

The Ages 1801

Chapter 1801 - Divine Sun Palace Troops

"You two," the sun emperor said, casting his blazing gaze at the Deluge Emperor and the Warlord, making them nervous. "I want to settle things once and for all, and I need you all to give it a little more effort. If we win, I'll grant you and your descendants the reward you deserve. No matter what kind of troubles befall a clan, as long as you win and have resources, you can build back anew, even stronger than before. If that caused your loyalty to waver from me, it's nothing but a childish response. I believe the two of you know what I mean."

Before the emperor even finished speaking, the two were already inwardly shuddering from fear. They had indeed wavered, and the sun emperor pointed out that soft spot.

"Your Majesty, we're also celestial orderians. Any sacrifice we make today is only expected. For the ultimate goal of reuniting us as a race, we won't relent in the slightest!" the Deluge Emperor said.

That made things awkward for the Warlord, as he was the only real traitor. Thankfully, he found his own angle. "We wargodeans only managed to rise to this point thanks to the celestial orderians. Without Your Majesty's nurturing and care, we wouldn't have grown to what we are today, so we do this to repay our favors. Every casualty we suffer is a mark of pride for us. We're embarrassed that we failed to stop the enemy this time around. From now on, we'll be sure to stand at the front to repay Your Majesty's trust."

Both of them felt like it was a close call. They'd indeed wavered after Tianming had made his prediction, but they knew better now that they were standing before the sun emperor. The consequences would be dire if their loyalty came into question. Fence-sitters would be the ones to suffer the most in this war.

"It's but a small matter. We're brothers, you and I. There's no need for all this anxiety and apology," the sun emperor said in a relaxed manner, as if he had completely shaken off the awkwardness of Tianming's escape. He put a hand on the shoulder of the Deluge Emperor and gave the Warlord's thigh a light slap to calm them down. "Now, the enemy has eyes all over the place. What I tell you now will serve just as well as an announcement to the Myriad Solar Sects, so listen up."

He smiled and said in a calm manner, "Since everything is there for all to see, I'll no longer mess around. The little accident during the battle of the Myriaddragon Mountains caused my Divine Sun Palace to falter. But now it's set sail once more. It's about time the celestial orderians and Myriad Solar Sects settle this once and for all. We have a grand show prepared for all to witness, so please look forward to it."

He turned to the north and continued, "Li Tianming, I know you're listening. Thank you for coming back, since my victory and conquest of the sun would be a hollow and uninteresting one without you around. While you may be young, you're a qualified player in your own right. I hope you'll have more surprises prepared for me like the one today."

He let go of the Deluge Emperor, much to his relief, then applauded. "By the way, I have another interesting gift for you. Once I bulldoze my way to the Myriaddragon Mountains, make sure you're prepared to ceremonially accept it!" He made a warm and gentle smile. "I know that my precious

daughter has also returned with you. Make sure to take care of her. Perhaps you'll be able to use her as a hostage against me, you know."

He shrugged and chuckled, sending chills down the backs of those listening. It was rare, but when the sun emperor was especially unstable, he would act like this. Normally, he was a blazing, stoic figure that inspired fear. However, his nonchalant jovial demeanor only unnerved those around him even more. He took out a gold transmission stone, and when the light from the stone shone on his face, his smile instantly disappeared into a fierce grimace. With a deep, savage voice, he ordered, "Five armies, gather and head south!"

Though nothing spectacular happened there, the places where the armies were seemed to rumble when they received the order. They had been tempted by the prospects of war for so long. The notion of uniting the sun under their banner was terrifying. Five groups of sixty million each were assembling into a full force of three hundred million, making up the strongest celestial orderian force ever. Their deployment meant the battle was now at a pivotal phase; whether the Myriad Solar Sects survived would soon be revealed.

The armies looked like boundless seas of fire as they headed south to assemble. As there were far too many people, they couldn't march very fast. However, they were practically unstoppable and scorched everything along the paths they took. War was never just a matter of numbers. It was like a living organism that struggled to survive at any cost, tearing down everything that came into its path.

All of this had resulted from the cowardice of this generation's Sky Palace. It only gave the sun emperor a good reason to strive toward uniting the sun, indulging in the sick desire to obtain complete dominion over beastmasters that some totemancers had! Since ancient times, the celestial orderians had wanted to be the sole hegemon of the sun, thus the desire had long been ingrained in them. They were merely biding their time and waiting for a chance, and this generation's powerful sun emperor and incompetent Sky Palace had perfectly set the stage for such an incursion. The normally gentle and refined celestial orderians let out their savage side on the battlefield, enjoying the debauchery wrought upon others. Now that they were able to easily obtain treasures upon treasures, they turned into flaming devils.

There was no war that was fought for no reason. Generations of celestial orderians had wanted their descendants to completely destroy their enemies, baptizing the sun with their totemic flames. And now that desire was being realized in the form of the five great armies that were marching south, burning everything in their path and leaving flaming terror in their wake. That very day, the sun unleashed a strong nova source surge from the north and south poles. The Voidsky Flame Pillar in the south was deathly silent, but the north burned with raging flames. Countless denizens of the Myriad Solar Sects' territories could feel the totemic flames spreading, casting the specter of death over them no matter where they were hiding. The mastermind of all of this, the sun emperor himself, had returned to the Divine Sun Palace, bathing in raging flames that stoked his killing intent.

"The extermination of the Myriad Solar Sects will only be a minor growing pain for the sun. After that passes, we'll have control over everything in this world and it'll make us stronger! I might be considered a villain by those of the Myriad Solar Sects, but to my own people I'm the ultimate benefactor." His words sent all of his troops, even the bluebloods and wargodeans, into a zealous frenzy. He merely brushed off the genocide that was to come as a simple growing pain and painted himself as a virtuous saint doing what was right for his people.

Mercy was no longer on the table for the enemy.

"Tianyi Army," the sun emperor said.

"We stand ready!"

"Tribulator Army."

"We stand ready!"

"Godblade Army."

"We stand ready!"

"Enter the Divine Sun Palace!"

Thirty million troops swarmed into the divine astralship like they were making a holy pilgrimage. The Warlord and Deluge Emperor looked at the sight with great agitation.

"If the sun emperor would summon us to join him and his great army, then we bluebloods will have finally returned to being one of the celestial orderians. Who cares how many we lose? That would be the greatest contribution we can make for our own kind," the Deluge Emperor said. He had completely forgotten his doubts from before. A few words from the sun emperor alone had been enough to overturn his convictions, instilling fierce loyalty into him. He was waiting for those magic words: enter the Divine Sun Palace.

"Stargods," the sun emperor finally said.

"We stand ready!" the Deluge Emperor said, echoed by tens of millions of others who were crying tears of joy. The bluebloods had been known as stargods back when they were still a part of the celestial orderians.

"Enter the Divine Sun Palace!"

"Understood!"

Being able to enter the Divine Sun Palace was a sign of respect from the sun emperor; they were no longer mere traitors. The Divine Sun Palace was sacred ground for the celestial orderians. Before the war, most people hadn't even been allowed to set foot in it. Now that the bluebloods were properly recognized, they would be able to do anything for the sun emperor, even give their lives.

That left only the xenorace, the wargodeans. With the Veildragon Palace now gone, the wargodeans had become their replacement. They had, after all, also been nurtured by the celestial orderians.

Chapter 1802 - Windheed Pavilion

"Wargodeans!" The sun emperor smiled, with the Goldring Warlord joining him. "From now on, you'll take your place among us as the Wargod Hall. Your territories shall be expanded to include those of the Fushen Clan. Everyone here will become part of my Wargod Army."

The sun emperor had made the promises in public, so it was set in stone. The Divine Sun Palace's reactivation had caused quite a few wargodeans to resent the sun emperor for attempting to use them

as cannon fodder; thus, they didn't expect they would be given the very status they had craved, not just replacing the Veildragon Palace but also being formally recognized as the Wargod Army. It was a mark of glory that they had never attained before. They were basically being recognized as equals of the celestial orderians and receiving the proper respect.

The Veildragon Palace had once enjoyed such a status, as well as access to resources, something the wargodeans were envious of. The celestial orderian territories also produced manna, after all, and if the beastmasters from the Myriad Solar Sects were wiped out, the wargodeans would be the sole remaining people who could enjoy those benefits. That was the main reason the Goldring Warlord had chosen to side with the sun emperor.

"Enter the Divine Palace!"

"Understood!"

The army of sixty million, comprising the Tianyi, Tribulator, Godblade, Stargod, and Wargod Armies was complete, having all kinds of people for all kinds of roles. There were those that excelled at intercepting and those that were expert ranged attackers. The beastmasters also made up for the lack of cavalry.

It was clear to all what the sun emperor wanted to use the Divine Sun Palace for. As fast as the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb was, the Divine Sun Palace was even faster. Carrying so many troops at once, it could easily obliterate any sect in one go. Not to mention, the strongest cultivator on the sun, the sun emperor, was with them. The Divine Sun Palace was nothing short of an absolute disaster for any faction in its way.

"I had wanted to use the Veildragon Palace to peacefully take over the Myriad Solar Sects, but they didn't allow me that chance. Since that's the case, there's no longer any need for pretense. Even if we have to sacrifice some of our own, unifying the sun will be to the benefit of everyone that remains. Let's see how that child on the other side reacts! No more schemes, just a straightforward fight all the way!"

The sun emperor had wanted to do it the easy way with a scheme, but he was sick of all the resistance he'd been met with. Reasons and morals no longer mattered. They were just for appearance's sake anyways.

The Divine Sun Palace rose into the clouds with sixty million troops within. At the same time, three hundred million other soldiers began marching south from the orderians' territory. The celestial orderians had fully bared their fangs and charged toward the sheep, revealing their true savage colors.

Within the Divine Sun Palace, the sun emperor stood in front of all the other 'pilgrims'.

"Esteemed Father, where will we be heading next?" Li Tianyi asked excitedly.

"We'll be going to a land that reminds me of my pain, the place where we lost your aunt," the sun emperor said with both eyes closed.

"The Xuanyu Continent?" Li Tianyi recalled a place called Dragonbound Valley. It used to be where the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect intended to preserve their younger generation, and it also happened to be where Li Wushuang had been killed.

"That's right." Two streams of golden tears streamed down his face. "I made an oath to complete her funeral rites by burning down the Myriad Solar Sects as a sacrifice. These past two years, her spirit seems to be haunting and pushing me to do it like a child throwing a tantrum. I have no choice. The day has finally arrived after much waiting. I'll bring her along as I trample the Myriad Solar Sects. We'll head all the way to the Myriadragon Mountains and avenge her along with the tens of millions of our own that perished two years ago!"

Everything would end where it had started. Li Tianyi could hear the pain in the sun emperor's voice. He recalled his aunt, Li Wushuang, and didn't understand what kind of relationship she had with her elder brother. As the eldest son of the sun emperor, Li Tianyi had loathed Li Wushuang, who had monopolized the care and attention of the sun emperor since his childhood while he was left neglected all the time. Though he had pondered for his whole life why that was the case, he'd never figured it out. Even now, he didn't know why the sun emperor thought of Li Wushuang's death as far more important than the tens of millions of perished troops.

It no longer matters. With him being so mad, the Myriad Solar Sects is done for. I really have to thank Li Tianming for coming back, otherwise father will never be able to let this go. It would haunt him for the rest of his life.... Li Tianyi was honestly grateful for how things had turned out. He didn't understand the pain the sun emperor was going through as he reminisced about his sister's death.

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Three days later, the Divine Sun Palace arrived at the Xuanyu Continent, a beautiful place with a thriving population. Li Tianyi felt a little moved, seeing the prosperous lands of the Myriad Solar Sects. After passing through Dragonbound Valley and crossing thousands of mountains, they would reach the strongest faction on the continent. Of the countless factions that used to be there, only eight second-rate factions still remained. The Divine Sun Palace was heading for the Windheed Pavilion, ranked sixteenth out of all the sects. It was also the largest on the Xuanyu Continent.

They had an elegant and poetic name, and led the cultural trends of the entire continent. Countless cultivators dreamed of going there. It was said that the sect was the most beautiful out of all of the Myriad Solar Sects, with the most beautiful and intricate divine celestial patterns inscribed on their buildings over countless generations. It sounded like a paradise, and all the cultivators there were elegant, cultured, and refined. They seemed to prize education even more than cultivation, and the height of their culture knew no comparison.

They were considered a magnificent cultural heritage of the Myriad Solar Sects; no other faction could rival them in cultural achievements. The Windheed Pavilion's leadership made the Xuanyu Continent as a whole adopt a higher standard of refinement, making the people there strive for beauty and sentimentality. Yet the gigantic flaming golden head simply flew past with sixty million troops, descending upon the grade-seven defensive formation of the sect. The celestial orderlies proceeded to crush the precious cultural constructs that had taken countless years to build.

Chapter 1803 - Payback in the Next Life

The Windheed Pavilion encompassed a city that stretched thousands of miles. The clusters of buildings somewhat resembled Myriadmile City. From above, it looked like a sea of stars in the night sky, clustered together to form a brighter whole. The chains of tall buildings intermingled with parks, ponds,

and beautiful facsimiles of nature that seemed organic, but were precisely designed and constructed. A relaxing breeze blew past the land in the sect, causing wind chimes to crisply tingle like the laughter of young maidens.

But this day, a cloud of gloom loomed over the gigantic city, within which was gathered millions of constelliers. Tens of millions of normal gods also ran about in a panic. As one of the higher-ranked sects, they weren't weak as a whole and could barely be considered half as potent as the Blueblood Starocean, which was ranked tenth. They had four million elites and more than forty million normal gods. Their sect alone had the might of the five sects from the Land of Three Skies combined. And thanks to their unique culture, they had grown into the unshakeable rulers of the Xuanyu Continent, yet they were facing elimination this very day.

"The Divine Sun Palace is working again!"

"I heard it's coming our way."

"Even though our Chaos Windstorm Formation is a top-tier grade-seven defensive formation, almost a grade-eight one, it won't stop the Divine Sun Palace! What do we do? Where's the sect master or the alliance leader?"

"The sect master is assembling the troops. As for the leader of the alliance, you're talking about Li Tianming, right? I don't know either. The battles at the Land of Three Skies sound confusing. Not even I know precisely what happened. The Divine Sun Palace is already close... it's over for us...."

The formation of the alliance and selection of the alliance leaders had brought much confidence to the many factions, yet they didn't think that their efforts would be foiled once more by the Divine Sun Palace.

"With the Divine Sun Palace approaching us, will we have to abandon our sect like the Azuresoul Palace and Supracloud Sanctuary?" someone suddenly asked.

"No! If we leave, everything here will be destroyed! The celestial orderians will wipe out anyone that's left behind, as well as the precious cultural treasures our ancestors have built! That's the most important thing to us! We have to defend them to our deaths!"

"But how? Once the formation is broken, the sixty million troops of the enemy will swarm in and wipe us out! We don't have that many even if we include our ascendants! If we lose our chance to run, we'll be wiped out for sure!"

"But...."

Many people fell into despair over the prospect of abandoning their homes. Every plant and stone of the Windheed Pavilion was infused with deep sentimental meaning. If they lost all of them, would they still have any soul to speak of? Should they run, or should they fight? This was the question everyone was struggling with. Amidst the chaos, some people began panicking, while others froze up as a result of the dilemma.

"All we can do is wait for the sect master and the council to make a final decision. If we abandon our homes, we might yet survive."

Everyone was nervous about having to be refugees, losing the comforts of their homes and risking estrangement from their friends and loved ones. They couldn't bear to see their homes and treasures burn in the flames ignited by the vile enemy. Only those who had suffered the same fate would understand how they felt, such as the Azuresoul Palace and Skyseal Sword Sect. They knew that the Windheed Pavilion would have a really hard time abandoning the mighty constructs of their ancestors, all of which contained impactful and important tales to their kind. The flaming beast was threatening to swallow it all.

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There was a tower at the center of the city. At the very top was a beauty dressed in green and white, sporting a tall figure and long, flowing hair. Her skin seemed incredibly smooth and her eyes were as clear as the freshest spring. While time hadn't left marks on her appearance, she was by no means young. Among the cultivators of the Windheed Pavilion, she was the respected and revered Lady Windheeder, the sect master. Her name was Fengling Suyu.

The Fengling Clan was an old one, with roots tracing back to the very beginning of Orderia. When the celestial orderians began appearing in this world, the Fengling Clan had already claimed some territory on the sun as their own home. As the master of a second-rate sect, Fengling Suyu's status was on par with that of Long Wanying. The two of them were tranquil, stoic beauties with an air of intelligence. However, Fengling Suyu seemed even gentler, like her sect. The sight of her alone made people feel serene. However, she didn't give off that impression this time around, as death was knocking at her door.

A silver egg before her turned into a metallic butterfly and perched on the back of her hand. While it wasn't appropriate to let the sect masters of second-rate sects know of Yin Chen, Tianming didn't really care too much about it anymore. He quickly reached out to her from the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb. The butterfly briefed her about everything they were in for, such as the savagery the celestial orderians could commit.

With a solemn tone, Tianming said, "Senior Fengling, I've seen the celestial orderians attack the Aeonin Dragon Formation. There's no way that your defensive formation will be able to hold out. If your formation breaks, the normal ascendants you have won't be able to contribute using the formation spirit threads, so you'll effectively only have four million elites fighting against sixty million enemies. Your casualties will be heavy."

"So, the only sensible choice to make is to abandon the sect and flee like beaten dogs, huh...." Fengling Suyu leaned against the windowsill with a stern look. She cast her gaze north, as if a hungry beast could be seen through the flaming clouds.

"Senior Fengling, in the face of disaster, survival is the only thing that matters. Only by surviving can we hope to turn things around and take back what belongs to us. The cultivators of the Windheed Pavilion all have a right to live on. Far too many third- and fourth-rate sects have already been forced to leave their homes, but if we band together, we'll still have hope."

No doubt, those words would take quite a bit of time for Yin Chen to relay. Tianming was flipping out over how long it took. The biggest challenge he faced in his position was to come up with solutions for

their troubles, but nobody could do much about the Divine Sun Palace. Who could have known the sun emperor had a backup core that could be used to activate it once again?

Naturally, nobody blamed Tianming for not having a miracle solution to all of their ills. As natives of the sun, their ancestors had all been facing down the threat of the Divine Sun Palace. Even if someone else led the alliance, they wouldn't be able to do anything against it. Fengling Suyu knew that defeating the sun emperor and the Divine Sun Palace was too much to ask of Tianming. Though, despite his heartfelt advice, her expression seemed unyielding.

"Li Tianming, the Windheed Pavilion isn't like the Azuresoul Palace. This city is far too precious to our kind, filled with too much of our memories. It's the crystallization of efforts over countless generations. I'm willing to perish together with it, if that's what it takes to not abandon it. From my birth, I've been bound to this city, in life and in death. The Xuanyu Continent has seven other second-rate factions, and the sun emperor won't spare them, either. I hope that our final struggle will at least help buy time for the others. Please greet our other friends of the Xuanyu Continent for me. Thank you." She had always been known as a graceful and gentle sect master, often giving her all to serve the masses. The people of the continent saw her as a saintly figure that never took part in conflict, yet she had resolved herself to fight as death came creeping toward her.

"But there's many others in your sect that haven't chosen to fight! You can't ask them to die on your own accord!" Tianming understood how she felt about the sect, but this was tens of millions of people they were talking about. They were all innocent and had no obligation to stay and suffer the sun emperor's wrath.

Fengling Suyu merely shook her head. "You misunderstood me. I'll arrange for those who wish to flee to depart with you. Those that want to remain and fight will also get their chance. Li Tianming, you're the most talented person I've ever met. Even though the Divine Sun Palace's arrival is enough to paralyze us in fear, you managed to help the Land of Three Skies avoid complete annihilation. I hope you don't mind letting us suffer the consequences of our own choice. Don't feel crestfallen about us, either. I have faith that you'll be able to defeat the sun emperor and avenge us. If that day ever comes, please bring those who left back to help them rebuild. I'll no longer have that chance, so I can only repay you for this in the next life."

Tears flowed down her face as she spoke. Then she crushed the metallic insect into smithereens and left her tower.

Chapter 1804 - The Old Folks

The news spread quickly, otherwise the cultivators at the Windheed Pavilion wouldn't even know what had happened even after the Divine Sun Palace reached them. Tianming was already communicating with Fengling Suyu as the sun emperor was loading the Divine Sun Palace up with his troops. There were quite a few factions that had to abandon their homes and defensive formations to escape, and Tianming knew that it wouldn't be easy for them. However, no sect would be able to withstand the might of the Divine Sun Palace and the troops within. It was practically made to breach defensive formations so that they wouldn't have to suffer casualties for that.

Most of the third- and fourth-rate sects had already abandoned their homes to preserve their main riches and combat power. Tianming had thought that it would also be something the Windheed Pavilion

could accept. But after Fengling Suyu crushed the Yin Chen in her hand, Tianming tried reaching out to her again to no avail.

Fengling Suyu stood calmly before the crowd and quickly organized the evacuation and defense efforts. Those that wanted to leave were helped in doing so. They were going to scatter in multiple directions, but in an orderly fashion. Those that remained could either fight on the battlefield or hold formation spirit threads. They knew that their enemy was powerful, but a large portion of the sect members chose to die defending their homes. They knew it was a hopeless effort that would lead to their deaths, yet they did it anyway. Nobody, not even Tianming could convince them to change their minds. Perhaps Fengling Suyu was right. As long as they remained, they would be able to buy time for the other seven second-rate factions on the Xuanyu Continent to retreat.

Many younger cultivators brought their family members and lifebound friends out of the Chaos Windstorm Formation, heading south on their lifebound beasts. To prevent being wiped out in one fell swoop, they decided to spread out as best as they could, but given the sheer number of people, they were still rather densely packed. Most of the people that stayed behind were the elderly, who couldn't quite run fast enough and had lived long enough lives. They loved the city far too much and decided to stay back, leaving the future to the younger generation.

Part of that was by Fengling Suyu's design. She had stipulated that those under five hundred years old had to leave no matter what, while those above could choose to stay if they wanted. With disaster almost at their door, they had no time for sappy farewells. They let their tears trail behind them as they headed south, not daring to look back in fear of seeing the flames that came from the north swallow up the place they had called home for centuries.

Given the speed of the Divine Sun Palace, it probably wouldn't take more than half an hour for it to reach the Windheed Pavilion. If it weren't for the delay caused by loading the sixty million troops into the Divine Sun Palace, they might not even have had a chance to flee. To take over a territory, it was crucial to crush the defensive formation around it, which served as the foundation of a sect or faction. All eight of the second-rate factions on the Xuanyu Continent had deployed their formations, manned by the few that chose to remain.

"With the Divine Sun Palace and sixty million troops, the second-rate factions no longer stand a chance to resist, huh...."

"Thankfully, the other seven factions of the continent didn't have as many people staying behind as the Windheed Pavilion did."

While this day wouldn't be marked by endless bloodshed and countless casualties, it was one where countless people had lost their homes and legacies. There were many kinds of cultivation resources that couldn't quite be taken away with them, after all, such as the divine ores and herbs in the vicinity. Without those, divine artifacts and pills couldn't be made.

"Even the combined Myriad Solar Sects would find it hard to face off against the Divine Sun Palace and all those troops on the battlefield. The only thing we can count on are the defensive formations. It seems that only the grade-eight formations of first-rate factions stand a chance, so all of the second-rate factions have to flee instead. That's the only way for us to survive," the Northdipper Swordsage said. Without the Divine Sun Palace, the sixty million troops wouldn't be too big of a deal.

"But what about Fengling Suyu and the rest?!" Long Wanying said, her eyes bloodshot.

"Let's respect her choice. The Windheed Pavilion's legacy is too important to be destroyed without at least putting up a fight," the Saintdragon Emperor lamented.

A veil of doom loomed over them. The celestial orderians had completely dropped all semblance of any pretenses and revealed their true colors. They threatened to devour all that was good in the Myriad Solar Sects. Countless totems gathered together to form flaming seas. The Divine Sun Palace's troops were only the vanguard, and there were another three hundred million troops marching south and burning everything in their path.

The gigantic golden head finally descended from the flaming clouds above, its sinister expression, flaming eyes, and messy, dragon-shaped hair striking fear and terror into the hearts of its enemies. The Divine Sun Palace was like the alpha lion of a pack, while the Windheed Pavilion was more like a cage for the birds within that couldn't run even if they wanted to. There were five million cultivators remaining there, a million of whom were elites while the rest were normal gods.

Most of them were more than five hundred years old. The beastmasters flying around with their mounts mostly had white hair and frail bodies. While they probably used to have incredibly powerful cultivations, their astralforce had started fading away long ago due to their age. When their level receded to the point of their birth, they would depart from this world; that was the truth of cultivation. Power couldn't just surge to the peak in a single moment, nor would it instantly dissipate into nothing. Dying from old age was an incredibly long process, much like growing up. All who remained were willing to die with their sect. Though they were old, they were still filled with fighting spirit. The elderly apathy that used to color their eyes had been replaced by courage before death.

"We were going to die today either way. At least the young ones managed to leave with hope for our future."

"We're already old and far from as lively as we were before. Dying is only a matter of time, so why not use our deaths to give our children a chance? We'll serve as an example. Even if they run today, they can fight another day like we are doing now! Let's show these totemancer dogs what we're made of!"

"We've cared for this place for so long, so how can we just let them take it from us? We won't go down without a fight!"

The approach of the golden head caused the pressure on them to mount. The territory of the sect was currently experiencing a windstorm, which would help fire spread even faster. The blazing flames of the Divine Sun Palace were already licking against their defensive formation, the light of which colored the faces of the defenders red. Many would never forget how the descent of the golden head from the flaming clouds felt like the arrival of a flaming god of death.

Fengling Suyu stood at the very front, facing the furious flames. Her hair and robes fluttered in the wind and beside her were five top-tier rainwood phoenixes, unique beasts that were the signature of the Fengling Clan. They had dual attributes of wood and water, making their beastmasters capable pill gurus as well. The Windheed Pavilion had planted a lot of divine herbs in their territory to facilitate that discipline as well.

The phoenixes took flight alongside countless other beasts, yet they seemed incomparably insignificant before the Divine Sun Palace. By sheer volume alone, the palace seemed to take up half the space of the defensive formation! Yet it could move, unlike a defensive formation. Divine astralships were basically moving fortresses, and with sovereigns controlling them, there was no recourse against them.

The gigantic head suddenly descended and flared up even more. The nova sources in its eyes immediately set the entire sect on fire. It seemed like it was breathing, and every breath it took shook the hearts of the defenders.

"Fengling Suyu, you're still here, huh?" said a booming voice as the mouth of the Divine Sun Palace opened. The sun emperor stood on its tongue, drawing the attention of all.

"I stayed here to tell you that nothing but death and destruction awaits you if you take another step forward. We have millions of years of legacies, and we'll use them to bury you if we're forced to endure your tyrannical onslaught!" She spoke her words firmly and clearly, channeling the spirit and legacy of her sect well. Since ancient times, no force had been able to force them to submit.

"You misunderstand me. Only enemies think of me as tyrannical, but my people think of me as a never-before-seen genius and a wise ruler. The history books of the future will write of how I brought about a new golden age."

Chapter 1805 - Sins of the Sun Emperor

Those in the Divine Sun Palace immediately cheered at the sun emperor's words. They seemed even more zealous than Tianming's believers. If the sun emperor had the legacy of the Primordial God-Emperor, he would no doubt have tens of thousands of times more Omniscient Threads than Tianming.

"Just because you'll be described as a saint by history doesn't overwrite your sins or cleanse the filth of your soul. Your son, Li Tianyi, set fire to the Azurecloud Divine Tree and caused the deaths of countless lives. All of that blood is sin on your hands. Since ancient times, the ones that stray from the righteous path will always be judged by fate. You crossed the line and gathered too much sin, so you'll be judged one day!" This didn't resemble the gentle demeanor Fengling Suyu was known for. She was firmly resolute and moved many hearts.

People fell silent after hearing her speak. They could tell that the sun emperor was deep in thought. He looked back and saw his son, Li Tianyi.

"Esteemed Father, I was just setting fire to the tree. It wasn't my intention to kill people with it," he said, his face entirely pale and sweaty. He hurriedly prostrated himself, his fingers shaking from fear. Despite not intending to kill, countless people had indeed died. What kind of elite cultivator would bother with the welfare of normal folk just living their lives? What happened at the Azurecloud Continent had made the Myriad Solar Sects as a whole loathe the celestial orderians. They were worried that the orderians would continue sowing destruction even as they were retreating. Gods could still flee, but the mortals would be doomed to their fates. A sun emperor that destroyed defensive formations to occupy territory and a tyrant who slaughtered innocents were completely different concepts.

People nervously looked at the sun emperor. How would he define himself? Would he pillage and plunder, slaughtering countless innocents simply for not being of his ilk? As they waited for his answer,

he suddenly laughed and squinted at Fengling Suyu. "You called me a senseless killer that's accumulating sin? No worries. I'll add another five million lives from your sect to my tally. The victors write the history books, after all. I'll just demonize you in those books for the children of the future to read. As for fate's judgment, I look forward to it. Hahahaha! I wanted to take over the Myriad Solar Sects without spilling unnecessary blood, yet you resisted me! The tens of millions of celestial orderians lost at the Myriadragon Mountains have to be made up for. So you'll be paying for that with your lives on top of those already claimed at the Azurecloud Continent. All of our fallen are heroes of our race, and since ancient times, we've never let the sacrifice of our heroes go unaccounted for."

Those words were for the celestial orderians to hear. It was a signal that they could kill as much as they wanted, as long as they were brave enough to give their all in the fights rather than shirk away like cowards as the bluebloods did. That was why he wouldn't bring up Li Wushuang. Tianming and the rest could hear him, and he knew his speech would give them despair. Tianming could tell that the sun emperor had gone mad from suffering the loss at the Myriadragon Mountains, even if he didn't want to admit it. There was no longer anything holding him back from using the cruelest of methods to wipe away that humiliating stain of loss. That made it necessary for everyone in the Myriad Solar Sects to take a firm stance. Apart from the wargodeans, everyone was ready to fight to the death. Any naive hopes of fence-sitting would only lead to worse suffering.

"Fengling Suyu, did you understand me?" the sun emperor said, still standing in his palace.

"I did. You've turned from a worthy ruler of totemancers into a lowly animal. The greatest shame in my entire life is having held a conversation with a lowly beast like you."

"Hahahaha! It's too bad that when you're exterminated, I'll tell your children that you are the actual beasts!"

"Lowly beasts! Lowly beasts!" the celestial orderian troops chanted, filled with an air of mockery.

The sun emperor raised an arm to stoke the flames. "So witness how we civilized people destroy the crude and primitive structures you built for yourselves. I heard that the Windheed Pavilion was the benchmark of all things beautiful, yet you look like nothing more than ugly, weak people to me."

The Divine Sun Palace rumbled as the flames around it glowed ten times brighter. It had never shown any attack capabilities until now. The two miniature nova sources gathered unbelievable amounts of power and channeled them to the mouth of the golden head, the light of which enveloped the sun emperor entirely. No doubt, this was a sign of an impending attack. Historically speaking, it was quite embarrassing for the celestial orderians to have to stoop to using the Divine Sun Palace to attack as well as carry sixty million troops. But now they no longer cared. They had revealed their shameless nature, all of them devils ready to strike. Now, the Divine Sun Palace looked like a gigantic ball of fire.

"Everyone..." Fengling Suyu turned to the five million precious members of her sect with tears in her eyes, "since we decided to remain, let's use everything we have to let what we built remain in this world, if only for a moment or two longer."

It almost seemed laughable for people to die in vain for a city that would be destroyed whether they stayed or not, but their will was unshakable. Everyone held on to the formation spirit threads, powering the grade-seven defensive formation to the maximum. Storms began brewing more and more intensely

until the defenders were between the raging storms and blazing flames. A gigantic tornado then surrounded the entire sect, threatening to eviscerate any that approached it.

Chapter 1806 - The Destruction of Windheed

Normally speaking, if the celestial orderians sent ten million troops against the Windheed Sect, they wouldn't be too worried as they had four million elites and tens of millions of normal gods. Their Chaos Windstorm Formation was among the top defensive formations of second-rate factions, after all. But this time around, they were up against a fully-powered Divine Sun Palace. Having gathered enough power, the golden head brightly shone and shook. Countless celestial orderians cheered and roared at the sight of the mighty structure that had been laying dormant for the past two years.

A golden beam shot out toward the defensive formation, instantly sparking destructive shockwaves. Gold and blue clashed and dissipated, flattening many mountains in the vicinity of the sect. The shockwaves alone crushed many buildings as they seeped in, rendering the beautiful landscape into ruins in quick succession. The five million defenders shed both tears and blood; however, that wasn't enough to break their strong wills. They stubbornly resisted even as death came bearing down upon them.

"The formation didn't break!"

"Yeah!"

"We managed to hold on!"

"Is that all the Divine Sun Palace can do? Did the sun emperor not feed his ship properly?"

It was quite a surprising outcome. Not only did those within the formation not cry from pain, they laughed instead after the first wave of attacks. That was something the celestial orderians simply couldn't tolerate. The sixty million troops felt that something was off about the sun emperor, who was furrowing his brow as he looked at the golden wheel in his hand, frustratedly manipulating it. The Warlord, Deluge Emperor, Li Tianyi, and the rest didn't dare to ask why.

After a moment, the sun emperor laughed and shook his head. "Well, it is a backup core, after all, so it's not quite there. Looks like it can only use half of its power in one attack, otherwise grade-seven defensive formations would be crushed in one shot." He seemed quite surprised by the output of the backup core. Though he was laughing, he was no doubt filled with rage. Having the Solar Wheel stolen from him was the most frustrating thing to ever happen.

"Then... Esteemed Father, will it affect our plans?" Li Tianyi gingerly asked.

"Not really. If one attack doesn't cut it, we'll just launch a few more. They're sitting ducks waiting to be slaughtered either way. It'll just take a little more time."

Hearing that, the nervous celestial orderians smiled and relaxed.

"So we'll just have more opportunities to make them piss themselves in fear."

"All defensive formations are merely cages before the Divine Sun Palace. If they don't run, they'll die. They're caged beasts."

The orderians weren't worried that the enemy would escape at all. That would simply give them victory without any bloodshed. However, some of them had noticed that the sun emperor wasn't the least bit relaxed. After all, just because the Divine Sun Palace could only attack with half its power didn't mean that it would only take two strikes to break the formation. While it would still eventually break after enough attacks, it was just grade seven. How would it fare against a grade-eight defensive formation? Was it only a matter of the number of attacks? Perhaps he would have no choice but to test it out.

Billions of cultivators were gathered at the Myriaddragon Mountains. Faced with so many enemies, if the celestial orderians were unable to break down the Aeonid Inifidragon Formation, they would no doubt suffer heavy casualties. In other words, as long as the Myriaddragon Mountains held, the orderians wouldn't be able to wipe out the Myriad Solar Sects for good even if they got all the other territories. Some of them were considering just such a problem, but they wisely decided to not speak up about it. Instead, they simply watched as the sun emperor continued channeling the palace's power for another attack.

Once every few minutes, the Divine Sun Palace launched a blast against the Chaos Windstorm Formation. The shockwaves from the explosions caused more and more buildings to collapse into ruins and the city was now blanketed in darkness, its former brilliance having disappeared like tears in rain. It was now just a large collection of ruins. Even so, the Chaos Windstorm Formation still held, guarding the ruins within.

Every blast was separated by around a hundred breaths, which was time enough for the defenders to recover from the blast once more for another bout of resistance. However, when the Divine Sun Palace launched its eighth blast on the formation, it suddenly shook and fractured, turning many within into a mess of blood. Countless people fell, but those that weren't killed crawled back up.

"One more time!" Their wills held strong nevertheless. They had never imagined that they would be able to defend the Windheed Pavilion for real, and they all knew that staying meant dying. All they wanted was a final showdown on this land to become a good example for their descendants that had fled.

"No matter how tough their lives are, the young ones will surely remain brave as long as they recall us old folk who died fighting here."

The Divine Sun Palace mustered its ninth blast, the gigantic head glowing even brighter, becoming the sole point of light amidst the cloudy darkness filled with debris and dust. Even with the dust clouds around it, its glowing eyes and mouth made it look like a demonic entity. Once more, a pillar of gold smashed against the formation, properly piercing it this time. Savage flames filled the city, swallowing up many of the collapsed buildings and painting the plains with a splash of golden flames. A loud explosion marked the complete destruction of the beautiful city, burying many seniors under the rubble. The Windheed Pavilion was gone for good.

Millions of defenders were left exposed before the Divine Sun Palace, covered in blood and grime. Their lifebound beasts were burnt and charred; it didn't help that avian lifebound beasts were particularly vulnerable to fire. But even so, they still stood together. The sun emperor probably thought that they would run away now that they had lost their 'cage', yet they stood together without relenting in the slightest, directing their hatred toward the Divine Sun Palace and, by extension, the sun emperor himself.

The woman who stood at the very front was the famous gentle beauty, the Lady Windheeder. However, her looks had been sullied by the blood and grime. Even so, she was still their symbol. She raised her sword as she stood on her phoenix, pointing it toward the Divine Sun Palace as she screamed, "Kill them!"

Even though the formation had fallen and the celestial orderians hadn't pressed their attack, she led the millions of beastmasters in a charge toward the palace like moths flying toward a fire. The war cries of the seniors intermingled as they charged into the clouds. They seemed to have forgotten how to speak; it was like there was nothing left in their minds but striving to become good examples for their children.

Facing the horde of beastmasters, the celestial orderians and the sun emperor were completely cold, yet they all seemed to wonder why their 'lessers' didn't just run. Even if they didn't want to submit, there was no need for them to rush to their deaths. The sun emperor had been on the verge of ordering his troops to attack, only for the enemy to have the gall to attack them first, which considerably angered him. With a growl, he gripped the backup core and caused the Divine Sun Palace to surge in power.

"So you want to see which side is bloodier, eh? Too bad for you, the celestial orderians have never lost." Once more, a golden pillar shot out of the Divine Sun Palace, instantly swallowing up the millions of incoming beastmasters. Many of them were vaporized right away, leaving not even a single speck behind. Fengling Suyu had been charging at the very front and was the one who took the brunt of the damage first. Perhaps she would be immortalized in the memory of others after her body was completely vaporized.

The power of the Divine Sun Palace was clear to see now that the defensive formation was gone. It was a mighty divine astralship. No matter how many millions of people fueled the formations, it would only be a matter of time until the palace destroyed them. The helpless struggle of the Windheed Pavilion had only resulted in millions of them being vaporized. What little specks of ash that remained fell to the ground and became one with the dust below. As they had wished, they were united with the ruins of the Windheed Pavilion.

Chapter 1807 - Dire Straits and a Choice

The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb landed in the Myriadragon Mountains before opening up. The countless people within were stuffed and cramped, but they immediately relaxed when they saw the vast mountains. They had finally reached the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect, their home for the foreseeable future.

Long Wanying had been feeling extra tired in recent days, thanks to having to settle so many people down. It was necessary to prevent conflict from occurring and secure enough rations for everyone. Even so, the arrival of so many did serve to considerably boost the might of the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect.

More and more refugees flocked to them, all seeking protection. However, there was a limit to the number of people the resources of the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect's territory could sustain. While it could make do in the short term, the problems would only be exacerbated with time. Much of it was due to the loss of territories, and thereby access to the resources within them. Yet as long as the Divine Sun Palace existed, the siege wouldn't end. The extermination of the Windheed Pavilion was a rather harrowing tale for every second-rate faction.

"Don't worry, we'll allocate places for all of you to stay. Please leave the divine astralship in an orderly fashion."

The biggest problem yet was forming the refugees into organized fighting forces. Everyone in Long Wanying's internal affairs department was so tired that they could barely spare attention for anything else.

"As for the sixty million troops that left with the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, please remain within for now!" Tianming ordered. Only the cultivators from the Land of Three Skies had been let out, while the others remained. It was much more spacious and comfortable than before now that half of the passengers had disembarked.

"Why did the first alliance leader ask us to stay?"

"Maybe he plans to go out and fight the sun emperor?"

"That doesn't seem likely. I think we're just on standby so the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb can deploy at a moment's notice."

"Currently, there's around a hundred and thirty million fighters here that can measure up against the celestial orderian troops. We'll keep sixty million in the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb to counterbalance the sixty million troops in the Divine Sun Palace while the rest will defend the Myriadragon Mountains."

"I wonder how the Windheed Pavilion is doing...."

"Li Tianming doesn't look too good."

"Let's not panic. The Divine Sun Palace's reactivation came as a surprise thanks to a backup core. However, we still managed to avoid being wiped out. That's already rather lucky."

"Now's the time to trust Li Tianming!"

"You're right."

The Ninedragon Army troops that remained inside were Tianming's loyal supporters. With them around, the other troops managed to retain their fighting spirit, even though they were still a little disorganized. If even they lost their morale, the Myriad Solar Sects would be done for.

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Tianming entered a hall on the Great Saintdragon Peak with the Saintdragon Emperor to see Long Wanying and the other Dragon Imperials. The Northdipper Swordsage, Ninesun Martial Lord, Fushen Gongyi, and many other sect masters remained in communication with him through Yin Chen.

"Tianming, how's it going?" they asked in unison.

"The Windheed Pavilion has fallen. All who remained were wiped out, Senior Fengling included."

Yin Chen reported that they had charged toward the Divine Sun Palace after the formation fell, only to be blasted into smithereens. Tianming could imagine what it must have been like even without

witnessing it himself. The news caused everyone to wallow in gloom. The other second-rate factions' sect masters felt worse off after hearing about the fate of the Windheed Pavilion.

"We don't have much time left. Aunt Ying, I plan to use Yin Chen to communicate with the other second-rate faction sect masters. Everyone must know what happened to the Windheed Pavilion."

Even a slight delay could result in the deaths of millions and the loss of eons of legacies. There weren't more than ninety second-rate faction sect masters in total; Tianming didn't believe that they would risk their own destruction to be spies for the celestial orderians. Not to mention, even if Yin Chen's existence was revealed, it didn't matter now. The sun emperor was already aware of some kind of omnipresent surveillance device and had stopped his plotting. By now, Yin Chen no longer afforded any surveillance advantage, but it still helped with instant communication.

Metallic insects flew toward the hesitating sect masters in the forms of butterflies, locusts, cockroaches, or spiders. Tianming informed them about what happened to Windheed Pavilion, including who had evacuated and who remained. The elders had stayed to ensure that they served as a good example for their descendants, fighting to the death against the invaders.

"We're short on time, so we shouldn't just be scrambling to run. Instead, we need to pick a strategic spot where we can fight back from. We can resist the invaders' advance! The Windheed Pavilion bought us some time. I hope you all understand now that grade-seven formations are unable to defend against the Divine Sun Palace, but grade-eight formations might work. The backup core isn't able to channel the Divine Sun Palace's full power, so that might be the last hope for our survival. We still have time to evacuate people now, but that'll no longer be possible once the celestial orderians' main army marches south."

No doubt there were many in the second-rate factions who wanted to stay behind like Fengling Suyu had. However, Tianming knew that most of them would make the rational decision while they still had a sliver of hope. Fengling Suyu had chosen to fly into the fire like a moth, and her dedication was praiseworthy. However, the second-rate factions would do well to retreat to a better location before fighting back. After all, there were still those from the Windheed Pavilion that didn't waste their time and evacuated.

"Her actions have shown that staying back only results in destruction. If the other second-rate factions seek to emulate that, however, her efforts would've been rendered pointless." Tianming knew that her other goal was to ensure that the Myriad Solar Sects wouldn't forget the Windheed Pavilion, Tianming especially. As long as there was hope for the future generation, their descendants could still rebuild.

Chapter 1808 - Marching to the Fushen Clan

Lady Windheeder was right. She was a wise woman. She had used her life for the sake of the Windheed Pavilion and the rest of the myriad sects....

The five million people who'd acted like moths to a fire had lit the fury of all the second-rate sects. Getting them all to retreat should have been impossible. However, after hearing about the Windheed Pavilion, their heartbroken colleagues could make the only rational choice.

All the second-rate sects' sect masters agreed with Tianming. On the continents without first-rate sects, second-rate sects were the pillars.

When the five sects from the Land of Three Skies retreated, it meant the Land of Three Skies had fallen. Now that all of the second-rate sects were retreating, it meant that two-thirds of the myriad sects' territories had fallen! The remaining third belonged to the first-rate sects.

Such a decisive decision was painful, but a lizard that didn't sacrifice its tail would die.

"The Windheed Pavilion used their determination to tell all of their brethren that leaving is the only way."

Giving up on their fantasies was very hard, especially for anyone who had to give up on their home. However, Tianming bluntly let them know there was no other way. Hence, the greatest migration in Orderia's history had begun, from the central regions of the sun southward.

All the while, the grand army of celestial orderians came from the north.

Those escaping were covered in soot and suffered the elements as they looked toward the south, their last hope. Fortunately, they had left quickly and resolutely enough, so the three hundred million strong army hadn't caught up. The Divine Sun Palace alone wasn't able to stop them from scattering despite its lightning-fast speed.

The sun emperor announced to the world the fall of all the second-, third-, and fourth-rate sects to their glorious might, leaving only a few first-rate sects pitifully struggling. The day the celestial orderians unified the sun and became the true people of the sun was just around the corner.

.....

On Great Saintdragon Peak, Tianming was constantly communicating with the first- and second-rate sect masters through Yin Chen.

Long Wanying said, "Tianming, there's eighty million elite cultivators when you combine the power of all the second-rate sects. That's about three times the number in the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect. There's also three billion gods following them. We can't accept any more people, the Myriaddragon Mountains is already filled to the brim." After absorbing all the third and fourth-rate sects, there really was nowhere for the second-rate sects to live. If it was too packed, the Myriaddragon Mountains territory would be too chaotic.

However, Tianming had a plan. "Send them all to the other first-rate sects. I'll do the divvying up based on distance. We'll prioritize the closest first."

"Yes, that'll improve the defenses of the first-rate sects. Although we gave up on the second-rate sects, we can't give up on a single one of the first-rate sects."

The Northdipper Swordsage was pleased with these arrangements, as it meant Tianming hadn't treated the rest as outsiders.

"Our Shenwu Dynasty will also try our best to accept our brethren heading south, so they can have a home and a base from which to take their revenge," the Ninesun Martial Lord said in a low voice.

"There's a problem on my end, though. My territory is smaller, as we're sandwiched between the Voidword Shrine and Dreamless Celestial Nation. If they cross those two areas, something may happen,"

Yan Lingxian from the Group of Celestial Maiden Halls said. Geographically, their location was a tad awkward.

"Then we'll use the others for now. You're further away anyway," Tianming said. He had no intention of trusting the dreamless celestial emperor, so Tianming had never involved him in any of the discussions.

"There's problems on my side too. My Frostsoul Imperium is deep in the sea. It's easy to defend and hard to attack, and not even the Divine Sun Palace is suitable for entering the Frostsoul Sea, let alone ordinary people. We have the most confidence in defending ourselves since the Divine Sun Palace is weakened, but it isn't very realistic to bring people into the deep sea," the Frostsoul Imperium's Frost Empress said.

It was true. The Frostsoul Sea generally had ice- and water-type nova source, so there was a certain suppression of fire-type totems, making it easier to defend.

"Then we'll mainly go with the Empyrean Sword Sect, Shenwu Dynasty, and Fushen Clan. I'll immediately plot paths for all the sects based on their distances. Everyone, try your best to take away your critical things so that the orderians can't benefit," Tianming said.

"Yes!"

Yin Chen's highly effective communication had bought some confidence from the second-rate sects' sect masters. They finally knew how Tianming had killed the eight million scouts

However, Tianming had found out that every sect had quite a few who made the same choice as Fengling Suyu, which was to stay behind and die. On the low end, there would be tens of thousands. On the higher end would be millions. Most were old people. They knew their days were numbered anyway, so they didn't want to die in foreign lands.

"We'll leave some hope to the youngsters...."

Hence, those who left began their journey to find hope for survival. Defeat in battle meant eternal slavery! That meant the beastmasters, outside of the wargodeans, had no path of retreat, and no choice but to die in battle.

Tianming had no time to be emotional, pained, or panicked. He fully focused his mind on plotting the escape routes for the second-rate sects and got the opinions of all the second-rate sects' sect masters.

"Wait!" Tianming suddenly stopped with a frown.

"What?" Long Wanying asked.

"They can't go to the Fushen Clan anymore."

"Why not?"

Tianming stood up. "The Divine Sun Palace is moving. Its next target is the Fushen Clan!"

Now that he had sent all the second-rate sects packing, the sun emperor had experienced victory through sheer intimidation rather than spending effort and blood. Thus, he chose to target the Fushen Clan next!

"I'll be going," Tianming said.

"Where?"

"To support the Fushen Clan. The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb is closer to them. I'm confident I can bring people to their formation before the Divine Sun Palace arrives. We have a chance of resisting a half-power Divine Sun Palace."

"Then I'll leave it to you. If we can buy enough time at the Fushen Clan, we can help all the second-rate sects smoothly complete their migration."

Chapter 1809 - Universe-Class Genius

All the decisions Tianming had made were rational, effective, and fast. They all seized every moment!

"Alright..." Long Wanying looked at this determined young man. He was getting more and more immersed in his role and forgetting everything else. It was easy to imagine that the battle between the Divine Sun Palace and the first-rate sects would be more tragic than any battle before.

"Come back alive, kid," Long Wanying said with tears in her eyes. The people she loved had all left the world of the living one by one because of the sun emperor. She didn't wish for Tianming to be next.

"Don't worry." Tianming grinned and confidently patted his chest. He turned and left.

.....

The Fushen Clan was unfortunate to suffer the coming invasion of sixty million troops brought by the Divine Sun Palace. However, before that could happen, Tianming brought sixty million troops there with the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb. There was hope for this battle, thanks to the Fushen Clan's powerful formation.

The Frostsoul Imperium was protected by the Frostsoul Sea, so it was reasonably safe. The Group of Celestial Maidens Halls was trapped between a rock and a hard place, so nothing could be done for now.

The Myriaddragon Mountains, Emyrean Sword Sect, and the Shenwu Dynasty were the three strongest, and would soon absorb the second-, third-, and fourth-rate sects to complete their preparation for the final battle.

Ignoring the sixty million 'Imperial Tomb Army' that Tianming had brought away, the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect would have a hundred million soldiers once the retreat was finished.

The Emyrean Sword Sect and Shenwu Dynasty had about fifty million each. With their top-tier formations, if they were willing to stake their lives on it, they would have a hope of holding on even if three hundred million troops attacked.

Tianming used Yin Chen to make preparations as fast as possible after hearing about the Windheed Pavilion. Once he was finished, he activated the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb and rushed to the Fushen Clan with sixty million troops.

Why was the sun emperor targeting the Fushen Clan? First, perhaps because he thought it was an easier target than the Frostsoul Sea. And second, he must have wanted to fully gain the wargodeans' full

loyalty. The wargodeans were extremely fierce, and they were much stronger than totemancers of the same level. And the best way to win their hearts would be defeating the ninth-rank Fushen Clan, which would be even more effective than conquering all the second-rate sects that had abandoned their lands.

Furthermore, it would demoralize the hearts of the Myriad Solar Sects.

.....

Below the fiery clouds, a massive golden head flew past. Ahead of it was a mountain range that seemed like an immortal wonderland; however, it was currently on fire.

Many people in the Divine Sun Palace coldly looked at the scene.

"Thus, the Redsky Sword Sect, ranked twenty-fourth of the sects, has fallen," the emperor said, his tone flat. "Each of these second-rate sects are more stubborn than the last. They don't surrender, they burn down their sects, and even destroy the formation core of their protective formations."

"We didn't even need to do anything before they burned up the inheritance of their ancestors." Li Tianyi didn't quite get it. He felt it was wrong, disrespecting the seniors and an act of the weak!

It incited laughter from the celestial orderians.

"The place may be gone, but the people still live," the emperor mildly said, which ended the laughter.

They could all feel his displeasure. Clearly, these repeated lack of gains, with nothing to show but ruins, were worse to the emperor than the Windheed Pavilion, where he had destroyed a protective formation and killed everyone inside!

Why did they destroy the formations? Clearly, it was so that the celestial orderians wouldn't be able to take over their sects for use as bases in the war. If the celestial orderians lost later on, they would have nowhere to rest and recuperate. For the races of nova source worlds, protective formations were the true city walls! The destruction of the protective formations meant the enemy was taking over nothing of value.

Tianming didn't even need to instruct them. The sect masters decisively personally destroyed the 'city walls' that their ancestors had bled and sweated to build for their later generations.

Now, the emperor's fist had only struck empty air.

While the celestial orderians were celebrating taking over two-thirds of the Myriad Solar Sects' territory without any effort, the emperor's expression was turning chillier. There was no way he could be at peace without having wiped out such decisive enemies.

"On the bright side, while congregating at a few core locations makes those places hard to take, it creates a huge problem of resource insufficiency. The Myriadragon Mountains can't handle ten billion people. As long as we don't care about time, we can starve them out." The Warlord was very clear on the Myriad Solar Sects' resource situation.

The sun emperor turned to him. "How many years do you think that'll take?"

The Warlord didn't dare to look him straight in the eyes, so he kept his head down. "Ten years, and the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect, the Empyrean Sword Sect, will all collapse from internal conflict if they've lost all their territory."

The sun emperor laughed, "Makes sense. But what if you gave a universe-class genius who could become the first alliance leader in his twenties another ten years? Wouldn't he come for my head once he grows?"

Everyone present was stunned.

"I missed that, my apologies. That Li Tianming is a troublesome matter." The Warlord lowered his head. He had noticed the sun emperor's words.

A universe-class genius! Many people finally called the variable that was a decabane on the enemy side. Even the plot of the Divine Sun Palace hadn't beaten him!

"Yes, so we must be quick." The sun emperor flew up and patted the Warlord on the shoulder. He smiled and continued, "Brother, your strength is greater than anyone in the celestial orderians other than me. You're our second-strongest expert, and one of my right-hand men. Now I'm going to give your Wargod Hall a huge present!"

The Warlord hurriedly thanked him on his knees. He didn't need to look to know they were about to enter Fushen Clan territory. The wargodeans had coveted it for too long. This would be his huge present.

"Li Tianming has such good information sources, so he'll surely come. I'm sure this place will be easier to take than the Myriadragon Mountains, right?"

That made everyone's eyes shine.

Chapter 1810 - A Feint

When the Divine Sun Palace flew off from the ruined Windheed Pavilion, heading south towards Fushen Valley, the sixty million troops who were already familiar with entering the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb had also set off from Myriadragon Mountains.

The two astralships flew off in a race for time.

Fushen Valley was much closer to the Myriadragon Mountains and the Divine Sun Palace would have to travel ten times as far as the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb

Orderia had two massive valleys, the Wargod and Fushen Valleys. Through the conflicts that had spanned eras, the Fushen Clan had usually been stronger. It was only in recent years that the wargodeans had outranked them.

Now, three hundred million celestial orderians were headed south. The military force of the Myriad Solar Sects was also gathering at the first-rate sects. It would be a while before the two forces collided.

Before that, the face-off between the two astralship armies would decide the course of the war. Hence, the sixty million people inside the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb were very agitated now. Their core force was twenty million troops from the Ninedragon Army. The remaining forty million were mostly those who had willingly followed Tianming to the Land of Three Skies. They included cultivators from the

Azuresoul Palace and Supracloud Sanctuary. Those willing to cast aside safety and do battle were true heroes.

Even so, they couldn't remain calm when battle with the emperor, Divine Sun Palace, and sixty million troops were just around the corner.

Many were passionately looking at Tianming. War was far different from one-on-one battles; morale was half the deciding factor. Confident troops could tear through anything, while disconsolate troops would break apart at the slightest breeze. Hence, Tianming had taken on the role of a monarch, standing in front of the troops and looking at them with his calm, passion, and willpower. Some of the people there even had his Omniscient Threads, so they understood him the best.

"Everyone, we retreated from the Azurecloud Continent, then from the Land of Three Skies. Now, all the second-rate sects have also kept themselves safe. All of that was for the opportunity to give them a nasty counterattack! We're en route to Fushen Valley now. They have an apex protective formation there and over ten million brethren from the Fushen Clan. We also have over three hundred million gods to support the formation. Numbers and terrain are on our side, so if the enemy insists on seeking their deaths, we'll oblige them for our five million seniors who died at the Windhead Pavilion!" The strategic policy for the Myriad Solar Sects was that second-rate sects and below couldn't stop the Divine Sun Palace, but they would fight to the death if the celestial orderians attacked the first-rate sects!

"I've personally experienced two battles in this war. Whether at the Myriaddragon Mountains or Azuresoul Sword Mountain, what I learned was that neither the emperor nor the celestial orderians are undefeatable! That includes the Divine Sun Palace as well. In fact, when they lose, they lose more pathetically than anyone else!" Tianming's inspiring words brought the fighting spirit inside the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb to a boiling point. It wasn't brainwashing; instead, if everyone was braver, there would be less casualties when the battle came.

"Everyone here is my senior. I know that if I survive, I'll be a headache for the emperor and the hope of the Myriad Solar Sects. However, I'll still lead from the front today. I want to tell everyone that if we experts are scared and hide in a corner to watch as the celestial orderians kill our friends and families, invade our lands, and enslave our children, it wouldn't be a generation's tragedy, but an eternal tragedy!"

Everyone knew what the celestial orderians wanted. And that was enough. Everyone there was at least a constellier, and Tianming knew they were willing to bear their responsibility as an expert. Each and every person was responsible for the rise or fall of the Myriad Solar Sects.

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Tianming was still communicating with the other alliance leaders through Yin Chen. "The most troublesome thing now is that it is possible the Divine Sun Palace may change course from the Fushen Clan and attack the Emyrean Sword Sect, Frostsoul Imperium, or even the Group of Celestial Maiden Halls."

The sun emperor might be making a feint, and the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb's inability to clash head-on with the Divine Sun Palace was a huge restriction.

“The Empyrean Sword Sect and Shenwu Dynasty have stronger formations. We have over five hundred million gods supporting them now. Even though many second-rate sects haven’t completed their migration, we can still endure for a while if the Divine Sun Palace attacks. It shouldn’t be a problem not getting reinforcements for a while,” the Northdipper Swordsage said.

“Yes, we can,” Ninesun Martial Lord agreed. Their main support was the sheer number of ordinary gods. After seeing how the Windheed Pavilion’s formation had held up, they had a better gauge now. The second-rate sects continued boosting them as well, so they were getting stronger and stronger.

So the ones who need reinforcement are the Fushen Clan, Frostsoul Imperium, and the Group of Celestial Maiden Halls, Tianming thought. However, he could only bring sixty million reinforcements. If he gave each sect twenty million, each sect would have about thirty million defenders after adding in their own elites. However, they would still be at a disadvantage if the sun emperor attacked any of them. The Myriaddragon Mountains could also suffer an attack, so Tianming couldn’t move the reinforcements there.

In this competition of astralships, the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb was worse at seizing time and would also be in danger if it met the Divine Sun Palace.

“The emperor is sly. He may really be making a feint. If you bring all sixty million to the Fushen Clan, he won’t go there,” Long Wanying warned.

Yin Chen’s latest report was that the Divine Sun Palace was still headed to Fushen Valley. It was still far away, but time was tight for Tianming to make contingencies.

“Then, let’s do this!” Yan Lingxian sighed.