

# The Shining Star Above The Heaven

## Chapter 46 - The Church of Heavenly Direction's Move

Xin Haotian walked through the busy streets of the inner district of Balin. Some who recognized his face gasped and made way for him. The surrounding people couldn't sense anything unusual from this man in the conical cap, but those who knew him understood that this was merely his way of hiding his presence. The sword saint continued walking until he reached the mayor's mansion. The two elven guards at the entrance, recognizing him, trembled but hardened their resolve.

"May I ask what the esteemed sword saint is doing here?" one of them inquired.

"Tell the mayor that I need to speak with him. There is something I need to know," Xin Haotian replied calmly.

The guard felt conflicted. They had strict orders to deny any visitors since a few weeks ago, but what if the visitor was the sword saint? Frustration gnawed at him, but the orders were clear.

"We apologize, but the mayor is currently occupied and cannot be disturbed," one guard said, though sweat rolled down his forehead. How could he not be nervous? He was standing before the strongest of the ten great swordsmen of the continent—he was just a mere small fry in comparison.

Xin Haotian looked at the guard and said, "Is that so? Then I will wait until he can spare the time." He then walked away to a nearby tavern.

The guards sighed in relief when Xin Haotian had already left, they feared offending this solitary cultivator. Though they were not afraid within their territory, protected by the world tree's blessing, it was still unwise to make an enemy of him. Unknown to them, the mayor, Livrin, watched them from his mansion window and sighed.

"This past month has been hectic," Livrin muttered to himself.

*"People keep coming to me, asking about the event from a month ago. But with the Sword Saint here now, I can't avoid them any longer. The number of guests will only grow in the future, so I need to come up with a believable explanation to satisfy their curiosity."*

He sat down in his chair, thinking of how to explain the situation. The existence of Aldrian was a secret the Ivory Empire was determined to keep hidden from the world, and he intended to keep it that way.

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In another part of the city, there stood a building different in style from its surroundings. The large white edifice, with its Gothic architecture and holy aura, inspired a sense of piety in those who passed by. Beings of different races could be seen entering and exiting the building, all dressed in white robes bearing the symbol of an eye shining upon the world.

This is the main branch of the Heavenly Direction Church in the Ivory Empire. Because they were unable to build in the capital city of Evergreen, the church found the strategic location of Balin to be the ideal place to establish their branch.

Inside one of the rooms in the church, a middle-aged man in a white robe with a dark purple sash draped over his left shoulder sat reading a document. Occasionally, he frowned as he read.

A month ago, when the hydra suddenly appeared near Balin, he watched the event unfold. The golden light that slashed the hydra in two and obliterated many people, or rather, the devils into nothingness shocked him. He was also stunned by the golden energy that suddenly appeared, and although it was only for a moment, he could feel a hint of holy energy within it. But what confused him was how the holy energy could be so intense and pure that it made the holy power within him resonate.

The holy energy of the Heavenly Direction Church's cultivators comes from the blessing of the heavens they worship. They preach the will of the heavens and spread their faith to the masses. As a result, the heavens, looking upon them with favor, grant them holy energy. However, the Heavenly Direction church have faced a problem since for a long time: their blessings have been weakening over the millennia. This gradual deterioration has caused their holy power to lose its purity and strength.

The golden energy he saw and felt that day was the purest and strongest holy energy he had ever encountered in his entire life. Even the holy energy used by a pope seemed pale in comparison to the purity of this energy. He immediately ordered an investigation, reported the event to headquarters, and requested their assistance. The headquarters, recognizing the utmost importance of the situation, did not hesitate to send paladins to aid in the investigation, believing it might be connected to their prophecy.

But from the weekly reports he received, he still hadn't found any clue about the person who defeated the hydra. This frustration led him to suspect that the elves might be involved. He knew that on the same night the hydra was defeated, the elves conducted a secret operation to eliminate the devils in the city. This also surprised him, as it was unexpected that devils could infiltrate the city.

If the person they were seeking was an elf, it would complicate matters. But he doubted it. The elves were not known for their swordsmanship, and the holy energy he had sensed was proof that the person had been blessed by the heavens.

The elves worshipped the Heavenly Tree of the World, which is why the church has never had any true elven followers. He continued to ponder how to find this person without drawing the attention of Balin's authorities or the Evergreen imperial family. It seemed he needed to dig deeper into the empire.

Knock knock

"I'm sorry to disturb you, Bishop Chris, but there is an urgent report," came a voice from outside the room. Bishop Chris put down the document and exhaled.

"Come in."

A young man in a white robe with a light purple sash, the sign of a priest, entered the room and bowed his head.

"What is the report?" Bishop Chris asked.

"I believe we have found a clue about the person we're looking for," the priest said.

Bishop Chris, who had been frustrated a moment ago, stood up with vigor and shouted, "Is that true? Tell me, tell me!"

"Yes, as we know, the Imperial Teacher of the Ivory Empire and Grand Duke Sylvaris arrived the morning after the night of the attack. We brushed it off as a clue because we thought it was an expected action from the Evergreen imperial family, and we didn't want to investigate their involvement at that time to avoid drawing their attention."

That's why he never tried to delve deeper into their arrival. Furthermore, their presence in Balin was not surprising. The Grand Duke of his territory came to inspect the aftermath of the battle, and the Imperial Teacher of—

"Wait, the Imperial Teacher?" Something suddenly clicked in his mind. Why would the Imperial Teacher of the Ivory Empire accompany the Grand Duke here? As far as he knew, the Imperial Teacher held a position of high respect among the nobles even the emperor himself and rarely left the capital.

Although the hydra and devil attacks surprised them, it wasn't necessary to send the Imperial Teacher just to accompany the Grand Duke in inspecting the aftermath. They could have sent someone more appropriate for the job.

"But that was our mistake. We found a clue suggesting that the imperial family might be involved. According to our information, we suspect that the Imperial Teacher came to retrieve the person we believe defeated the hydra. Even though Balin's authorities tried to close off the area around the teleportation station when the Imperial Teacher returned to the capital, we discovered from an eyewitness who accidentally saw the imperial family's envoy enter the teleportation station with two additional people."

Bishop Chris, upon hearing this, was thrilled because the clue was enough to narrow down the search area and identify who they should reach out to.

"Good work, Andrew. Your efforts are greatly appreciated," Bishop Chris said.

"Thank you, Your Excellency. I will continue to work hard for the church," Andrew replied.

After dismissing Andrew, Bishop Chris immediately pulled out his long-distance communication device and reported the development to the archbishop at the headquarters.

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Ten kilometers from the city wall of Balin, on one of the branch trees in the forest that overlooked the crowd of people meditating on the surrounding sword will, stood a man with a giant axe strapped to his back. His fierce expression and tall, muscular body gave the impression of a wild beast ready to unleash its rampage.

His short red hair, like small fires, and his black eyes, which were very intimidating, only added to his menacing presence. At this moment, he looked in the direction of the meditating people and snorted.

"The ten great swordsmasters have actually gathered there. This is truly unexpected," he said.

"Fuck, that many powerhouses will limit my movement in this city! Fuck, fuck, fuck," he yelled.

"Fuck, for whoever did this! Because of it, the Devil Lord has ordered me to investigate personally. This unknown bastard has jeopardized our plan for the Ivory Empire and even the whole continent," he said, sounding very irritated.

*"But it's strange that the elves could eliminate so many devils in such a short time, and even a fucking mid-King stage Hydra! Is there a traitor among us? Has the Golden Swan Commerce betrayed us?"* he thought.

*"No, that's impossible. The devils would not betray us, and the Golden Swan Commerce would face backlash if they were discovered to be connected with us, even just a little."*

He scratched his head in frustration over this mess.

"Argh, fuck whoever disturbed our plan! I will fucking crush you!" he yelled.

As for the person responsible for all this, he didn't care about the outside problems and was happily talking with two beautiful spirits.

## *Chapter 47 - Again?*

Five months later,

In the imperial palace complex, there was a multifunctional training ground for the imperial family, typically used by its members to practice their techniques. On one side of the training ground, there were numerous static targets for archery, where the elves would sharpen their skills. At this moment, some of the targets already had arrows embedded in their centers. Some arrows even overlapped each other, creating a flower-like pattern.

The source of those arrows was a twelve-year-old boy with black hair, who would turn thirteen in a few months. The way he held the bow was steady, his posture perfect, and his eyes focused on the target. When he released the string, the arrow flew with such speed that it was merely a blur, landing precisely on the target, overlapping the already embedded arrow.

Aldrian hadn't wasted a moment during the months he'd been here. He familiarized himself with elven life to grow closer to them. At first, the elves, who were unaware of Aldrian's circumstances, wondered why the imperial family was so accommodating to this human. Most of the elves in the capital felt strange and uncomfortable about his prolonged presence.

Sure, there were times when other races visited the capital, and Evergreen City had a small district where other races could stay. But they didn't linger in other districts, because they knew how the capital's inhabitants didn't appreciate the presence of other races—not like in the cities on the borders.

Aldrian's existence here was an anomaly to them, yet the imperial family seemed to accept him, with the princess even talking and walking with him around the capital. With the imperial family's treatment, plus Aldrian's efforts to adapt to their lifestyle and his helpful nature, in the end, the elves gradually accepted him.

The way of the elf was also archery, which aligned perfectly with Aldrian's intention to learn it so he could use the Earth-Shattering Bow to its full potential. He asked the imperial teacher if there was someone who could teach him archery, and the teacher, delighted, decided to teach Aldrian himself. After learning the basics and trying a few shots, the imperial teacher quickly realized that Aldrian was a natural-born genius in archery. He felt it would be a shame not to maximize Aldrian's potential in this area.

He didn't mind that Aldrian also used a sword because he knew Aldrian was no ordinary human. Perhaps he could train with more than one specialized weapon and this turned out to be true—Aldrian quickly grasped every lesson and even began learning basic techniques like homing arrows just two days after starting archery. Gradually, Aldrian was able to train by himself and even started creating new techniques based on his understanding.

Now, he trained in basic archery without any special techniques, just to hone his senses and instincts as an archer. Eleine and Princess Sylphia watched him from the side, sometimes cheering and clapping for him. But they weren't the only ones there. Two other figures, wearing the golden-green noble attire that only the princes of the Ivory Empire could wear, stood nearby.

"He's truly a prodigy. How can he learn everything so quickly and never seem to hit a bottleneck? I just can't grasp how he does it," said one of them.

"He's always been like that, Your Highness. He's been special since birth," Eleine responded. Her aura had grown stronger over the past months, and her cultivation had increased to High Earl, thanks to the herbs Aldrian brought from the Forest of Despair. Eleine felt grateful for her young master's care, she could even feel her cultivation foundation becoming more solid due to one of the herbs she consumed.

Aldrian ended his training session by demonstrating the homing arrow technique. He shot an arrow without aiming directly at the target, and it flew towards its mark guided by wind energy—one of the basic techniques mastered by elves, but quite draining on concentration and mental energy for those not used to it.

He walked back to the group watching him train and smiled at them.

"You're back, Brother Arion, Brother Aran," Aldrian said.

"The situation is under control and not drastic, so I could return quickly," Vilan replied.

"You never cease to amaze me, Brother Aldrian. You're truly like a veteran in archery," said Arion.

"Thank you for the compliment. I'm still not as good as you," Aldrian answered modestly.

Arion Evergreen and Aran Evergreen were the fourth and fifth sons of Emperor Ladwin. Aldrian had already met the second and third sons but had never met the emperor's first son, who was guarding the southern border near the demon territory. Over time, Aldrian had grown close to the royal brothers, and they addressed each other as brothers.

"Aish, don't be so humble. Let's go, Father wants to meet you," Arion said.

"His Majesty?" Aldrian nodded, and they walked towards the throne hall. Upon arriving, Aldrian saw Emperor Ladwin and a beautiful elf beside him. She had long, golden hair draped over her shoulders and back, an elegant golden-green dress covering her voluptuous figure, and a smiling face that radiated warmth, like a mother smiling at her child. Aldrian bowed his head towards the two elves.

"Greetings, Your Majesties. I heard you called for me, Your Majesty?" Aldrian asked.

"Yes, I have something to discuss with you," Emperor Ladwin said.

Aldrian nodded and looked at the woman beside the emperor. She was the Empress of the Ivory Empire, Elaria Evergreen, and he bowed his head once again.

"It's only been three months since I last saw you, but you're like a new person now," Empress Elaria said with her soft voice.

"I'll take that as a compliment, Your Majesty," Aldrian replied.

"Of course, it's a compliment, child. How has your stay here been?" she asked.

"I'm enjoying it very much, Your Majesty. Everything here is good, and the people have come to accept me after a while," Aldrian replied. Thanks to the Oath of the Heavenly Tree, even the conservative nobles didn't make things difficult for him during his stay.

"I'm glad to hear you're enjoying your stay. Now go, Ladwin wants to talk to you," she said. Aldrian nodded and walked with Emperor Ladwin to another room where the emperor usually read documents, inside his workroom. After they were seated on sofas facing each other, Emperor Ladwin spoke.

"Aldrian, can you show me your golden energy?" Hearing Emperor Ladwin's request, Aldrian was puzzled for a moment, but he complied, revealing his energy through his hand. The golden energy and its aura filled the air, and the sight still amazed Emperor Ladwin, especially its color. It resembled holy energy but lacked the distinct feel of it, and it was even more radiant than holy energy.

Usually, a cultivator's energy color in their dantian corresponds to their compatibility with the elements or attributes for example, basic elements like earth is brown, fire is red, water is blue, and wind is transparent white. There are also more advanced elements like ice, space, time, and many more, each with its own distinct color.

When a cultivator begins their journey, they typically have compatibility with one element. However, in rare cases, a cultivator may start with compatibility with two elements. These individuals are considered geniuses because of their innate talent.

When they reach the Marquess and Emperor stage, they have the chance to add another element to their dantian. If successful, they gain another element as part of their arsenal. Of course, those who already have dual elements have an advantage and can add more.

However, the downside of having multiple elements is that it requires harder training and cultivation to maximize their potential. As the saying goes, "Don't be a jack of all trades but master of none." But that wasn't the case with Aldrian.



*"Aldrian, you are the embodiment of 'jack of all trades, but master of all.' Could this golden energy truly encompass all things, even holy energy?"* Emperor Ladwin thought as he assessed the golden energy before him.

*"But still, I can't sense it fully. I know this energy has a soothing effect, but it's not enough proof. Did they lie to me and try to dig something up? Or is it too pure and can only be felt by holy energy?"* When Aldrian noticed the confusion in the emperor's eyes, he asked,

"What's wrong, Your Majesty? Is there something wrong?"

Emperor Ladwin looked into his eyes and sighed.

"To tell you the truth, a month ago, a delegation from the church came to the capital."

"The church?"

"Yes, long story short, it seems they've sniffed out your presence in the capital—the person who defeated the hydra." Aldrian was stunned upon hearing this.

"How did they do that? I'm pretty sure no one saw me except Mayor Livrin when I defeated the hydra, and I always used teleportation afterward to avoid detection."

"They said they could feel your golden energy containing holy energy. They investigated the event and found their way to this city. They came to me and asked to meet you."

Aldrian was even more puzzled by this new development.

*"Holy energy? Inside me?"* he thought. This was a new discovery for him since he didn't even know there was holy energy within him.

"And I had to take their visit seriously because they came with their archbishop," Emperor Ladwin added.

"Archbishop? Why would a high-ranking church member visit just to find the person who defeated the hydra? Even if I have holy energy, why would the archbishop himself come?" Aldrian asked.

"Sigh. Here's the thing, they said it has to do with their prophecy."

Aldrian almost facepalmed.

*"Prophecy again?"*



## Chapter 48 - Talk With The Archbishop 1

"Which prophecy? Is it the one we already know about? Well, that one and the prophecy from the Evergreen world tree's spirit are almost the same, so maybe I'm connected to it," Aldrian said.

Emperor Ladwin gave him a bitter smile and replied, "I don't know the specifics, but besides the prophecy, it has to do with their church's secrets. They believe your energy is the key to something important."

Aldrian sighed and began to ponder. *"Holy energy, huh? This is new. My energy has always made spirits and beasts react, but now there's this holy energy that's attracting the church. What exactly is this energy?"* He felt as if he was starting from scratch again.

He had thought his energy would only affect nature-based creatures like spirits, but with the introduction of holy energy, it seemed to be something entirely different. The holy energy is a blessing from the higher entity. If elves receive their compatibility with nature, especially the forest and the powers they wield over it as a blessing from the Heavenly Tree of the World, then similarly, the members of the church receive holy power from heavens as a blessing for spreading the faith and will of heavens.

The holy power can neutralize negative energy and curses. Due to this trait, holy energy serves as the perfect antidote to devil energy and somewhat demonic energies. Given these characteristics, his energy not only reacts with spirits and beasts but is also intrinsically connected to the blessing of heavens.

"When they came to me, they said, 'Fate has brought us here,' and they knew that the person who defeated the hydra is somewhere in the capital. They also mentioned that he has 'the strongest and purest holy energy' and asked me to help them find that person. Although they indirectly inquired about your whereabouts, I believe they already know that the Evergreen imperial family has that person," Emperor Ladwin explained.

Aldrian began to ponder. He was now interested in meeting with the people from the church to learn more about his 'holy' energy. He needed as many clues as possible to understand what his energy was truly capable of. He then looked at Emperor Ladwin.

"So, will they be coming back, or what?"

"They are staying in the special district for outsiders, where accommodations have been arranged for them. They're very persistent, and sooner or later, I'll have to address them. It wouldn't be wise to ignore them, especially with the archbishop leading the group. That's why I'm asking for your opinion now. What do you think of this situation, and how would you like to proceed? If you'd rather not meet them, I can make up an excuse and let them be," Emperor Ladwin said.

"To be honest, your majesty, I'm quite interested in this holy energy they claim I possess. I don't know much about it myself, but perhaps they can provide answers and clarify how I'm connected to their prophecy," Aldrian replied.

"So, do you want to meet them?"

"I will meet them, Your Majesty." Emperor Ladwin then sigh and said to him,

"Alright, we'll arrange your meeting with them. I'll send them the notice after this," Emperor Ladwin said. If he were honest, he wasn't eager to introduce Aldrian to outsiders just yet. He was uncertain how things would unfold if they met, but the presence of the archbishop was significant, highlighting the importance of the church's interest.

After their conversation, Emperor Ladwin sent a notice to the church delegation, informing them that he had found the person they were looking for and that the meeting would be held at his workplace that afternoon. Aldrian then told Eleine, who was waiting with Princess Sylphia in the palace garden.

"The church, huh? You really are a magnet for all kinds of people, little brother." Eleine said.

"Well, what can I do? It's like fate made me a magnet."

"Aldrian, are you sure it's okay to just meet them like this? What if they want to harm you?" Princess Sylphia asked, her worry evident.

"It's okay, Sylphia. Even if they want to do something to me, I guarantee they won't be able to harm me here. Even if something unexpected happens, they won't be able to touch even a hem of my clothes. And I don't think they'd dare to try. After all, we're in the heart of the Ivory Empire." He spoke with a mysterious and confident smile.

When Aldrian said he wanted to talk to the church delegation, he had one guarantee: he was sure he could handle anything that came his way. He look at his information,

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## **Aldrian Aster**

**Domain** : The secret realm, The Ivory empire

### **Age**

: 12 years

**Cultivation** : Peak Viscount

**Current energy : 288,389 (+2 /15m)**

**Energy needed for the next stage : 320.001**

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He successfully made the entire Ivory Empire his domain, as he had hypothesized. After integrating himself with the World Tree of the Evergreen, the area of its blessing, which covered the entire Ivory Empire, also became his domain. The changes within him were tremendous. Not only did his cultivation speed increase significantly, but he also occasionally experienced new visions about the unknown spirit. His mind became much clearer, and he began to gain deeper insights into his domain.

He couldn't yet sense the entire domain in detail due to his lower cultivation level, and he predicted he would be able to use the full potential of his Ivory Empire-sized domain once he reached the Grand Duke stage. He felt satisfied and ready to test his new power when the opportunity arose.

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A few hours later,

Not far from the World Tree lies a small district specifically designed for outsiders, including official delegations from other countries who wish to stay. This district features structures primarily made of brick, built to human standards for comfort and functionality. It includes facilities such as lodging, restaurants, taverns, artifact shops, trade areas, and more. In short, this is the only area in Evergreen City where outsiders can conduct their activities.

At this moment, inside a luxurious three-story inn, the church members prepared for the meeting. Among the group were two bishops, an archbishop, and four paladins. Among the paladins was Arthur Maximilian, serving as their escort.

"Your Excellency, what are we going to do if we confirm what Bishop Chris said is true? Are we really going to bring him to the main church immediately?" asked one of the priests.

"We will see to that, this matter already spread to all high ranking member in main church and they put high hope for this, I only hope this visit we will gain something even that is just gaining hope."

They boarded two carriages marked with the church's symbol and headed toward the imperial palace. The journey itself was not long, only 20 minutes, before they arrived. After briefly marveling at the unique architecture of the elven imperial palace once more, they were directed to the meeting place by the imperial guard.

When they arrived and the door opened for them, they saw a young boy sitting on a sofa, with a young human woman and a young elven woman standing behind him. They instantly recognized Princess Sylphia, but they were stunned by the presence of the other two. Even Arthur looked at them suspiciously.

*"Are the elves trying to fool us?"* he thought.

The others began to doubt Emperor Ladwin's intentions when the boy stood up and spoke to them.

"Welcome, esteemed guests. I understand your excellency wishes to meet with me. May I inquire what you desire from my humble self?" Aldrian asked the archbishop. In response, he received doubtful stares from the church members.

"What is the meaning of this?" one of the bishops asked, ignoring Aldrian and addressing Princess Sylphia, the only imperial family member present. With a serene expression, Sylphia answered them.

"The church is looking for the person who defeated the Hydra, and we have brought you the person who did it."

"A Viscount stage cultivator killed a King stage, three-headed Hydra?! Is the Evergreen Imperial family trying to fool us?!"

"Does His Majesty the Emperor want to humiliate the church?"

Voices began to rise from the church delegation. They felt the Evergreen Imperial family was trying to humiliate them and hide the true person they were looking for. The archbishop silently observed Aldrian's calm face but inside he was upset, as this was not what he had expected. He had come here hoping to meet their prophesized savior. What was the imperial family trying to pull off, bringing a young boy of Viscount stage as a substitute?

Arthur was also unhappy with the situation. He had expected to meet the person who unleashed the technique, but it seemed this trip would be a disappointment. Aldrian looked at them, saying nothing. Their reaction was as expected from those who didn't know him, but it also irritated him. His innate trait could not accept being treated as a scammer.

"Lower your voices, delegation from the church. You are in the imperial palace, not the market," Princess Sylphia said with full authority and dignity. The usually friendly and cheerful princess was nowhere to be seen, and this side of her made Aldrian's perception of her change.

*"She is still the princess of one of the great empires, after all,"* he thought.

"What do you mean, your hig—" One of the bishops started to ask, but before he could finish his sentence, his voice suddenly disappeared and no sound came out. The others looked on in shock as they witnessed this.

"What are y—" Before another could ask, he received the same treatment. Their shock grew as all the surrounding energy moved as if controlled by someone, blocking their voices and making their bodies feel heavy. The archbishop trembled as he felt the pressure as though the energy itself was trying to crush him. A few moments later, the pressure was gone, and everything returned to normal.

"Now, can we talk?"

#### *Chapter 49 - Talk With The Archbishop 2*

The church members looked at Aldrian in astonishment. Did he really just do that? The weakest among them was at the Duke stage, yet they had been silenced by a young boy at the Viscount stage? They felt the pressure bearing down on them, a force that seemed intent on crushing them.

They quickly scanned their surroundings, searching for a high-stage cultivator who could have caused this, but found only three youngsters, none of whom could possibly have pulled off such a feat. With no other explanation, they had no choice but to give this boy the benefit of the doubt.

Aldrian sighed as he observed their astonished faces.

"At first, I thought we could have a civil conversation, and I might learn something from you, Your Excellency," he said, addressing the archbishop. "It seems that was just wishful thinking on my part. I have to say, you were all too quick to jump to conclusions." He swept his gaze over the others.

"Did you really think the Evergreen Imperial Family would just pick some random person off the street and have him stand before you? You all have quite the imagination. Why would the imperial family call you here just to humiliate you? They could have left you waiting in the outsider district indefinitely if they wanted to, but instead, they brought you here to express their goodwill. And what did you do? You lashed out as if you'd been scammed."

The archbishop looked at the young boy and realized they had seriously misjudged the situation. Only now did he recognize how inappropriate their behavior had been within the imperial palace, even to the point of accusing the imperial family of humiliating them. He sighed, then looked at the boy with newfound respect, and slightly bowed his head.

"I apologize for our inappropriate behavior. We were at fault this time, and I hope we can continue our meeting so that we may better understand one another," he said.

Aldrian studied the archbishop for a moment.

"Well, I'm not really offended by your behavior. I understand what you were thinking, but I don't like seeing anyone underestimated just because they don't match your expectations—especially when that person is me." He said. He spoke with such confidence that they thought he was quite cocky for someone at the Viscount stage to dare speak to an archbishop like that.

But when they remembered what had just happened, they had to reconsider the boy in front of them. The pressure they had felt was real, as if their bodies were on the verge of exploding. The archbishop himself had felt the space around them compress, making it feel as though they were inside a high-pressure chamber.

"I'll keep that in mind," the archbishop replied.

The archbishop then took a seat on one of the sofas facing Aldrian, while the others stood behind their respective leaders. Aldrian could now focus on the archbishop—an old man with grey hair, wrinkles etched into his face, dressed in a white robe with a light yellow sash draped over his left shoulder.

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### **Ravin Garius**

**Age** : 85.140 years

**Race** : Human

**Cultivation** : Mid Emperor

**Cultivation technique** : Heavenly Light Enveloping The World

**Attack techniques** : Heavenly Judgment, The Light of Guardian Angel, Heavenly Spear, Spear of Judgment

**Defence technique** : The Light of Guardian Angel

**Supporting techniques** : Heavenly Aura, Heaven's Blessing

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"Now that we can talk with clear minds, let's introduce ourselves. You can call me Aldrian. May I know your esteemed name, Your Excellency, so I can know who I'm speaking with?" Aldrian asked.

"I am Ravin Garius, the archbishop appointed by His Holiness, Pope Claudius Maximus, as the church's representative to find the person we are searching for."

"Alright, Your Excellency, Archbishop Ravin Garius. Let's start with why you wanted to meet me. Why do you want to meet the person who defeated the Hydra? Can you be more specific?"

Archbishop Ravin hesitated as he looked into Aldrian's eyes, then glanced at the two women standing behind him.

"Ah, I see," Aldrian thought, reading Archbishop Ravin mind. He had forgotten one important thing. Although he had somewhat convinced them that he was no ordinary cultivator, they were still unsure if he was the person they were looking for. Even though he had assured them that the Evergreen family wouldn't joke about something like this, they couldn't trust him so easily due to the sensitivity of the issue. Moreover, the presence of Princess Sylphia, a member of the Evergreen family, could potentially become a gateway for outside forces to discover the church's problems.

"I apologize, but given the secrecy and importance of this matter, how can we be sure you are truly the one who defeated the Hydra? I'm not doubting the Evergreen Imperial Family, but how can I be sure they haven't brought us the wrong person?" Archbishop Ravin asked, staring at Aldrian's calm face. He could no longer consider the person before him a mere "boy", his appearance and cultivation must be a façade.

"Fair enough. So, what do you propose we do, Your Excellency?" Aldrian responded.

"It's simple. Let me see your energy. One of our bishops from the Ivory Empire said your energy would resonate with our holy energy and might even be stronger than ours," Archbishop Ravin said.

Aldrian nodded, stretched out his hand, and released his golden energy. When the church members saw the golden energy emanating from Aldrian's hand, the holy energy within their dantians fluctuated and resonated with it. They were also shocked by the purity of the holy energy in this golden aura and the sheer strength it exuded, which sent shivers down their spines. Archbishop Ravin trembled at the sight before him.

*"What kind of purity is this? Is it possible for a human to contain this much power and such pure holy energy?"* he wondered. He had never seen holy energy of this purity, not even from the Pope himself. Arthur, who had remained silent until now, trembled, his eyes widening in disbelief. His usual expressionless, handsome face was gone.

Judging by their reactions, it seemed true that his energy was indeed connected to the heavens' blessing. With this confirmation, Aldrian realized he would have an advantage in the relationship they were about to build. They had come to him out of interest, and he needed them as a source of information—and perhaps even more.



He then retracted his energy, allowing them a moment to regain their composure.

"It's incredible. How do you possess such holy energy, Sir Aldrian? I'm sorry if I'm being rude, but where are you from? What about your family?" Archbishop Ravin asked.

"My parents left me when I was a child, leaving me and my older sister. So, I don't know where they are," Aldrian replied.

"I apologize if I made you uncomfortable," Archbishop Ravin said.

"It's fine. Now, would you like to tell me the real reason you're seeking this holy energy? Because I'm certain I'm on your radar because of it."

Archbishop Ravin, now convinced that Aldrian was the one they had been searching for, felt they needed to do whatever it took to bring him to their side—even if it meant revealing their secret to the Evergreen Imperial Family.

"The church, as the neutral power of the continent, is considered an organization focused on preaching the will of the heavens. We aim to spread the faith of the Heavens—the Heaven that judges, the Heavens that upholds the law of causality, the Heavens that observes every deed, even the smallest ones. Oh, forgive me for my preaching nature. Anyway, the Heavens have blessed us with this holy energy to aid us in spreading their faith," Archbishop Ravin said. He extended his hand, showing Aldrian his holy energy, which also had a golden hue but was lighter and less radiant compared to Aldrian's golden energy.

Aldrian, observing this holy energy, was impressed by its presence but felt it was lacking something. As he focused his senses on the holy energy, he detected a foreign element that was unfamiliar to him. This foreign energy irritated him and even made him angry. Archbishop Ravin, unaware of Aldrian's reaction, continued his explanation.

"This holy energy has been blessed to us for millions of years. Our followers take great pride in it as a symbol of their commitment to the church and their pious adherence to our teachings. But what if something were to happen to this holy energy, the very proof of our loyalty to the heavens?"

"What do you mean?" Aldrian asked.

*sigh* "To be honest, for the past three million years, our holy energy has gradually weakened. At first, the decline was not noticeable, but over time, it has diminished to the point where the devil energy is nearly on par with our holy energy, and it can now resist it. Even the holy energy we once took pride in has been tainted with an unknown energy, reducing both its purity and its power. We fear that if this continues, we will not receive any further blessings and may instead face a curse."

No data found.

