him were two other black-robed figures with perfect concealments. The original black-robed figure's voice resounded softly, "It seems he's here."

A faint killing intent emanated from this group. Clearly, they were ready for a fight, and they seemed to care little about the three Earthly Saints observing the situation. The two looked at each other, then formed hand-seals. A strange fluctuation integrated with the Dark Void.

Wei Wuyin's expression instantly changed.

"The surrounding space has become a quagmire!" Kratos immediately voiced its discovery, causing his Astral Souls to fall silent. If before it was extremely difficult to escape through Void Portals or Spatial Shifting, now this made it ten times more difficult. Wei Wuyin even felt sluggish despite his Void Dragon Bloodline.

The Earthly Saints noticed this development as well. Their expressions became extremely dark, especially the Soul Rising Saint.

The Tang Matriarch and the other Highlords felt the ambient spatial energies and fixed space itself become stale and slow. "As long as we get the Fire Phoenix, nothing else matters! Be ready to activate all defensive propulsion formations!" She hurriedly gave orders as all the Highlords were on one ship, including many of its crucial members.

The other Voidships were almost all empty, with a few old figures at the end of their lifespan piloting and maintaining the arrays and formations. She was clearly not stupid enough to not anticipate this development. How could she, a prestigious leader of an entire clan, not realize Trueborn's intent? They wanted vengeance.

They wanted her to be bait. She had no issue with that, but she refused to be cannon fodder.

"...haaa..." Wei Wuyin sighed heavily. While it didn't seem like it, he was certainly given a check in this position, likely one move left before checkmate and subsequent defeat. Even if he revealed his identity, this might not be enough to ensure his safety or freedom. There were just far too many variables and pieces of incomplete information. Who knew the situation would develop so unfavorably so fast?

He had no choice...

With a swift hand-seal, on his abdomen, the outline of 'War' bled through his outfit with shining golden light. A tiny orb of white light escaped his abdomen. The sphere had a brilliant golden character of 'War' etched on its spherical surface.

Wei Wuyin formed another hand-seal. The orb released faint rays of light and a radiant glow before it transformed into a small golden flag. On this tiny flag were extremely dots of star-like objects with varying sizes, all of which were orbiting a single, slightly bigger star at the center. They numbered ten thousand exactly.

Bai Lin was shocked by this development, asking curiously: "What's that?"

Wei Wuyin gave a faint smile, "Your vengeance." He formed the final hand-seal, and from his pores, uncountable amounts of light strings left and entered the flag. These strings were all Primary Soul Light!

The flag began to vibrate at an unnatural rate!