

The Shining Star Above The Heaven

#Chapter 461: Wounded - Read The Shining Star Above The Heaven Chapter 461: Wounded

Chapter 461: Wounded

Boom!

Aldrian's aura flared to its maximum as he drew the full power of his domain into his body. Golden energy radiated from him, instantly breaking the high-level curse that had burdened him with so much negativity.

When the golden energy merged with the full force of his domain, the curse shattered. At the same moment, the emblem in Prince Wilmar's grasp cracked, startling him.

Though he had already retreated behind the city's barrier, Wilmar couldn't help but feel a shudder deep in his soul at Aldrian's sudden transformation.

An overwhelming instinct surged within him, he wanted to prostrate himself before Aldrian. It was a reaction born not of thought, but from the depths of his very soul.

Cardinal Carsius, who was already close to Aldrian with his spear strike nearly upon him, faltered for a moment due to the sudden explosion of Aldrian's aura. He staggered in the air, but continued charging toward Aldrian with incredible speed.

Yet, in the next instant, it felt as though Aldrian's movements were beyond his perception. Suddenly, Aldrian's hand that grasping his sword moved in a slashing motion toward him.

In that moment, it was as if Aldrian had stepped into a different time and space. He tried to use his time laws to move faster, even if it meant gaining only 0.01 seconds. But that sliver of time was enough for him to unleash the Slash of Vanguard.

This technique was a simpler version of Slash of the End and its power and complexity couldn't compare to the Pillar of Heaven's Judgment, let alone the Slash of the End. But that didn't matter.

What he needed now was speed. He needed a quick, simple strike that he could unleash in an instant to intercept the incoming spear attack.

As for the lack of power, he could compensate for it with the power of his domain.

In that moment, a slash of energy infused with tremendous force hurled toward Cardinal Carsius—colliding with his spear mid-air.

Boom!

A massive surge of wind swept out from the impact, and the surrounding space collapsed once again, swallowing both Aldrian and Cardinal Carsius.

A spatial storm reappeared but this time, far more violent than the one before. The cracks in space were larger, as if reality itself was being consumed by the void. The sky vanished.

Yet behind the darkness of the void and the chaos of the spatial storm, a blinding light shone. It burst forth from the exact point where the two techniques had collided.

Zinng!

The sound of the impact echoed across the entire city. People shielded their eyes from the sudden flash of light.

After a few seconds, the light receded, and they were finally able to look up again.

The spatial storm continued to ravage the sky, making it impossible to see the figures of Cardinal Carsius and Aldrian. Both had been swallowed by the void and the chaotic storm.

But then, gasps echoed across the city as something shot out from the storm like a projectile, hurtling toward the ground at frightening speed.

Everyone was stunned when they realized who it was. The figure was Cardinal Carsius.

His body slammed into the ground with incredible force, creating a massive crater on impact. He didn't move. For a moment, many thought he was dead.

However, the high-ranking cultivators could still sense a faint breath within him. He was alive, but unconscious.

His body was covered in wounds. His robe had been torn in multiple places, and blood stained his entire body. From the sheer impact alone, it was clear that he had suffered numerous broken bones.

Many turned their eyes upward once more, watching as the void began to mend itself. At first, the process was slow, but then the pace began to quicken, as if someone were controlling the process.

It was then that many among them realized that this was Aldrian's doing. He was using his space laws to accelerate the healing of the cracked space.

Aldrian was still alive, somewhere behind the spatial storm and the void. Many people were truly amazed, even after everything that had happened, he had survived.

A few more seconds passed, and finally, Aldrian's figure came into view. The cracks in space had fully mended, and the world around them returned to normal.

However, everyone was stunned when they saw Aldrian's condition. His body still radiated golden energy so intensely that it stirred an instinctive urge to worship him.

But despite the golden glow, his upper attire was torn, revealing his well-proportioned, muscular frame. His body was marked with numerous scratches, and blood stained his skin. Even his face bore signs of blood at the corner of his lips and a few visible cuts.

However, many high-level cultivators watching from below noticed something strange. For a split second, Aldrian's face seemed to change.

What they saw was not the familiar face of Aldrian, but a more striking one—more handsome, with long red hair.

Then, just as quickly, it returned to the face they recognized.

They couldn't help but wonder—was it an illusion, or maybe...?

In Aldrian's hand, the Heaven's Judgment Spear was already firmly in his grasp. It trembled briefly, then fell completely still after it felt his golden energy.

This legacy artifact had almost been lost to the void if Aldrian hadn't pulled it back to him immediately after the clash between the two techniques.

Because of how powerful and devastating the clash between the two techniques was, someone unable to withstand it would be instantly thrown back.

In this case, Cardinal Carsius was overwhelmed by Aldrian's technique. He managed to endure the Slash of Vanguard for only a few seconds before he was completely overpowered. In that moment, he lost his grip on the spear, and it was flung into the void.

His body was struck by the slash's energy, though, fortunately for him, much of its force had already been spent in the initial impact. Even so, it hurled him to the ground.

Aldrian instantly pulled the spear toward himself using his gravity laws while simultaneously shielding his body from the spatial storm. He had already activated his

golden energy and conjured a spatial shield to protect himself, but the storm was incredibly powerful and relentless.

Spatial winds howled around him, and the constant distortions in space continued to batter his body.

Even with all his defenses, he was still taking damage.

However at that moment, he was not sure if it was just his imagination, but he felt that the storm's power weakened slightly, although only by a small margin, whenever it came into contact with his golden energy.

Still, the might of the spatial storm was nothing to underestimate. Even a peak Emperor-stage cultivator could be annihilated here. Their body would be torn apart by the chaos of space itself.

He also tried to steady himself so he would not be pulled deeper into the void by the spatial storm. Fortunately, he was able to quickly mend the space around him, allowing him to escape, even though his body was covered in wounds.

It was truly extraordinary. The last time he had suffered injuries was during his heavenly tribulation, when his body had been directly struck by heavenly lightning.

Aldrian looked down at the spear in his hand and read on its information.

Heaven's Punishment Spear

Description: One of the legacy artifacts of the Heavenly Direction Church. It was created by the first king of the Forgeheart Kingdom, along with other dwarves, in collaboration with the first pope and the early cardinals of the church.

This spear received a direct blessing from the heavens and contains an immense amount of holy energy. If the wielder possesses holy energy, the spear can amplify the power of their techniques by at least 25%, depending on the complexity of the technique.

When used in conjunction with the holy territory created by the Heavenly Sovereign Sanctuary Staff, the effect becomes even greater. In such a case, the amplification may reach up to 50% of the original strength.

Level: High Divine Grade

Aldrian sighed to himself. The effect of this artifact was truly absurd. When combined with the Heavenly Sovereign Sanctuary Staff and wielded by someone like Cardinal Carsius, who was at the peak of the Emperor stage, it could boost an already powerful attack by him as much as fifty percent.

This battle had been a truly valuable lesson for him. It was the first time he had fought someone at the peak of the Emperor stage and wielded a legacy artifact. He was thankful to be alive, and he knew it was only because he had acted quickly and without hesitation.

If he had faltered, even for a moment, and failed to use the full power of his domain, he would have died.

The curse that had been cast on him was quite dangerous, as it disrupted his focus and interfered with the flow of his energy. He had forcefully broken it using his golden energy, which carried the full power of his domain, before unleashing the Slash of Vanguard toward Cardinal Carsius.

It had been a close call—one of the moments where he had come closest to death.

He suddenly received the intent of the heavens and simply nodded in understanding once it had passed.

"Well, it's alright, if I have to be protected by you, I will never grow," Aldrian replied.

Basically, the heavens conveyed their deep regret that they could not directly intervene to help Aldrian, such as by striking Cardinal Carsius or anyone else with heavenly lightning. They were bound by the rules of the universe.

At most, they could offer Aldrian some leniency in certain matters and communicate through intent, as they usually did.

The heavens also urged Aldrian to continue growing stronger and to keep expanding his domain. Only by reaching a level where he could influence the rules of the universe himself would the heavens be able to offer him greater support in the future.

Aldrian simply smiled at the heavens, which seemed desperate for his growth.

After the brief exchange, he looked down to see the people below, all staring up at him with a mixture of emotions.

For the first time in a hundred thousand years, a battle of this scale had taken place. It would be recorded in the history of the continent as the clash that decided the fate of the Atria Empire and shaped its future.

Chapter 462: Still Not Giving Up

Aldrian could sense the emotions of the people who were watching him—fear, anxiety, respect, piety, worship. All of them reflected a single truth: they had no power before him, and so they chose to submit.

Some submitted because of the circumstances, while others did so with their whole will and soul. At this moment, Aldrian's very presence resembled that of a god. In fact, many had already prostrated themselves before him, compelled by their souls to do so. For lower-level cultivators and mortals, his presence carried a force that filled them with reverence.

He was a god who had descended to the mortal plane, delivering his own judgment to those who had dared to offend him. A powerful god who is always watching and all-knowing.

Every scheme the second prince had devised now seemed meaningless in the face of Aldrian's overwhelming power. As some would say, before such might, all tricks are futile.

Even now, the wounds on Aldrian's body were healing rapidly and he would be fully healed in no time.

Aldrian looked toward the unconscious Cardinal Carsius and acknowledged his strength. Cardinal Carsius was a truly powerful cultivator.

Although the cardinal did not specialize in combat, his peak Emperor-stage cultivation and legacy artifacts made him a difficult opponent to face. He was much stronger than the Greed Devil, even when the latter wielded a high divine-grade artifact.

Until Aldrian encountered Cardinal Carsius, the Greed Devil had been the strongest opponent he had ever faced. At that time, the Greed Devil was at the high Emperor stage and wielded a high divine-grade sword he had taken from the vault of the Forgeheart Kingdom.

However, Aldrian knew that the Greed Devil couldn't fully unleash the sword's potential. The weapon wasn't truly his to begin with. That sword wasn't compatible with the devil's energy, even if it still granted him a considerable boost in power.

Cardinal Carsius, on the other hand, was entirely different. He was already at the peak of the Emperor stage and wielded legacy artifacts that were fully compatible with him. He had successfully refined them. In addition, he possessed two artifacts that complemented each other perfectly, granting him an even greater surge in strength.

Without a doubt, Cardinal Carsius was the strongest opponent Aldrian had faced up until now.

With a thought, Aldrian teleported Cardinal Carsius's body away to a safer place. He looked down at the massive army below and saw that they had already lost the will to fight.

Even though the holy territory was still active and gave the army both confidence and a boost in power, Aldrian's strength was simply too overwhelming. Even the attack of a peak Emperor-stage cultivator wielding a divine-grade artifact had failed.

In the face of such power, they could only surrender. Their numbers and tactics were meaningless against someone like him.

His gaze then shifted toward the city wall, where Grand Duke Donovan, Prince Wilmar and Carlson Harris were supposed to be. Their presence had vanished the moment Cardinal Carsius was defeated. Aldrian assumed they had escaped using an escape talisman or something similar, as their presence disappeared instantly.

However, he did not mind. He would find them soon enough.

The remaining Emperor-stage cultivators and dozens of King-stage ones were still there, but he simply let them be as he swept his gaze over the vast army below.

"The battle is over. Return to the places you belong," he said, his voice echoing throughout the entire city. "I don't care who leads you in the meantime, but I hope we never cross paths like this again."

He then turned his gaze toward a distant part of the city, where a large and imposing palace stood. It was located outside his domain, which meant he could not teleport to it directly. He was fairly certain it was the imperial palace.

Without hesitation, he teleported inside the city barrier and flew toward the palace.

In a vast forest at an unknown location, a figure sat in a state of panic. His face was pale, sweat rolling down his cheeks, and his eyes filled with unease. He leaned against a tree, his breathing ragged, as though he had just escaped from a nightmare that refused to let go.

Though he wore low divine-grade armor and carried a low divine grade sword at his waist, none of it brought him comfort now.

All that mattered to him was escaping. He had to get as far away as possible so that the monster would not be able to catch him.

And who else could this be, if not the esteemed second prince, Prince Wilmar?

When he saw the curse break, Cardinal Carsius defeated, and Aldrian still alive, he didn't hesitate for even a moment. He immediately activated the escape talisman he had prepared and escaped to a remote location far outside the capital.

There was no way he would stay in the capital for even a second longer—not after witnessing the failure of both Cardinal Carsius and the special artifact the devils had given him.

He still couldn't comprehend it. The artifact was a middle divine-grade treasure, something powerful enough to curse even a high Emperor-stage cultivator with ease. He had used it on his own father, and thanks to that, his coup had succeeded.

But to think that even a curse cast through a divine-grade artifact had no effect on Aldrian... he no longer knew what to believe. That monster didn't seem to have any weakness at all.

"Fuck! All of my dreams, all of my glory—gone!" he shouted in frustration, clutching his hair.

He knew that after everything, Aldrian would hunt him down. Sooner or later, he would be found. He wasn't sure if Aldrian had a way to track him more quickly, but with how formidable he was, it was only a matter of time.

"No... I need to do something. I have to find a way to make him give up his intent to kill me."

He gritted his teeth, trying to think of something—anything—until his eyes widened slightly. A thought struck him.

He remembered that Aldrian hadn't come to the empire alone. He had arrived with a group.

"Yes... I can use them. I can use them to threaten Aldrian. He'll have to listen if I get my hands on one of them."

Wilmar stood up and looked off in one direction, a sharp glint flashing in his eyes.

Without wasting another second, he took off at full speed. As a low Emperor-stage cultivator, his movement was swift, his figure blurring as he shot eastward through the sky.

Back in the capital, Aldrian had already arrived at the imperial palace grounds. He had changed into a fresh robe to cover his upper body, as he had no intention of walking into this place bare-chested.

During his flight, his body had fully recovered, and the wounds had vanished without a trace. The golden energy that once surrounded him had already been retracted.

The imperial guards did not dare to stop him. They simply let him land and even lowered the palace barrier to allow him entry. After what they had witnessed and sensed from him, they had no reason to resist.

Although they were far from the battle site, those in the imperial palace could still sense the clash in the distance. A few King-stage cultivators stationed there had witnessed the battle from afar. The outcome was clear, and it was obvious that Aldrian intended to come to the palace.

There was no way they could stop someone like him with their strength. The only thing they could do was make sure not to provoke him.

After landing on the palace grounds, Aldrian walked into the palace without the slightest hesitation. He had already spread his senses and could instantly detect everything within the imperial palace. There were several places that caught his interest, and he intended to visit them.

He walked past many of the palace staff, but all of them quietly stepped aside to let him through. A few maids blushed at the sight of Aldrian's handsome face, though they quickly composed themselves and bowed in submission.

Aldrian made his way to his first destination, a place where he had sensed the presence of someone powerful. The strange thing was that their aura felt weak and fragile, but he still intended to meet this person.

When he arrived at the room where the presence originated, the doors were already open. Inside, he saw a butler and a physician tending to someone.

What Aldrian saw was an old man with a white beard and pale skin, lying on his bed as if gravely ill. The man had just opened his eyes, and the physician was in the middle of checking his condition. The butler stood beside them, assisting the physician as he examined the old man's health.

When they noticed Aldrian standing at the door, both the butler and the physician stunned before their faces turned pale. As for the old man, he looked in Aldrian's direction with a hint of curiosity.

Aldrian met the old man's gaze and asked calmly,

"Are you the emperor of this empire?"

Chapter 463: Another Healing 1

"Are you the emperor of this empire?" Aldrian asked calmly.

The moment his eyes landed on the old man, he read his information and couldn't help but notice his surname. With his cultivation level and age, Aldrian thought this old man might be the true emperor of the Atria Empire before the second prince's coup.

"Raymond Atolia Rosalis," Aldrian thought.

The old man was actually a High Emperor stage cultivator, but he appeared extremely fragile, with a thin body and pale countenance. His condition reminded Aldrian of Pope Claudius before he healed him.

However, before the old man could answer, the butler standing beside the physician suddenly jumped in front of Aldrian, as if trying to protect the old man from him.

"What do you want? Isn't your Excellency's target that bastard? Why come here?" the butler asked in a firm voice.

Still, Aldrian could sense that the man was forcing himself to stay brave in front of him. His peak King stage cultivation was easy to sense. It was clear that he wanted to prove he was ready for anything and would not back down. The butler was even prepared to sacrifice himself for the old man, if it came to that.

Aldrian gave an inward nod, appreciating the butler's determination. He had no intention of causing a misunderstanding, so he answered calmly.

"Relax. I don't intend to harm him. I only came to see for myself the true emperor of this empire before the second prince's coup. I want to know who the real ruler of the empire is, and perhaps build a relationship with him. If I intended to harm him, I would have already done so without any of you noticing."

Although what Aldrian said was humiliating, the butler couldn't refute it. He still felt uneasy about Aldrian's presence and wanted to drive him away. However, a voice from behind interrupted his thoughts.

"Daryl, you can stand down. What the young man said is true. If he wanted to harm me, he would have already done so long ago," the old man said in a slightly hoarse voice.

The butler continued to watch Aldrian warily for a few moments before finally sighing and stepping aside to make way.

The old man looked directly at Aldrian and finally responded to his earlier question.

"Yes. I was the emperor before that son of mine—no, before that man usurped my throne."

Aldrian gave a slight nod and walked in without waiting for an invitation. He approached the emperor and stood beside him.

The physician and the butler grew tense as Aldrian now stood closest to the emperor. All they could do was hope that he would not change his mind and harm him.

Emperor Raymond looked at Aldrian. There was no fear in his eyes. Instead, he simply wondered what Aldrian would do next.

Aldrian sat on the chair that had already been placed beside the emperor's bed and spoke calmly.

"Can you give me your hand? I want to check something."

Emperor Raymond nodded and extended his frail, thin hand. Aldrian took it and placed his fingers on the emperor's wrist, as though he were checking his pulse.

However, Aldrian was doing much more than that. While appearing to examine the pulse, he was assessing the emperor's overall condition. He also used karma laws to check for any curses that might be affecting him.

From what he observed and sensed, the emperor seemed to be suffering from a blockage in his meridians and dantian. The blockage had only recently been released, allowing energy to begin flowing again.

He could also sense the lingering remnants of an ominous darkness, as if a curse had been bound to the emperor's soul not long ago. Its presence still felt fresh, as though the curse had only recently been lifted.

Suddenly, he remembered the sensation he had felt when he was afflicted by the curse from the artifact in Wilmar's hand, just before he destroyed it. The blockage of energy flow, the sealed dantian, and the way his soul felt bound by a darkness made it feel as if he were trapped in a nightmare.

As he looked at the emperor's symptoms now, Aldrian finally understood what had truly happened. The emperor had been cursed, and that was how the second prince had been able to usurp the throne.

It was no wonder the coup had gone so smoothly, especially when he heard that the emperor had shown no signs of weakness before the coup. That artifact held strong curse. Aldrian had experienced its effects firsthand, and it was capable of rendering even a cultivator at the emperor's level completely helpless.

From Aldrian's guess, the curse within the emperor had been lifted because the artifact that served as its source was destroyed. When he had channeled the full power of his

domains into his body to destroy the curse, he had instinctively sent a karmic attack toward its origin. That origin was the artifact.

The artifact was likely a vulnerable item, which explained why it shattered instantly under the force of his karmic attack supported by the power of all his domains.

There was no way someone like the second prince could have lifted the curse on his own after escaping. Doing so would not have brought him any advantage.

Aldrian then injected his golden energy into the emperor's body to speed up the healing process and erase any lingering remnants of the curse. Although the emperor would recover over time and the remnants would eventually fade on their own, Aldrian needed his condition to improve as quickly as possible.

Emperor Raymond suddenly felt a warm sensation as Aldrian's golden energy flowed through him. His body felt refreshed and rejuvenated, as if he had just consumed a high-grade elixir. However, this sensation was far more comforting, and he could immediately tell that the energy coursing through him was more potent than any elixir he had ever taken in his life.

The physician and the butler watched the emperor's transformation, unable to hide their amazement. Their eyes did not blink throughout the entire healing process. A golden hue flowed from Aldrian's hand into the emperor's body, healing everything it touched—even hidden ailments deep within.

After more than thirty seconds, Aldrian finally let go of the emperor's hand and asked softly,

"How do you feel?"

Emperor Raymond looked at his hand and then down at his body. Although he was still thin, he felt refreshed, and there was a noticeable strength returning to his limbs. He could move more freely than before.

When he tried to stand, the physician and the butler immediately stepped forward to assist him, but he raised a hand to stop them, silently refusing their help.

Once Emperor Raymond stood up on his own, he began to walk. He took a few slow rounds under the watchful eyes of the butler and the physician. They were genuinely overjoyed by the sight. It truly looked like the emperor had been healed.

Since the day the second prince had done something to him, they had done everything in their power to help the emperor recover. They knew it was a powerful curse, and they had tried to break it, but nothing had worked, and there was no one in the palace capable of dispelling it.

They wanted to ask for help from the Church, but they couldn't because the second prince had already begun his coup. He blocked every effort to seek assistance from outside, and not everyone was willing to come when the empire had already fallen into the chaos of civil war.

Emperor Raymond continued walking for more than a minute before finally sitting back on the bed with a quiet sigh. He looked at Aldrian with deep gratitude in his eyes.

"Thank you for healing me, young man. I heard your name is Aldrian? Then... may I call you young Aldrian?" he asked.

"Whatever that makes you comfortable, Your Majesty," Aldrian replied with slight smile. It was the first time he had shown a smile since arriving in this place.

The emperor responded with a nod and a smile, but suddenly, the emperor seemed to remember something. His expression shifted slightly, tinged with apology as he looked at Aldrian.

"I'm sorry, young Aldrian, but may I ask one more favor of you? I know you've already done so much for my empire, and I truly don't know how to repay you... but could you please check on my other son? He's in the same condition I was, but I fear his situation may be even worse."

There was a hint of pleading in his eyes as he continued.

"I will do anything in return for this. Please... can you heal my first son?" he asked, bowing his head slightly.

The butler and the physician widened their eyes slightly as they saw the emperor lower his head. It only showed how desperate he must have felt. They understood, at least to some extent, the emperor's feelings. He had only two children—one had betrayed him, and the other now lay in critical condition.

If he lost his only remaining son, there would be no descendant to continue his legacy or inherit the empire. He had no blood brothers or younger relatives who could take the throne, leaving him completely alone. Without a clear successor, the empire would likely fall into another chaos, with various parties trying to push forward their own candidates for the throne.

"Of course, Your Majesty. I will heal him, even if you hadn't asked, I would have done it anyway."

Chapter 464: Another Healing 2

Aldrian was then brought to another room by the butler and the physician. The emperor accompanied them as well, wanting to see his first son's condition for himself. Ever since he had been cursed by the second prince, he had been unable to leave his bed.

The curse had bound him and drained his strength, leaving him powerless. Wilmar had also restricted who could visit him, which made everything even more difficult.

He could only receive reports from his butler and physician, the few people permitted by Wilmar to see him. One of his sources of information about what was happening outside came through them.

That was how he knew the empire had fallen into turmoil, and that a mysterious swordsman had appeared to save the day. It was also how he learned about his son's condition, which was said to be even worse than his own.

The physician then summarized what the first prince had experienced, and it was nearly identical to what had happened to Emperor Raymond. He too had been cursed by the same artifact used by Wilmar.

Once they arrived at the first prince's bedroom, they saw that his guardian knight was standing outside the door. The knight was visibly shocked by their sudden visit and quickly stepped aside to let them through.

Inside the room, the first prince lay unconscious on his bed, prompting Aldrian to frown slightly.

His body was in the same condition as the emperor's. Due to the lack of flow from the energy of heaven and earth, his complexion had turned pale, and his body was slowly "consuming" itself as a substitute for energy, causing him to grow thin.

"This is his current state," the physician explained. "He and His Majesty fell into that bastard's trap at the same time, but their conditions are quite different. His Highness appears to be in much worse shape. I haven't examined him yet today, but from my last observation, there seems to be an issue with his soul. However, because of the curse, I can't accurately assess the extent of the damage."

Aldrian nodded at the physician's explanation and approached the first prince. As he drew closer, he read the information of the man lying unconscious—a man whose face appeared more mature than Wilmar's. He was also at the Low Emperor stage, just like Wilmar.

"Ferdinand Losaris," Aldrian thought as he read the name of the first prince.

Once he stood beside the bed, he immediately checked the prince's condition by placing his fingers on Ferdinand's wrist. What he sensed inside was the same as when he had examined the emperor—the energy within the prince's body had begun to flow

again now that the blockage had been cleared. With time, his body would recover on its own.

However, there was a difference between Prince Ferdinand's soul condition and that of Emperor Raymond.

There were remnants of darkness lingering on his soul, a sign that the curse had only recently been lifted. However, Aldrian noticed that the prince's soul was damaged. The soul, which to take the shape of the prince's body, appeared cracked in several places, with darkness seeping out from the fractures.

Aldrian guess that this might be the reason why the first prince hadn't woken up, despite the curse being lifted. The soul was the most fragile part of a living being, an intangible aspect that directly affected consciousness and the subconscious.

How a person lived influenced their soul, and for cultivators, the soul was even more important. It was intimately tied to their cultivation technique, making its crucial part of their entire being.

If something happened to the soul, there could be unknown effects on the cultivator. What happened to Prince Ferdinand was a clear example of this—despite his body being relatively in good condition, something was wrong with his soul, which had left him in a comatose state.

From Aldrian's understanding, the strong curse that had bound the first prince had caused him to be consumed by negative emotions and illusions, which in turn had cracked his soul in several places.

The first prince had been under the weight of this powerful curse for over a year, and each person reacted differently to negative feelings and illusions. Aldrian wasn't surprised that the prince's condition was far worse than the emperor's. It only meant that his mental fortitude was weaker than Emperor Raymond's.

First, he needed to heal the prince's soul.

Next, he had to help the prince destroy the lingering nightmares caused by the curse. The mental state condition was something only the prince could face on his own, but Aldrian could assist by using his golden energy to soothe him. It was similar to when he had helped Baek Jimin, who nearly succumbed to her inner demons atop the cliff in the Thorny Flower Garden.

Using his golden energy, Aldrian began the difficult process of healing the prince's soul. This was no easy task, as even among physicians, those capable of healing something as intangible as a soul were rare. It required a special technique and a unique healing pill, such pills were far rarer and more expensive than normal healing pill.

Aldrian's golden energy, which encompassed all things, enveloped the prince's soul. Slowly, the many cracks began to mend. Once the soul was fully restored, Aldrian allowed his golden energy to continue covering it, ensuring that the energy would have a greater effect within the prince's subconscious.

His golden energy was a special case; if anyone else tried to replicate what Aldrian had done, their energy would have no effect on the recipient. Aldrian's energy had the unique ability to influence even something as abstract as the subconscious, affecting what a living being felt inside their mindscape or illusions.

At that moment, inside the first prince's mindscape, he sat motionless. His surroundings were so gloomy that anyone entering this space would immediately feel its weight. His expression was deadpan, as if he didn't care whether he was alive or dead. He stared at the ceiling, questioning whether anything he had done in his life had been right, or if his life even had any meaning.

Suddenly, a golden light descended from above, bathing him in its warmth. He felt an overwhelming sense of comfort, and his expression began to soften. After a few moments, it was as if he had come back to himself. He blinked, his gaze fixed on the golden light.

He stood up, as if regaining his confidence, suddenly feeling that all the time spent in this place had been a waste. The gloomy environment around him began to shatter, piece by piece, and the golden light engulfed him completely. When his sight cleared, he found himself looking up at the ceiling of a different place.

At this moment, he found himself inside a room. After a few seconds of thought, he recognized the place—it was his own bedroom in the imperial palace.

He glanced to his side and saw an unfamiliar young man with his father, who seemed different, along with two other people he recognized. Suddenly, as if a memory had resurfaced, his eyes widened slightly, and he tried to lift his body from the bed.

He glanced to his side and saw an unfamiliar young man with his father, who seemed different, along with two other people he recognized. Suddenly, as if a memory had resurfaced, his eyes widened slightly, and he tried to lift his body from the bed.

However, a wave of weakness washed over him, making it difficult to move as he propped himself up. His upper body felt stiff, slowing his movements. He narrowed his eyes, and his expression hardened with anger.

"Easy, Your Highness. You've just woken up after more than a year lying unconscious in bed," the physician said, his voice laced with concern.

Prince Ferdinand turned his head to look at the physician and the others in the room.

"Where is that bastard? How dare he use such underhanded tricks to trap me and Father? He truly has no fear of the consequences of his actions in trying to usurp the throne!" he said, his tone fierce.

"Relax, Your Highness. Your brother is fleeing as we speak," Aldrian replied. "Your brother's plan to take control of the entire empire has already failed."

Finally, Prince Ferdinand looked at Aldrian more thoroughly and couldn't help but ask,

"Who are you?"

"Your Highness, he is the one many people call the mysterious swordsman," the butler replied.

At first, Prince Ferdinand frowned, but then his eyes widened in realization. His expression changed to one of respect. Of course, he knew this title. Even before he had fallen unconscious, he had heard it many times. In fact, he had even visited the mysterious swordsman's trace of sword will in Balin City a few years ago to deepen his understanding of swordsmanship.

The man had always been so mysterious that no one knew his face, his origins, or anything about him—only that he was renowned for his tremendous strength and achievements, which had left cultivators across the continent in awe.

He had battled devils and beasts far stronger than most cultivators, saving countless lives. He had unleashed powerful sword techniques that gave sword cultivators new insights and deeper comprehension. All of his achievements and strength were more than worthy of being recorded in the history of the continent.

Without hesitation, Prince Ferdinand extended his hand, showing his respect toward Aldrian.

"My apologies. It's rude of me to speak to someone as esteemed as yourself. I hope you don't mind my sudden outburst. I just remembered something that made me angry. I'm truly ashamed to show you this ugly side of myself."

Aldrian took the handshake.

"It's okay, Your Highness. I understand your condition, and I'm not offended in the least," Aldrian replied.

"Anyway, now that you've woken up, I know you must have many questions." Aldrian then looked at the emperor. "The same goes for Your Majesty. Although you've just healed and His Highness has only just woken up, I believe we need to discuss certain matters right now."

As they looked at Aldrian, who seemed intent on discussing something right now, they thought it must be about the second prince.

Chapter 465: Conversation with the Losaris Imperial Family

Emperor Raymond was silent for a moment before he looked at the physician and the butler, signaling that it was okay to leave them alone. The physician and the butler did not hesitate. Having witnessed Aldrian's abilities and seeing that he did not seem to mean anyone harm, they gave a slight bow before leaving the room and closing the door behind them.

Once only Aldrian, Emperor Raymond, and Prince Ferdinand remained in the room, Aldrian opened the conversation while the emperor took a seat on the sofa not far from him.

"Alright, I know Your Majesty and Your Highness must have many questions. However, before that, let me tell you about some of the things that happened outside, things you might not be aware of while you have been confined within the palace. I will also explain how the second prince repeatedly came to provoke me."

Aldrian looked at both of them and continued.

"As many already know, my main reason for coming to this empire in the first place was to capture Cardinal Carsius. As you may know, he has already been declared a traitor by the Pope for working with devils. The Church and I share a special relationship, and I have been assisting them in capturing the traitor."

"Although most people did not know where he had escaped to, I discovered through my investigation that he fled to this empire."

Emperor Raymond nodded in understanding, but Prince Ferdinand's eyes widened slightly. Their differing reactions were not surprising. The latter had no idea that Cardinal Carsius had escaped to the Atria Empire. He had been unconscious for over a year, and the cardinal's presence in the empire had been carefully hidden from the public.

Even most of the nobles within the second prince's faction were unaware of Cardinal Carsius's presence in the empire—let alone outsiders. News of him only began to spread once the second prince had already been driven into a corner by Aldrian, and Cardinal Carsius appeared in person to meet him at the imperial palace.

There was no way the presence of someone at the peak of the emperor stage could go unnoticed within the palace. When he finally revealed himself, it became clear to everyone that Cardinal Carsius was indeed in the empire and had been working alongside the second prince.

"The reason Cardinal Carsius chose this place was not only because the situation in this empire made it easier for him to hide. More importantly, he shared a common interest with the second prince. Both of them were involved with devils."

Emperor Raymond and Prince Ferdinand narrowed their eyes.

"The second prince is working with devils, and Cardinal Carsius knew it because they were cooperating with one another. That is another reason why he chose the Atria Empire as his place of refuge."

Upon hearing Aldrian's words, the emperor and the first prince remained silent. However, they did not appear surprised. In fact, Prince Ferdinand's expression turned fierce, as though he were recalling something from the past.

"As I suspected. He truly was working with devils. That cursed artifact must have come from them as well," he said, his voice sharp with anger.

Aldrian looked at Prince Ferdinand curiously and asked, "If I may ask, did the second prince ever show signs that he was hiding something?"

He then turned his gaze to the emperor.

"It seems he had established connections with devils for quite some time. Considering the support he gained from the majority of the nobles and the palace commanders, Your Majesty must have had some suspicions about his behavior. There is no way he could have gathered that much support in such a short period."

Emperor Raymond sighed and gave a slow nod.

"To be honest, I had already suspected that bastard's strange behavior, along with some of the nobles around him. I even sent someone to investigate his actions. However, without my knowledge, the man I assigned had already betrayed me. He failed to report everything and kept crucial information from me. That is also one of the reasons I was caught off guard and ended up falling into his trap."

"I feel truly ashamed that I couldn't predict how many of my subjects had already betrayed me and sided with that bastard," Emperor Raymond said, his voice tinged with frustration. "That moment didn't just make me angry; it also made me deeply sad. Even to this day, I don't understand why they all turned against me. I might understand the noble families, as they have their own interests, but the commanders of my knight orders and even the assassins of the imperial family?"

The emperor sighed again, pausing before continuing.

"Fortunately, not all of my people betrayed me. Some still remain loyal." His expression darkened with anger. "To think that bastard is truly working with the devils... It seems

their influence stretches wide across the continent. They've infiltrated everywhere—even within the imperial family."

Aldrian pondered for a moment, thinking about the situation. If Wilmar had been able to gather such support, even from the knight orders directly under the emperor, it meant he possessed something that made them back him. Something that made them abandon Emperor Raymond—who was the true ruler and the strongest cultivator in the empire—and instead trust Wilmar's plans.

However, the fact that Wilmar hadn't killed his father or his brother suggested that he was keeping them alive as bargaining chips of some sort. In the end, the emperor and the first prince still had support from many other nobles and people.

Aldrian guess that Wilmar intended to keep them alive until the civil war was over. After that, he would be free to do whatever he wished with them.

Aldrian shook his head. In the end, no matter the reason behind those people's actions or decision, they had still betrayed the emperor, and it had all led to this moment.

"Well, we'll know everything more clearly once I catch Wilmar," Aldrian said. "I can already imagine that this time, he's desperate to do something to escape my pursuit. I have a feeling he won't hide for long due to his insecurities." He then looked at Prince Ferdinand.

"I know Your Highness is still confused by the events outside. You will learn the details for yourself later, but I'm sorry I can't share them right now. It will take some time, and I still have things to attend to. However, I want to tell Your Highness," Aldrian then turned to the emperor, "and Your Majesty, that I intend to personally punish Wilmar with death. He has done something unforgivable to me, and I hope you understand."

Aldrian then explained the gu outbreak that Wilmar and Grand Duke Donovan had planned and executed. It was an outbreak that claimed thousands of lives and nearly took the life of someone close to him.

The emperor and the first prince, upon hearing this, were truly astonished. They nodded in understanding. It was no wonder Aldrian had come to the capital. If Wilmar was capable of such actions, he had essentially forsaken the people and embraced full tyranny.

Emperor Raymond suddenly felt a wave of sorrow. He couldn't understand how his own son had turned to working with the devils and committing such atrocities. How could the son he had raised betray his family in this way?

Aldrian, sensing the emperor's pain, spoke softly, "Was Wilmar always an ambitious person?"

"Well, it can be said that, although he was ambitious, he wasn't stupid or careless. He must have known that working with the devils would only bring his own destruction. I don't understand why he did it," the emperor replied, leaning back against the sofa.

Aldrian nodded. He then reflected on his experiences with traitors in various organizations and noble families over the years. The devils were masters at tempting people, using their negative emotions to manipulate them into doing their bidding. Many chose to work for or with them, consciously or not, for a variety of reasons.

"For me, if Your Excellency—"

"Please, don't call me that, Your Highness. It makes me feel bad for someone as esteemed as you to address me so formally. My name is Aldrian, and you can call me that," Aldrian interrupted, cutting off Prince Ferdinand.

Prince Ferdinand was momentarily stunned, but then he nodded.

"Alright, I will call you Young Master Aldrian then. It still feels quite rude to just call you by your name," Prince Ferdinand said.

"That works," Aldrian replied.

"Then, I'll say it again: For me, if Young Master Aldrian wants to punish that bastard, I don't mind. Although I really want to beat him and punish him myself, this matter involves you, so I understand. But Young Master, I hope you give him a humiliating death. I want him to feel the same desperation I felt when he trapped my father and me back then," Prince Ferdinand said, his tone fierce.

Hearing his first son speak like that, Emperor Raymond sighed for the umpteenth time. As a father, seeing his first son wish for the death of his second son truly made his heart ache. Although Wilmar had done something unforgivable, deep in his heart, Wilmar was still his flesh and blood. He couldn't help but wonder how fate had brought their family to this point.

Suddenly, the door to the room opened, and a beautiful woman with brown hair walked inside, causing the three men in the room to look up at the newcomer. The emperor and Prince Ferdinand's eyes widened slightly. Before they could say anything, the woman rushed toward Prince Ferdinand and hugged him tightly on the bed.

"I'm glad you're okay," she said, her voice cracking.

The prince, still stunned, suddenly softened his expression.

"Mother."

She is actually the Empress of the Atria Empire, Sandra Donovan.

Chapter 466: The Solution for the Donovan Family

Aldrian knew that Emperor Raymond's wife was the younger sister of Grand Duke Donovan, which made the Donovan family the emperor's in-laws. He had learned this from the memories of Duke Schmidt and Marquess Xavier.

Aldrian simply watched as the empress hugged Prince Ferdinand fondly for a few moments before turning to look at the emperor, then at him.

The moment her gaze landed on him, she suddenly stood up and walked around the bed to stand in front of him, then instantly kowtowed.

Her sudden movement shocked both Emperor Raymond and Prince Ferdinand, while Aldrian only raised an eyebrow. What was this woman trying to do?

"I know my second son has already done something unforgivable. I don't dare ask for his forgiveness, but please—spare the Donovan family! I beg you. I know they've done wrong, but not all of them are guilty."

Aldrian finally understood, but he kept his gaze fixed silently on the empress. This situation reminded him of Emperor Durand's second wife, Imperial Consort Veronica, whose family had also been involved with devils and conspired with Third Prince Lewis to plunge the Doria Empire into chaos.

Looking at the kowtowing Empress Sandra, Emperor Raymond gritted his teeth.

"Sandra, stop that! Stop humiliating yourself! Your brother has done something that endangered our family and the entire empire. Do you think he, or Donovan family can come out of this unscathed? After what he's done, even if young Aldrian does nothing, there's no way I can let him go. The Donovan family will be affected as well. Even if you beg, nothing will change," he said, his voice slightly raised.

He was truly furious as he watched his wife humiliate herself for a family that had betrayed both him and their children. The fact that the Donovan family had supported his second son was something he had never expected.

When Wilmar launched his coup, Grand Duke Donovan—his brother-in-law, with whom he had once been quite close—turned out to be supporting Wilmar as well. Because of their in-law relationship, he hadn't paid much attention to their communication. After all, grand duke Donovan was Wilmar's uncle.

But to think that Grand Duke Donovan had actively supported his downfall...

It made him want to beat that bastard to death.

However, even after the emperor spoke, Empress Sandra remained in place, still kowtowing to Aldrian without moving in the slightest.

"I will continue until my family is spared—" she began, but suddenly, she felt her body being lifted off the floor by an invisible force, cutting her words short.

"Stop it, Your Majesty. Do you want me to feel guilty from watching you act like this?" Aldrian said flatly.

"No, I—"

"Devils are the beings I hate most. And I know not every member of the Donovan family was involved in the schemes of your family's upper ranks. I also know they didn't tell you—because your brother didn't trust you enough to stay silent if you found out."

"However, in the end, the Donovan family will still be affected entirely because of their cooperation with the devils. The devils have a presence in this empire to destabilize it. They also played a role in this civil war, even if not directly. So even if I do nothing to the Donovan family, they will still be affected—they will crumble, one way or another."

"As for Grand Duke Donovan, he's already a dead man. I hold a personal grudge against him. He's done something that, in my eyes, already sealed his fate. If I catch him, he dies. Even if Your Majesty begs me not to kill him, I will still do it. That is my decision."

Hearing Aldrian's words, the empress's expression turned to despair. She looked toward the emperor, her eyes pleading—was there truly nothing that could be done?

But the emperor, face still rigid, met her gaze and slowly shook his head.

"No, if we just let them go, it will affect the people's trust in us. Do you want another chaos to erupt, with uprisings from the people because they believe we didn't take a firm stand against the devils?"

The empress's expression grew even paler as she lowered her head and bit her lip. Aldrian could only inwardly sigh at the situation. He didn't care much about what happened to the Donovan family or how the emperor would handle them—his main target was Grand Duke Donovan. Still, he couldn't help but feel that what was happening in these imperial families was a tragedy.

The emperor usually married noble ladies, and events like this were bound to occur if a woman's family betrayed them. The woman was forced to choose between her blood family and her family with the emperor.

This situation also became an important lesson for Aldrian. He needed to prevent something like this from happening to his own family in the future. His privileges, which were his abilities and power, made it possible to avoid such betrayals.

"The main thing is, my primary target is Grand Duke Donovan. The Donovan family itself doesn't really matter to me, as his Majesty must already have his own considerations regarding them." Aldrian said before he looked at Emperor Raymond.

"I have another option, one I believe could be a win-win solution. If Your Majesty wants to save what remains of the Donovan family without drawing massive criticism, you can purge the traitors. Of course, this will significantly diminish the family's power."

"The empress must show that she is not part of the Donovan family's higher-ups' scheme with the devils and must support the emperor in rooting out the traitors of the empire. By doing this, public opinion against the Donovan family and the imperial family will be minimized. Although many will still criticize the Donovan family, and their status will fall, it's far better than being destroyed completely."

"To make it easier, Your Majesty can borrow my name to reduce the public's prejudice and opinion against the imperial family or the remaining members of the Donovan family."

"That is all I can think of as the best solution for this situation."

Hearing Aldrian's suggestion, the emperor and the first prince were both impressed by his quick thinking. They also believed that what Aldrian had proposed was the best course of action they could take.

Truthfully, Emperor Raymond had hesitated to impose the harshest punishment on a family that had been his in-laws for so long. It would create a rift between him and his wife, which was not good for the stability of his family. They had already suffered a significant blow with their second son's betrayal, and it would be devastating if his wife were also hit by the loss of her family.

Emperor Raymond looked at his wife, waiting for her response.

After a minute of silence, Empress Sandra clenched her fists and finally looked at Aldrian, lowering her head.

"Thank you for your generosity," she said softly. "Thank you."

Although she couldn't save her second son or her elder brother, at least she could preserve the legacy of her parents and ancestors. The Donovan family had been a noble house for many generations, and she would not let their legacy be dismantled. She also believed that this was the best decision for her family as a whole.

"Alright, if this matter is settled, let's talk about something else." Aldrian said.

"It concerns an artifact that Wilmar gave me, in hopes of mending our relationship in the past. Wilmar gave me this artifact."

Aldrian then took out a guqin from his storage ring, causing the emperor and the others to widen their eyes slightly. They recognized the guqin immediately.

The Spirit of the Great Path.

"I want to tell you that this artifact holds great meaning for me, and its origin is much deeper than any of you know. The only thing you know about this guqin is that it was given by the Rosalind family's ancestor to the Losaris family's ancestor as a means for the Rosalind family to establish an agreement with the imperial family, correct?"

The emperor seemed to understand the implication behind Aldrian's words but was still shocked that Aldrian knew about the agreement between their ancestors with the Rosalind family. That agreement was a secret known only to the imperial family and the Rosalind family.

"Yes, this artifact was given to our ancestor by the Rosalind family, and to this day, I still honor the agreement our ancestors made," Emperor Raymond said.

"Did the Rosalind family tell you this, young Aldrian? Or do you have a deep connection with the Rosalind family?"

Aldrian shook his head.

"No, I don't have a deep connection with the Rosalind family. And as for them telling me—forget it. They don't even know what their own ancestor did or that there was an agreement with the imperial family. It seems that only the imperial family knows about it. But with Your Majesty's confirmation, that confirms my conjecture," Aldrian answered.

The emperor was stunned. The Rosalind family didn't know about it?

"No wonder Baron Rosalind seemed so clueless about the agreement!" he thought. Then how did Aldrian knew about their agreement?

"I see, I understand what young Aldrian wants to say, and you don't have to worry. You can keep it, as this can also be our repayment for all you've done and a way to build our relationship. I hope that with this, young Aldrian will think of the Losaris imperial family," Emperor Raymond said.

Aldrian nodded with smile.

"Thank you, and of course, our relationship won't stop here and can develop further in the future. After all, we need to support each other in these uncertain times."

The emperor smiled, satisfied with it.

"By the way, may I ask what place lies in that direction?" Aldrian said, pointing to a spot. "I think it's about a kilometer away, and it seems to be exuding a powerful heaven and earth energy."

Chapter 467: The Losaris Imperial Family's Legacy Artifact

Emperor Raymond looked in the direction Aldrian pointed, confusion flickering across his face.

"Something a kilometre from here and exuding—oh, do you mean our imperial family's sacred ground? That place is special to us. It's not only used for cultivation, but it's also where we store some of our legacy artifacts," he replied.

"May I visit it?" Aldrian asked. "There's something I need to confirm. I would appreciate it if you could allow me to take a look."

"Of course you can. That's the least I can do. Let's go—I'll bring you there," the emperor said, then turned to his wife and Prince Ferdinand.

"You two stay here. I'll take young Aldrian to the Sacred Ground."

Empress Sandra and Prince Ferdinand nodded, and afterward, the emperor led Aldrian toward the imperial family's sacred ground. Along the way, they encountered the butler and the physician, but Emperor Raymond instructed them to remain behind as well.

Due to his recent recovery and not being in full condition to fly or use any movement techniques, they had to travel by carriage.

After they arrived at the site, Aldrian immediately sensed the richness of heaven and earth energy. But to his surprise, what he saw wasn't a vast cultivation field or some kind of building—it was a massive portal.

He observed the spatial distortion, recognizing the traces of space laws woven into it, as if the portal served as a gateway to another place. From the distortion and the aura it released, Aldrian finally understood what the sacred ground truly referred to in this case.

"The sacred ground is a secret realm?" Aldrian asked the emperor beside him after they stepped down from the carriage.

Emperor Raymond nodded.

"Besides lightning laws, the imperial family has been quite fortunate with space laws. Every generation has produced at least one person who managed to comprehend them. The first emperor of the Atria Empire was a powerful cultivator—said to be far beyond the Emperor stage. He created a spatial pocket that became the imperial family's secret realm. It was meant to be both a sacred ground for cultivation and a safe haven in times of crisis," he explained.

Aldrian was amazed. He could clearly sense how powerful the space laws were in this place. He also believed that the first emperor of the Atria Empire had come from outside the continent. The man was far stronger than the Emperor stage, Aldrian could feel it just from sensing his legacy, this secret realm.

No wonder, during his battle against the massive army of the second prince earlier, Aldrian had noticed several instances of space law usage, like teleportation. Wilmar must have been using some kind of artifact capable of teleporting people to a specific location. Aldrian was quite amazed by how fast and silently they appeared around him.

With an ancestor who had comprehended space laws and a lineage that continued to produce individuals who could do the same, it was no surprise that the imperial family possessed such a powerful spatial artifact.

The Sacred Ground was guarded by four knight guardians, each at the low King stage. They were clad in heaven-grade armor and armed with heaven-grade swords—an extravagance that spoke volumes, considering they were stationed just to guard a single location.

When they saw who had stepped down from the carriage, their eyes widened, and they immediately knelt.

"Welcome, Your Majesty! We have been waiting for your return!" they shouted in unison.

Emperor Raymond nodded in appreciation. These men were among the few who still remained loyal to him in the palace after the civil war broke out. The second prince hadn't purged them because he found them useful and needed their strength.

King-stage cultivators were still a valuable asset, and that was why he kept Emperor Raymond alive—using him as a tool to control those still loyal to the emperor.

"At ease," Emperor Raymond said. "I wish to bring this young man inside the sacred ground. Lower the barrier."

The four guardian knights looked at Aldrian, and of course, they knew who he was. They had witnessed the battle from the palace. As King-stage cultivators, they could see from this distance, and they felt immense respect for Aldrian after seeing how he had caused the second prince's plans to fail.

"Yes, Your Majesty," one of them replied. Not long after, the barrier surrounding the portal was lowered. The barrier had been designed to prevent anyone from entering the secret realm and was strong enough to withstand even the attacks of high Emperor-stage cultivators.

The emperor glanced at Aldrian.

"Let's go," he said, stepping forward into the portal, followed closely by Aldrian.

As soon as Aldrian stepped into the portal, he was immediately greeted by a vast environment that could only be described as a "lightning garden." The atmosphere of the secret realm was eerie, with cloudy skies and a slightly darkened landscape, all thanks to the thunderous lightning clouds overhead. Bolts of lightning struck the earth relentlessly, as if the lightning itself harbored a grudge against the world.

Aldrian could also sense the true richness of heaven and earth energy within this place, and he couldn't help but feel amazed. This secret realm seemed to draw in energy from the outside world, creating a dense and abundant reservoir of power. It made perfect sense why this place was considered a sacred ground for cultivation, especially for those who comprehended lightning laws and space laws.

"Our ancestor created this place using his understanding of both space and lightning laws," Emperor Raymond explained. "He also imbued all his comprehension of those laws into this secret realm for us, his descendants, to use in our cultivation, to help our comprehension."

Aldrian nodded but then glanced toward a specific direction, where lightning bolts seemed to strike a single spot, as if drawn to something in that area.

"What is that in that direction? The lightning bolts there seem to be attacking a single spot," Aldrian asked.

The emperor looked in the direction Aldrian pointed and smiled.

"That is where we store our most important legacy artifact. Come, let me show you." The emperor began to lead Aldrian, but Aldrian stopped him.

"Wait, excuse me, Your Majesty, but I think it would be faster if we used my technique." Aldrian touched Emperor Raymond, and in an instant, they teleported toward their destination. The emperor was momentarily stunned by the sudden teleportation, but they continued teleporting several times, as the secret realm was vast. Finally, they arrived near the area where the lightning bolts rained down.

The emperor did not dwell on or feel much aftereffect from the teleportation. Once they arrived, he simply looked toward a high, standalone platform, shaped like a pyramid

with a flat surface. This was the place he had wanted to bring Aldrian—the location where the Losaris Imperial Family's main legacy artifact was kept.

The numerous lightning bolts striking the top of the platform created constant flashes and the rumbling sound of thunderclaps that never ceased. The power of the lightning was so intense that even a high Emperor-stage cultivator would be heavily injured if struck by it, and if struck repeatedly, they might be reduced to ashes.

Emperor Raymond gazed at the platform with a touched expression. This was the place his ancestor had personally built, and it was here that the main legacy artifact of his family was kept—an artifact that had protected the imperial family on several occasions. If not for that artifact, he doubted his family could have survived this long.

Aldrian's eyes were fixed on the top of the platform. Despite the blinding flashes of lightning, he did not look away.

"I will show you the main legacy artifact of our family. Be careful and stay close to me, the lightning here will kill you if you underestimate it," the emperor warned before stepping toward the platform.

Aldrian followed closely behind, stepping up the stairs until they reached the top of the platform. Finally, Aldrian saw the artifact—it was a ring.

The ring hovered in midair above a small stone platform, and the lightning continued to strike it relentlessly. However, Aldrian could sense that the ring was not being harmed; instead, it was absorbing the lightning, as if the lightning itself was nourishing it.

"Young Aldrian, this is our legacy artifact, the artifact that has been with the Losaris Imperial Family since its founding. It has saved my family on numerous occasions,"

"This is the Lightning Sovereign Ring," Emperor Raymond said with pride.

Rumble! Rumble!

The sound of the thunderclap was still loud, but it seemed as if it wanted to greet Aldrian, growing even louder. Aldrian looked at the ring and read its information.

Lightning Sovereign Ring

Description: One of the Losaris Imperial Family's legacy artifacts. The ring is mainly made from the core of the silver lightning dragon that resides in the Eighth Heaven, one of the dragon clans capable of controlling lightning from nature.

The ring contains the will of the silver lightning dragon, which can be awakened.

The one who becomes the master of the artifact can control lightning and unleash lightning strikes far stronger than their own cultivation could normally create.

Level: High Divine Grade

This was another high-grade divine artifact, but what intrigued him more was the material used to create the ring. He slightly raised his eyebrows, his curiosity piqued.

"The Silver Lightning Dragon?" Aldrian suddenly remembered that in one of his visions, he had encountered those very dragons!

Chapter 468: The Will of the Dragon

Inside one of his visions, he remembered the name of the Silver Lightning Dragon—one of the dragon clans that resides in the Eighth Heaven. True to its name, this dragon can unleash silver lightning, a unique power that sets it apart. In addition, it can manipulate lightning from the nature through its deep mastery of lightning laws.

Silver Lightning Dragon's core contains immense power and profound comprehension of lightning laws. If someone were to obtain it, their strength would increase tremendously, and it would not be impossible for their cultivation to rise by several levels.

However, few dare to challenge the Silver Lightning Dragon or dragons in general, due to their immense power. The core's power is tempting, but obtaining it requires cultivators to risk their lives.

Yet, there is one here who has become an artifact ring on this continent, which made him wonder: Who was the first emperor of the Atria Empire, and what happened to the Silver Lightning Dragon clan?

However, he did not dwell on it for long, as he had something to do in this place. This was the place where the faith of the entire Atria Empire gathered, and he needed to make the entire empire his domain.

"This is a ring that has been passed down from the first emperor of the Atria Empire. Although we don't know who created it, we do know that it came from outside the continent. I suppose you already know the history of our continent's power origin?" Emperor Raymond said.

Aldrian nodded.

"This ring's origin must be extraordinary, as it contains the strong will of a dragon—or at least, that is what the ancient records of our family say. However, we have never

encountered the will of the dragon, as it has never appeared. We can only sense a strong intent within the ring, which we believe might be the intent of the divine-grade artifact itself. This condition has lasted for a long time, so we don't know whether the true will of the dragon exists or not," the emperor added.

Aldrian continued to gaze at the ring in silence for a few moments.

"Your Majesty, may I approach the ring?" Aldrian asked.

The emperor was stunned for a moment, but then his expression turned serious.

"You may, but be careful. Don't get too close to the ring, as the lightning will obliterate you. I tell you, the lightning here seems alive, and only the one chosen by the ring can even get close to it," the emperor warned.

Aldrian nodded and slowly walked closer to the ring. The lightning that continued to strike the ring grew fiercer, but Aldrian released his golden energy as if to declare his identity and power. His aura spread across the entire platform, making the emperor shudder. As he watched Aldrian's back, Emperor Raymond felt as though he was standing before someone far mightier, someone with a much higher status than himself.

He was someone to be respected, someone before whom even standing required one to lower their head.

However, the most astonishing thing was that suddenly, the surrounding environment became much calmer. The lightning from the clouds receded greatly, as if it dared not create chaos in front of Aldrian. The lightning continued to recede until it came to a complete stop.

Emperor Raymond's body trembled as he looked around and into the distance. There was no lightning, no sound of thunderclaps at all. The secret realm had turned silent, leaving him shocked. What was going on?

He then looked at Aldrian again, seeing that Aldrian had already stood in front of the floating ring.

Unconsciously, Emperor Raymond's body slumped against the platform. He couldn't comprehend what had happened to the secret realm, as this was the first time it had changed like this. It had been said that this secret realm was created by the first emperor of the Atria Empire, and the environment inside had remained unchanged since its creation.

Aldrian looked at the ring for a few moments before closing his eyes and sensing the surroundings. He made himself one with nature and, finally, established his domain here. He felt another surge of power that refreshed him and made him feel much

stronger. His aura unconsciously spread out into the surrounding area, making the emperor tremble even more.

His golden energy became much stronger, and he felt his cultivation begin to rise again. However, Aldrian ignored it, still concentrating on making use of this powerful feeling.

Without his knowledge, the ring in front of him trembled. Suddenly, a powerful aura surged from the ring, and the white silhouette of a long, giant dragon appeared. It soared towards the sky, its massive head tilting to gaze upward. Then, a roar full of mightiness resounded.

Roar!

The roar, showcasing the might of the dragons, echoed beyond the secret realm and throughout the entire palace. In fact, the sound of the dragon's roar could be heard across the empire and reached as far as the neighboring territories, including the Vindas Empire and the Buddhist Sect territory.

The sound of the mighty dragon startled countless people. Their souls shuddered, having never heard such an overwhelming roar. They wondered what kind of beast had made that sound.

Inside the secret realm, the dragon turned its head and looked toward Aldrian after unleashing its mighty roar. The dragon moved closer to Aldrian, attempting to be as polite as possible, not wanting to appear rude. It lowered its head as much as it could to make itself seem smaller than Aldrian, but its massive size made the gesture somewhat comical.

Suddenly, the dragon's silhouette vanished, turning into particles of light that returned to the ring.

Emperor Raymond, who witnessed all of this firsthand, felt as though he were dreaming. The dragon had suddenly appeared and seemed tamed in front of Aldrian. He looked at Aldrian's silhouette, and for the first time in his life, he began to question the truth of someone's existence.

What is he? Who is he? What is his origin? Many questions flooded his mind.

While the emperor was in turmoil, inside Aldrian's mindscape, he stood in a different environment. He was beneath a vast starry sky, and he knew this was the representation of his mindscape.

He ignored his surroundings and focused on what was in front of him.

There sat a man on his heels, knees together, his posture perfectly upright. He had silver hair and a handsome young face, but the most striking feature was not his silver hair or handsome face—it was the two protruding dragon horns on top of his forehead.

Aldrian's eyes watched this person's face intently as he tried to remember whether he had met him inside one of his visions before. But before he could recall anything, the man suddenly prostrated to him.

"The Silver Lightning Dragon clan, Long Leiyun, greets the arrival of the absolute ruler, the great emperor of all heavens."

Meanwhile, in another place, there was someone who had to hide his face. Even while walking through the crowd, he made sure his face was not recognized. Wilmar concealed his face with a new robe that covered his entire body and face. Right now, he was in one of the towns nearest to the capital, where he intended to use the teleportation portal.

The commotion caused by the roar helped him move quickly without attracting much attention.

Earlier, after escaping into the forest from Aldrian, he made his way toward one of the locations nearest to the capital. This place was one of the satellite towns of the capital. It wasn't as far from the capital as Padina, so he had arrived in just 20 minutes by flying at his full speed.

He had already stored his divine-grade artifact to avoid attracting attention, and he wore a new white robe that covered his features. However, despite this, he still attracted some attention. The robe itself was quite unique, and people could tell it wasn't an ordinary robe, only some nobles could afford such a robe.

Wilmar paid no mind to the few people who glanced in his direction. It couldn't be helped, as this was the only robe he had at the moment.

He walked toward the town's teleportation station, but when he arrived, he saw that it was sealed. He knew this was due to his own order, which made him feel frustrated, as it had backfired on his plan.

With no other choice, he strode toward the guard stationed at the teleportation station.

"Halt, the teleportation is off—" The guard stopped talking when he saw the face beneath the robe. His eyes widened in shock, and he couldn't help but blurt out,

"Your majes—"

"Shh, shut up, don't call me that," Wilmar whispered, silencing the guard, who responded by nodding repeatedly.

"Call the teleportation operator and have him activate one of the teleportation portals. I need to use it right now," Wilmar said urgently.

"As you wish."

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Chapter 469: May the Great Emperor of All Heavens Continue to Reign Sovereign!

Inside Aldrian's mindscape, he looked at the man before him. Even after diving into his memories, he could not recall ever seeing this man. He wasn't sure whether they had met in the past.

However, the man seemed to recognize him.

"The great emperor of all Heavens, huh?" he thought. This was the first time he heard someone call him that. So did that mean he was the ruler of all heavens in his past life? No wonder he could control the cosmos back then.

After a moment of silence, Aldrian spoke.

"Long Leiyun, huh? For you to act like this, you must know me to some extent. Tell me, Leiyun—do you know me personally? Did you ever come to see me in my past life, when I met the Silver Lightning Dragon clan?"

Long Leiyun straightened his posture.

"Answering Your Majesty, I do know you—though not closely. We met long ago, but I was still a child at the time. I didn't dare hope you would remember me, as I was not someone worth remembering."

He spoke humbly, but Aldrian shook his head.

"That would be my decision—whether you're worth remembering or not. If I ever met you, you would be engraved in my memory. Still, I must admit, there are gaps in the visions of my past life. I don't truly remember you. But I assume you know about my situation?"

"Yes, Your Majesty. Of course I know. Placing my will within the artifact ring was my way of greeting you, helping you answer some of your questions, and perhaps aiding in the recovery of your past life's memories. And it's not just me—many have been waiting for your return."

Aldrian fell silent for a few moments.

"Your situation... if you placed your will inside the artifact, and the ring was made from the core of the Silver Lightning Dragon, then doesn't that mean you are—" Aldrian stopped mid-sentence.

Long Leiyun, already understanding what Aldrian meant to say, simply nodded.

"Yes, Your Majesty. I am already dead. This will is the only remnant of my consciousness left in the world."

Hearing the answer, Aldrian let out a quiet sigh. He didn't know why, but a heaviness settled in his chest.

"I have a few questions I hope you'll answer. But you don't have to, if you'd rather not."

"Please ask, Your Majesty. I'll answer them if I can."

"Alright, first... I've met a few people who said I would return—and that they were waiting for it. My question is: return to where? What does it mean, the 'worthy place' for me to return to?"

"The place of Your Majesty's return is the highest place," Long Leiyun replied. "To the highest status, the highest realm—to become the absolute ruler you were always meant to be."

Aldrian fell into thought for a moment. From the way he answered, it seemed that the 'place' wasn't necessarily a physical location, but rather a term referring to something he was worthy of—whether that be a place, power, or status.

"Do you know how I died in the past? I knew I was some kind of mighty figure. Many still seem to hold me in reverence... but with that much power, how did I still end up dead?"

Long Leiyun remained silent for a moment.

"To be honest, I don't know either, Your Majesty. What I remember is that, at the time, the entire universe seemed to tremble. Heaven and earth were plunged into sadness, the stars' light dimmed, and many of Your Majesty's followers were crying. The only thing I know is that I once heard from my parents that Your Majesty had made a decision, and no one could persuade you to stop, which is why you entered the reincarnation cycle."

Aldrian touched his chin, still unsure. The answer was vague.

"You and some others said that they are waiting for my return. Why are they waiting for me? What if I decide not to return to that 'place' and just stay here? What if I don't follow all of your expectations?"

Suddenly, Long Leiyun's expression shifted to one of absolute conviction.

"I believe Your Majesty choose to return—no, Your Majesty will return! You will undoubtedly choose to return to the peak. Many have placed their faith in you. Your Majesty will return, one way or another. This is my belief, and the belief of many others."

There was not a sliver of doubt in his voice. Aldrian could see in his eyes that he truly meant every word.

Looking at Long Leiyun like this, Aldrian felt that he could finally ask a question that had been lingering in his mind since he had encountered so many figures seemingly waiting for him.

"Actually, I wonder... why does everyone seem so desperate for my return? Even without me returning to the place I once was, everything will still go on, right? Even without me, the universe seems to be just fine, operating as usual."

Long Leiyun's expression suddenly turned serious.

"No, Your Majesty. Although everything may seem fine on the surface, that's only because chaos has yet to reach this place. If chaos finally arrives and Your Majesty is unable to stop it, there will be no hope left for anyone to face those bastards!"

Aldrian frowned, a sudden thought crossing his mind. Could the chaos Long Leiyun mentioned be tied to the prophecy? From the way Long Leiyun spoke, it seemed that the chaos wasn't just something caused by specific parties.

Until now, Aldrian had believed that the devils, with their immense concentration of negative energy that became devil energy, were the primary force behind the upcoming chaos. But now, it seemed there might be more to it.

"Who are 'those bastards'? All this time, I thought the devils were the main force behind the chaos, the ones responsible for all the destruction. But from what you're saying... are there other parties involved in this?"

Long Leiyun fell silent. After a few moments, he finally spoke.

"It would be better for Lady Feng Xuanyan and Lord Long Shentian to explain this to Your Majesty, if you meet them. They are far more knowledgeable about these beings."

But then, his tone shifted—fury burning beneath his words, a reflection of the deep hatred he held toward these unknown enemies.

"However, what I do know is that those bastards have done something unforgivable. They've sullied and challenged Your Majesty's authority."

"That is also why we believe Your Majesty will return, because they will inevitably come for you. Your Majesty poses the greatest threat to them. We believe that with your power, if you return to the peak, to the place you once stood, there's no way those bastards could withstand even a drop of your strength."

Aldrian suddenly felt the weight of an even greater problem looming beyond the time of the prophecy. From the way things were unfolding, it seemed he would need to fully regain the power he had glimpsed in his visions if he was to face what lay ahead.

Another thing caught his attention—the names of two figures.

"Feng Xuanyan and Long Shentian..."

Suddenly, he felt another wave of visions and memories flooding into his mind. He saw glimpses of his past once again—along with new fragments. In them, he saw the Phoenix Ancestor and the Dragon Ancestor. They had often appeared in his visions, interacting with him more than most. They were among the few who had shared many moments with him.

As if something in his mind had finally unlocked, he now knew their names.

Feng Xuanyan was the Phoenix Ancestor, and Long Shentian was the Dragon Ancestor.

He grab his head as if he felt slight headache.

Those were their names—the names his past life had spoken many times. To think he was only remembering them now... it felt strange and ridiculous. Like suddenly forgetting the name of someone incredibly close to him, only to finally recall it.

It was as if something had been blocking his mind, keeping him from remembering. But now, at last, their names were engraved into his memory once more.

He sighed at this and looked into Long Leiyun's eyes. But then he noticed something—Leiyun's body was growing more transparent, slowly fading from the feet upward.

"Alright," Aldrian said quietly, "I know there isn't much more you can tell me. I can sense that our conversation is draining your will. I'll find the rest of the answers myself. It's time I leave, so you won't exhaust what remains of your will."

But Long Leiyun shook his head.

"No, Your Majesty. Even if you leave now, this will of mine will still fade away. Once you awakened my will, my time was already set to end. I was here only to greet you and to answer what I could. My waiting and duty are complete. It's time for me to go."

Aldrian sighed again. He couldn't quite control his emotions in a moment like this. A farewell from someone who had waited so long for him left behind only sadness and a bitter taste.

"Although my will in the ring will fade, a part of me has already become one with the ring. So if you wish to use me, I can still be of some help. Or, if you'd prefer I continue supporting the Losaris family, that choice is yours, Your Majesty."

Long Leiyun's body continued to grow more transparent, his form nearly gone now.

"Your Majesty, may I make one last request of you?"

Aldrian nodded, his expression solemn.

"Say it."

Suddenly, Long Leiyun prostrated and his voice filled with pleading.

"Please avenge us, your loyal followers, please avenge my clan. For me, all I can do now is hope Your Majesty will avenge the Silver Lightning Dragon clan. You are the only hope I have left."

Aldrian was stunned. He wanted to ask what had happened to the Silver Lightning Dragon Clan, but he knew time was running out. Without thinking, he instinctively nodded.

"I will."

At Aldrian's response, a sense of relief washed over Long Leiyun. He lifted his head slightly to look at Aldrian, offering a faint smile. Then, in a final gesture of respect, he prostrated once more.

"Thank you."

Suddenly, Long Leiyun's voice rang out with renewed spirit.

"May the glory of the absolute ruler be eternal!"

"May the great emperor of all heavens continue to reign sovereign!"

His words echoed through the space as his will faded, leaving Aldrian alone in the vast, starry space.

Chapter 470: Start the Pursuit

Aldrian opened his eyes as he left his mindscape and let out a quiet sigh. His heart felt heavy, but he tried not to let it distract him. He glanced at the ring for a moment.

"Although I don't remember you yet, I've already received your plea. If something truly happened to the Silver Lightning Dragon Clan, I will avenge you."

He knew he had already acted recklessly by accepting Long Leiyun's request without knowing the true condition of the clan or the identity of the parties he might have to face. Any group capable of endangering the Silver Lightning Dragon Clan was not to be underestimated. He suspected these were the same parties Long Leiyun had spoken of earlier.

But he still accepted Long Leiyun's request because his heart told him to, and he also felt it was something he needed to do. A dragon's will whose only purpose was to wait for his arrival for who knows how long and to pass on a few pieces of information showed just how much faith Long Leiyun truly had in him. That conviction was what had kept him holding on until today.

If someone could hold that kind of loyalty and faith in him, he couldn't bring himself to reject the request outright.

His heart told him it wasn't right. He would respond in kind, according to how people treated him.

Long Leiyun's request made him wonder what had really happened to the Silver Lightning Dragon Clan. However, without enough information and with no one who could provide it, he decided to put that concern aside for now. There were other matters that needed his attention.

After glancing at the ring for a few more seconds, he turned his body and looked at Emperor Raymond. He was stunned to see the emperor already slumped to the ground, staring at him with a blank expression. Aldrian couldn't help but smile at the sight of him acting this way. He wondered what had happened while he was inside his mindscape.

Aldrian then walked toward the emperor, the surrounding silence still unbroken as the lightning had yet to appear, even after he had finished checking the ring.

Once Aldrian was near Emperor Raymond, the emperor unconsciously blurted out the question that had been stuck in his mind since earlier.

"Who are you?" His voice trembled.

Aldrian smiled at the emperor and offered his hand to help him up.

"I'm just someone who happens to have great power and responsibility."

His answer still left the emperor staring at him with a blank expression, as if he wasn't satisfied with it. Emperor Raymond reluctantly took Aldrian's hand and stood up. Aldrian then walked past him, still smiling.

"Your Majesty, I'm already done here. Let's go back. I'm finished with the sightseeing." Aldrian said.

Emperor Raymond turned his head to look at Aldrian's back, then glanced at the ring again. He didn't know why, but he felt something different about it. He sighed and decided to follow Aldrian. What he had just witnessed would be engraved in his mind, and he needed to ask Aldrian later about what had happened.

He followed Aldrian down from the platform and, just as he did, he finally heard the thunderclap again. He looked up and saw strands of lightning between the clouds. Finally, the lightning bolts struck the earth again, and the ring was struck by the lightning just like before. A few seconds later, the lightning returned to normal across the secret realm.

A few moments later, Aldrian and Emperor Raymond were outside of the secret realm. The moment they stepped out, they were stunned to see that more troops had already arrived at the location.

Besides the four guardians, Aldrian noticed more than a dozen cultivators, ranging from marquess to king stage, all nervously watching their direction. However, as soon as they saw Emperor Raymond and Aldrian step out from the secret realm, they froze for a moment. Then, they quickly straightened their posture.

"Your Majesty, is everything alright?" one of the guardian knights asked, worry evident in his voice. He even stole a glance at Aldrian with a hint of suspicion.

At this time, their emotions were still in turmoil because of the roar from the unknown beast. The four guardians of the secret realm were the ones who had gathered everyone here after hearing the sound. Since they were the closest to the secret realm, they could clearly feel the overwhelming aura and the effects that radiated from within.

That was what made them shudder. The secret realm was a separate space that should have sealed everything inside. For the roar and aura to break through and spread outside, it could only mean that the beast which had appeared inside was powerful enough to overwhelm even the boundaries of the realm itself.

This was also what left them confused. As far as they knew, there were no beasts within the secret realm. That uncertainty caused the guardians to grow suspicious of Aldrian, who had entered the realm together with the emperor.

They had immediately raised the alarm and called for support from anyone nearby to come to the secret realm, even preparing to enter it themselves. At this moment, even more troops were still arriving in response to the emergency signal.

Emperor Raymond understood their panic. Even he had been affected by the appearance of the dragon.

"Stand down. There is no danger. The beast is not hostile and has already been taken care of, so there is no need to remain in a state of emergency. All of you are dismissed," Emperor Raymond said.

Hearing the emperor's words, the troops felt a wave of relief and allowed their tense shoulders to relax. Although they were curious about what had happened inside the secret realm, none of them dared to question the emperor, let alone Aldrian.

Aldrian and the emperor approached the carriage, but Aldrian quickly noticed that four horned horses pulling it were in a state of distress. They were trembling, sitting on the ground, and barely moving. The coachman looked exhausted, as if he had already tried everything to calm them down, but their condition remained unchanged.

"What happened?" the emperor asked.

"Forgive me, Your Majesty," the coachman replied apologetically, "but the horses became like this after hearing the roar of an unknown beast from the secret realm. They still seem terrified and refuse to move."

Emperor Raymond raised his eyebrows. Well, it was to be expected—there was no way normal beasts like horned horses could remain unaffected after hearing such a mighty roar.

Aldrian approached the horses and knelt beside them, then gently injected his golden energy into their bodies to help them feel warm and at ease. He wanted to ease their stress, and from the coachman's explanation, he realized something must have happened while he was focused on the ring and creating his domain.

The coachman watched in amazement as Aldrian's golden energy soothed the horses. After a few minutes, all four returned to normal. They even moved closer to Aldrian, as if they were drawn to him and wanted to stay near.

Aldrian smiled and gently patted their large bodies before turning to the emperor.

"Your Majesty, I think it's time for me to go. I have something to take care of right now, and it concerns those traitors. Your Majesty can return to the imperial palace without needing to escort me."

Emperor Raymond was stunned, but then he asked,

"Do you need my help? I know you're capable, but I believe they've already escaped far away, and it will be very difficult to find them if they put effort into hiding. I can announce a wide-scale search across the empire to make things easier for you."

Aldrian smiled and shook his head.

"No, that won't be necessary, Your Majesty. I have a much simpler method that won't waste any resources, and they'll be caught in no time," he said.

Aldrian then focused and contacted the heavens. Now that the entire Atria Empire had become his domain, he could locate them with the help of the heavens.

After asking for their location and receiving the heavens' response, Aldrian was stunned for a moment, but then his eyes flashed coldly.

"It seems he truly chose the most painful death possible."

He had already predicted that his targets might make a desperate move, but he hadn't expected one of them to come straight to his nest!

However, Aldrian's eyes turned serene again, with no trace of worry. In fact, he felt this was the best possible outcome. Did 'he' truly believe 'he' could leave his nest after entering it? The man would be in for a surprise when he encountered those who were there. Those people were more than enough to catch him.

With 'him' there, Aldrian could then focus on pursuing the others.

"Your Majesty, I'll go first. I'll meet you again later, for now, I need to catch those rats," Aldrian said.

Emperor Raymond nodded.

"Alright."

With that, Aldrian disappeared, leaving the emperor and the capital behind.

At Caritas, the situation had returned to normal. Many people resumed their daily activities. The outbreak, which had occurred more than a week ago, still left scars on

many as they mourned the loss of loved ones. Yet, life had to go on, and so they continued with their routines, trying to numb the pain in their hearts.

Amidst the bustling activities of the city's people, there was someone who did not appear to have come with good intentions. His cold gaze was fixed in the direction of the mayor's mansion.