

The Ages 1831

Chapter 1831 - Duel of the Astralships

Tianming's other method of escape would have been to mix in with the rest of the fleeing army. He may not have been discovered then, but he would have to control the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb from a distance, which might cause him to lose it. Long-distance control would have been possible, but risky. Astralships needed an astralship core inside them to perform complex maneuvers. For example, the wheel formation in his hand. He felt like the tomb had become very heavy, and it kept vibrating inside from all the collisions with totemic calamities and abilities.

Many were using weapons forged from premier divine ores to attack the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, peeling off its bricks. Tianming couldn't control the defensive formation of the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb; when its structure was destroyed, even the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb would become scrap!

"Thank goodness I didn't let the army in or we'd have been one big target." Even Tianming had gotten injured from the impacts, so others would have fared worse. Tianming was the only one inside the tomb, which meant he was the only one who could save himself.

Over ten million people had switched targets from the Ninedragon Army to the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb. Lifebound beasts rammed it while totems slashed at it.

The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb's shaking grew even worse.

Tianming was getting anxious. He madly spun the wheel, pushing it to the maximum. The saplings in the tomb used their maximum power to give the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb horsepower, the tomb spinning faster as Tianming continued spinning the wheel. It was almost like Lan Huang's Primordial Wheel.

The sharp and irregular Ninedragon Imperial Tomb was dangerous. Even Tianming was almost thrown around inside. As for the lifebound beasts and totems trying to stick to it, some were flung away while the unlucky ones went splat.

"What mad driving skills." Ying Huo had a few bumps on its head from knocking into things.

"Quiet." The danger wasn't over yet. Tianming had thrown off the unwanted passengers with great difficulty. He hurriedly stopped the wheel, the inertia nearly breaking his arms.

Now released from its shackles, the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb shot into the sky. "Are we going to make it?"

As long as the tomb used its speed, those on the ground wouldn't be able to catch up. Just as the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb reached the sky, light illuminated its interior. It was the Divine Sun Palace!

The two astralships had finally met.

"Fuck!" Tianming hurriedly spun the wheel, swinging the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb to the side. Even then, it wasn't enough to avoid the incoming Divine Wrath.

A pillar of fire smashed into the tomb's tail, creating a charred crater while the massive force slammed the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb into the ground, its landing spot coincidentally where many Blueblood Starocean cultivators were. The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb had even been accelerated by the Divine

Wrath, causing it to strike the earth like thousands of mountains, instantly reducing the cultivators to bloody paste.

When immortals fought, mortals suffered!

The Deluge Emperor felt pained at the sight, but he quickly recovered. “Press on, don’t let it fly away! Then go inside and seize Li Tianming!” Li Tianming was definitely inside, given the complex movements of the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb.

“If we take down Li Tianming and the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb today, it’ll be the end days of the Myriad Solar Sects no matter how many losses we take!” The Deluge Emperor knew the sun emperor’s thoughts. The Blueblood Starocean cultivators hadn’t given their best inside the formation just now out of self-preservation. Now was the best opportunity to give their best. They could reap great gains at little cost; it would be of great merit if they helped the sovereign capture Tianming.

Everyone knew that defeating Tianming was the same as taking down half of the Myriad Solar Sects!

The remaining Divine Palace Army roared and charged forward. At the same time, the Divine Sun Palace above blocked off the airspace while charging another small-scale Divine Wrath. It was ten times weaker than the attacks on the Nonacrypt Fushen Formation, but it could still damage the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb. Honestly, Tianming wouldn’t have dared to try to keep the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb if the Divine Sun Palace’s power hadn’t been exhausted to such an extent.

Tianming was dizzy after the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb had crashed into and flattened multiple mountains, but he hurriedly stood up for the sake of survival.

“Don’t panic, it’s like driving a horse carriage!” Ying Huo shouted.

“Stay strong, Little Li! Xian Xian doesn’t want to fall into the hands of that pervert!”

Tianming’s lifebound beasts were just as anxious as him. Only Meow Meow felt sleepy. It took advantage of no one having the attention to spare to slide itself into a nook so it wouldn’t be thrown around before entering the world of dreams...

“It’s just driving! Of course I have the skills!” Now was the time when Tianming had to act a little crazy to get out of this situation. Of course, being crazy didn’t mean losing a cool head.

He flew the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb up again, pursuers hot on his tail. Abilities and totemic calamities struck the tomb’s tail, while the Divine Sun Palace above was preparing another Divine Wrath.

“Come!” Tianming’s face was red from exertion. Controlling an astralship was another form of combat, one that tested a man’s control. It was honestly a form of joy.

Tianming was suddenly inspired. He turned his ship around and aimed for the army chasing him. The crowd was even more dense than the fleeing Imperial Tomb Army.

“Come on! Shoot us!” Ying Huo shouted.

Tianming kept an eye on the sky as his heart pounded—he was gambling with his life. He had already calculated the timing of the Divine Sun Palace. “Three, two, one!” He shut his eyes and decelerated,

braking and abruptly turning the wheel. The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb lost control, falling to the ground and carving out another path of blood.

While it looked pathetic, he had dodged another Divine Wrath! The Divine Wrath landed in front of the tomb, right where ten million Divine Palace Army soldiers were.

The sun emperor was truly vicious. He hadn't hesitated, despite knowing there was a high risk of friendly fire. The Divine Wrath fell on the crowd, instantly creating a sea of fire on the ground!

Miserable wails rang out. They included the wail of the Deluge Emperor. Even an expert like him had been reduced to a pathetic state after taking the hit, let alone others.

Seeing their comrades turned to ash by the Divine Sun Palace stunned many of the soldiers and a deathly silence fell over the ruined battlefield.

Chapter 1832 - Why Cry?

"Haha!" Carefree laughter rang through the tomb.

"Moron! The Nonacrypt Fushen Formation can't move, but I can! And you think you can accurately hit me?" The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb didn't have to stay still and keep taking hits. The time Sovereign Starfeather had attacked the Primary Sphere with the Kilostar Capital, it had dodged many times.

Time was tight, so Tianming had no time to care about what the people inside the Divine Sun Palace thought. He hurriedly flew the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb into the sky again. After being roasted by the Divine Sun Palace, the Divine Palace Army had been scared out of their wits. Not even the Deluge Emperor dared to order them to give chase.

As expected, the next phase was the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb fleeing while the Divine Sun Palace gave pursuit. The only good news for Tianming was that the Divine Sun Palace's attack power should be near the minimum. As long as he could dodge, he was home free.

"Come on, shoot! Let's see how many more times you can!" Ying Huo arrogantly shouted at the Divine Sun Palace. It had clearly been won over by Tianming's driving skills.

Unobstructed now, the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb kept accelerating. Once he got back to the Myriadragon Mountains, the sun emperor wouldn't be able to do anything to him.

Tianming's guess had most likely been correct; the Divine Sun Palace had likely used up its miniature nova source. After the last Divine Wrath, the Divine Sun Palace no longer attacked. Perhaps if it attacked once or twice more, it wouldn't even be able to get off the ground.

"I guessed right." Tianming looked back. The Divine Sun Palace was still hot on his heels, but it didn't attack anymore. As long as it didn't attack, the sun emperor couldn't do anything even if he rammed the Divine Sun Palace into the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb.

The situation had been perfectly overturned!

From his perspective, the Myriad Solar Sects had won this round. Just as he began slightly relaxing, Ying Huo suddenly stiffened. "Hey, you may want to look back."

“What?” Tianming looked back while driving, only to see that the Divine Sun Palace was slightly faster than the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb and gaining on it. The golden head was covered with flames, its eyes glowing and its dragon-shaped wings flying about wildly. It was the very image of anger.

Its mouth opened. That was usually a signal for an incoming Divine Wrath. However, energy didn't gather inside this time. Instead, someone was standing there!

Tianming's body shook at that moment, his hair standing on end. It was a muscular man with long crimson hair. He stood amidst flames, his long hair fluttering. He was smiling at Tianming, his gaze warm. He was even waving to him.

“Godfather!” The main reason Tianming had rushed back to Orderia was his concern about Li Wudi. The man had provided great help to Tianming during his growth, but had somehow become an 'experiment' after coming to Orderia. He had been imprisoned by the sun emperor, his freedom and dignity lost.

Li Wudi had definitely rendered great services when he stole the Solar Wheel the last time. If he hadn't, the Myriad Solar Sects wouldn't have had these two or three years and the Nonacrypt Fushen Formation wouldn't have been able to withstand a few true Divine Wraths. He was also the father Li Qingyu yearned for.

Tianming had assumed he wouldn't be seeing him until he killed the sun emperor. Hence, the shock of seeing him was great.

The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb decelerated. The Divine Sun Palace didn't ram it, instead decelerating as well. The two massive astralships parked in the sky, and Tianming turned the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb around to face the giant golden head.

The world around them seemed to fall silent, but Tianming's heart was pounding in his chest; Li Wudi's smile and warmth gave him a strange feeling.

Tianming appeared in the black dragon's head. He could communicate with Li Wudi through the dragon's eyes, and the other side could see him as well.

“Tianming my son, I hope you've been well.” Li Wudi gave a carefree smile before shaking his head, seemingly full of emotion.

“Godfather,” Tianming hoarsely said.

“Yes.” Li Wudi nodded in acknowledgment before shaking his head and laughing bitterly. “Why'd you return? You're still so disobedient. You could've brought Qingyu along to wander high-level nova source worlds. That's the future for you two. But now you've made this painful for the both of us.”

“What do you mean, godfather? I don't understand.” Tianming wanted to say that he had returned to save him, but he wasn't able to say it, as grief filled him at that moment.

“You still don't.” Li Wudi shook his head. “You should with your intelligence.”

“On this matter, I'm a bit foolish. Please enlighten me, godfather,” Tianming said.

Li Wudi nodded. He exhaled and began, “From the very start, I was the same person as the other me. We merely grew up in different places. Your godfather is a piece of flesh and blood I split off. Hence,

Qingyu is my flesh and blood daughter. She inherited my most perfect bloodline. How else would an octabane or nonabane appear in a deserted place? The 'experiment' was just a guess I had before awakening my memories. But now I'm no longer confused. I'm the sun emperor and the sun emperor is me. Throughout all the heliacal-class worlds of the astralscape, the sun may be in a small corner, but I'm the strongest king of a heliacal-class world." His last sentence finally had the arrogance of the one who had called himself the 'number one genius' of the Grand-Orient Realm before. That smugness and arrogance was very similar to the old him.

However, Tianming shook his head bitterly as well after hearing him. "You're messing with me, godfather."

"How so? I know you must have doubts in your heart. This exceeds your imagination and it's difficult for you to accept. Facts are facts. Do you know the name of the first ancestor of the celestial orderians who was also a nonabane like me?" Li Wudi asked.

"Please tell me," Tianming said.

"His name was Li Shenxiao," Li Wudi said. That name was the same as the name of the Li Saint Clan's first ancestor.

There were some connections in there that were filled with mysteries. Tianming went quiet. "Seems interesting. But let me ask something. If that's true, why'd you steal the Solar Wheel for me years back and make me run away?"

"That's simple—it's because I understand you all too well. You're a person that values kindness. You joined the Myriad Solar Sects after coming to Orderia and stood opposite of me. You definitely wouldn't approve of me uniting the sun and causing casualties, so I had to come up with a way to let you and Qingyu safely leave. However, I underestimated your growth rate. If you'd come back a few months later, you would've returned to a united and prosperous world. Even the experience in the Grand-Orient Realm tells me that once everyone is united, the sun will reach its peak in history and no longer fear the law of the jungle of the astralscape.

"Tianming, I don't mind telling you that the Skywolf Star is already eyeing Orderia. Their nova source is already moving in our direction. If they arrive before the sun is unified and the astralguard formations haven't been controlled, all the people on the sun will become slaves and millions of years of glory will end! Unification must be accompanied by blood. There'll be resistance. I don't want children to witness this, but I have no regrets for the sun's future. You must've witnessed the tragedy of destroyed stars after wandering the astralscape. This is the path I must take for survival and the future."

Li Wudi spoke until Tianming was crying. He had seen a dead sun before. It was desolate. Nothing lived there, not even grass. He wouldn't be able to accept it if the sun became a dead star. But that wasn't the reason for his tears.

"Child, why do you cry?" Li Wudi asked.

Tianming's tears carried an absolute grudge within them. He glared at the man he had once recognized as his godfather and said to him in a resolute voice, "You pilfered his memories. No matter how you try copying him, your acting skills as a high and lofty sovereign are very clumsy. Maybe your words today have truth inside. However, you are not him, no matter how much you try."

He wiped away his tears and deeply inhaled—men didn't cry. However, from the moment he had first laid eyes on him, he knew that the godfather he loved and respected no longer existed.

His younger sister would also never see her beloved father ever again.

Chapter 1833 - He's The Madman

Some things couldn't be accomplished even if one tried their best. Tianming had already returned from Violetglory at the greatest speed possible. If he had returned earlier, he wouldn't have had such huge growth and been capable of resisting the sun emperor.

Now, they could technically speak, but perhaps it was too late already. A person he was once familiar with stood in front of him, but felt like a stranger. Could the Li Wudi he respected still return? Tianming didn't see any hope for now at least. The man before him was perfect and flawless. And that perfection was exactly why there was no space left for Li Wudi.

Li Wudi was very calm before Tianming's interrogation. He smiled and said, "You're still too young, so you don't understand. Many things in this world are constantly changing. There are no absolutes. I'll definitely be different from the past me. Perhaps that makes me feel foreign to you, but you can't deny that, from start to finish, I'm the same person, Li Wudi. I was your godfather in the past, I am now, and I will be in the future until the end of time. At the same time, I'm the sun emperor, responsible for all life on this world. And especially my celestial orderians."

"Haha, is this very fun?" Tianming coldly laughed.

"It isn't. I'm not joking or messing around with you. It's up to you whether you believe me or not. But time will give you your answer. One day, you'll understand me. I'm not a madman. The blonde 'clone' inside is the madman," Li Wudi said.

Tianming's mind was thrown into chaos. The blonde 'clone' inside? What did that mean? Who was the real sun emperor?

"If he's the madman, then kill him?" Tianming said.

"No. He's also your godfather, and my other half. Killing him is the same as killing me. If he's gone, everything of the sun emperor will transfer to me. In the end, I'll be a madman too."

At that moment, Tianming nearly believed him. Perhaps that was the opponent's tactic, so he quickly quashed the notion. "Whatever. There's nothing more to discuss. No matter who you are or who you represent, a blood grudge exists between us. If my godfather's no longer around, I'll fight you to the bitter end. In the future, you'll regret missing out on your last chance to handle me today."

Tianming was right in front of him, but the Divine Sun Palace unfortunately had no ability to pursue or attack. Tianming was also fully on guard and prepared to fly the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb away at any moment.

Li Wudi's response to Tianming's determination was to laugh unrestrainedly. It was the exact same manner as the godfather in Tianming's heart.

After laughing, he sighed, "I won't. As long as I'm still on the sun, you'll never die. Otherwise, wouldn't I have used the people of Flameyellow to threaten you, Tianming?"

Tianming's heart skipped a beat. The sun emperor had Li Wudi's memories and knew Tianming's weak point? That was a fatal weakness that Sovereign Xi had used before! Tianming had been plunged into dire straits when she sent down a hundred thousand of the divine lunarians. "You're using their lives to threaten me?" He felt a raging fury.

The red-haired man shook his head with a smile. "I won't. Time will prove everything and remove all your misunderstandings."

Whether or not it was a threat, if an exalted personage like the sun emperor used the same despicable method as Sovereign Xi, it would pose an intractable problem for Tianming.

"No matter what you say, I'll stop your invasion of the Myriad Solar Sects! I will block you no matter where you attack, until your celestial orderian army is crippled. The territory and homelands of the myriad sects will be personally seized back by me, too," Tianming said in a low voice.

"Fine, bring it! Godfather doesn't think there's anything wrong with your perspective. No matter who wins between us, there'll only be one ruler of the sun. That'll be very important when we resist Skywolf. You already have the qualifications now. Furthermore, you can represent the Sky Palace to get the authority over their half of the astralguard formation and fusion formation."

"What's that mean?" Tianming frowned.

"Go get an explanation from them," Li Wudi said.

"Are you bullshitting when you talk about Skywolf?" Tianming coldly laughed.

"I'm not. Time will give you your answer." That was the third time he had said that.

Tianming was in an astralship. His Ninedragon Imperial Tomb could produce a star map at any time. He quickly changed the wheel formation into one.

When I last looked at the star map, I already noticed that Orderia was even closer to Skywolf than Violetglory.... Tianming hadn't looked at the map for quite some time, but he knew from the experience with the Divine Moon Realm that nova source could move. However, high-speed movement had terrifying consumption. Every 'pursuit' would burn up more than a hundred thousand years of nova source, even if the distance wasn't long.

So, were the Skywolf Stars moving? Tianming checked and found that, compared to the last time he had looked, the distance between Orderia and Skywolf had shrunk by twenty-five percent! That was a clear change.

"That means the sun emperor is likely telling the truth. Skywolf is coming!" His heart chilled. The invasion was imminent. Furthermore, those wolves of the universe, the Skywolf Stars, had found this blazing planet in the midst of the dark forest that was the astralscape!

His heart was thrown into chaos. He looked at the man. He had the Divine Sun Palace. Did it have a star map? Could he see the position of Skywolf?

Tianming didn't trust him! Hence, he tested him by asking, "You say that Skywolf's invasion is imminent, so do you know their location and when they're coming?"

"I don't."

"Then why do you claim so?"

"I already took down the Voidword Shrine. They burned their royal blood to summon Skywolf. They succeeded, though they've all died already," Li Wudi said.

"Impossible!" Through Yin Chen, Tianming found that Voidword Shrine was still doing fine. Only a few dozen odd core members had vanished into a secret formation and hadn't shown themselves for a while.

"It's the actions of only a few. No matter how many eyes you have, you can't see everything," Li Wudi said. "You think the Voidword Shrine is the problem, but they aren't. The real problem is the Sky Palace. It's been infiltrated. If they didn't help, how could some Voidword Shrine have the chance to mess around under my watch? They did so many things during the forty years I was sleeping..."

The Sky Palace again? Tianming was even more confused. This was supposed to just be a celestial orderian invasion, so why was it getting so complicated? He wanted more intel, so his mind moved as he planned to ask more.

Suddenly, a man whose body blazed with golden flames appeared next to the man with blood-colored hair.

Chapter 1834 - The Sky Palace's Strangeness

This was Tianming's impression of the sun emperor: golden-haired, vicious, strange, and sinister.

As soon as he appeared, the red-haired sovereign shut up.

"Li Tianming, you can try stopping what's coming. However, standing against history and the survival of all life on Orderia will only have one outcome—losing!" the blonde sun emperor coldly and imposingly said. And what did it mean when the golden-haired one appeared and the red-haired one no longer spoke?

Tianming couldn't understand it and laughed, "Don't make your crazy invasion sound so righteous. You're all just greedy, arrogant, and psychopathic sinners. If you really wanted to resist Skywolf, the best option would've just been asking for an alliance. The Myriad Solar Sects aren't idiots. Who'd start an internal conflict right before fighting an outside invader?"

"The will of the Myriad Solar Sects is decided by the will of the Sky Palace, which is sick to the core. Thus, so are the myriad sects. Only aggressive treatment can remove the rot and make the sun whole." Flames of righteousness seemed to burn in the sovereign's eyes.

"Are you joking? What can those old fogies in the Sky Palace do? How can they decide the will of the myriad sects? We decide our own will," Tianming said.

The golden-haired sovereign laughed. As for red-haired, he had been quiet ever since the newcomer arrived, as if he was locked in place.

“You’re a disciple of the Sky Palace and carry their stigma. When you have the chance, go in and you’ll understand everything. You may think they are only a symbol, but they hold the lifeline of the myriad sects!”

Tianming didn’t know if the two bodies were cooperating to hoodwink him. The waters were growing more and more muddied.

“Opposing all life on the sun will only lead to death. I advise you to think this over very carefully. Otherwise I’ll end you even if you’re my godson!” As he spoke, he placed his arm over the red-haired sovereign’s shoulder. The two faces, one tyrannical and the other cold, had a heavy visual impact when placed so close together.

Then they turned around together and stepped into the Divine Sun Palace, which turned north.

“All protective formations of the Myriad Solar Sects must be broken within one month, no matter how many people die. All territory must be administered by my celestial orderians. If the Myriad Solar Sects are wise enough to surrender, fewer will die on both sides. But if they resist, everything will burn to ash so that the sun may shine forever more.” No matter how nicely he put it, his last sentence was filled with a vicious will.

It was right to call him a madman. But Tianming refused to believe he was a clone. ‘Li Wudi’ had become inert like a puppet when the golden-haired sovereign had arrived. It was clear which was the true body and which was the clone.

The Divine Sun Palace’s flames ignited with a roar as it headed north. It was clearly headed back to replenish its nova source.

If he wanted to hoodwink me, he shouldn’t have contradicted himself. Why would he use the Solar Wheel to trick me away? If that were still around, he’d have an easier time attacking the myriad sects’ formations. He wouldn’t need so much effort. From that point alone, the red-haired sovereign’s words were all bullshit from the start. Even so, the entire conversation had given Tianming a headache. He didn’t know where the truth began and ended, or where the lies were.

If Red-hair really was so compassionate, why’d he speak so vaguely? Why didn’t he just tell me the entire truth, including the secrets of the Sky Palace? Wouldn’t things have been easier to resolve? Regardless, there’s something off about them. However, will I fall into the sun emperor’s plot if I just rashly go in and cause the extermination of the myriad sects? The sovereign had posed a question and told Tianming to go in and see. What if he couldn’t come out afterward?

He asked Ying Huo and the rest for their thoughts. In the end, each was more stunned than the last as they stared at Tianming with wide eyes.

“We’ll discuss this with Aunt Ying when we get back, and see if we can find something through discussion.” The matter was too critical. In the short term, Tianming wasn’t able to discuss it with people outside of the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect.

The Divine Sun Palace went back to replenish its nova source and there’s three hundred million celestial orderians moving south. When they reach the south pole, the decisive battle will still happen based on the sun emperor’s current will. His target is to remove all the protective formations, so he doesn’t care

about the resultant loss in life. Regardless, the Myriad Solar Sects wouldn't be willing to give up their protective formations.

The Fushen Clan had given up, but they could lay low for now and wait for the chance to rebuild their home after the celestial orderians were toppled. But if the final Xuanyuan Dragon Sect lost their formation, the world would be defeated. The beastmasters who had lost their homes would have nowhere to go and could only wait for death.

"Everything he said today could be a trap. I can't follow his thinking. However, the information about Skywolf is definitely true!" Tianming had found new worries. "I... fuck!" When it rained, it poured.

"The Voidword Shrine summoned Skywolf and the Sky Palace protected the Voidword Shrine. The sovereign said the Sky Palace isn't simple and holds the lifeline of the myriad sects. Do the Saintdragon Emperor and the rest know they hold it?"

The area outside Fushen Valley was filled with fleeing people. As for the ten million or so that were left of the Divine Palace Army, they had been abandoned at Fushen Valley. They no longer had the strength to pursue and they hadn't received the next instructions from the sun emperor, so the Deluge Emperor could only have everyone stay there.

The Divine Sun Palace had left and Yin Chen could track its location. Hence, Tianming landed the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb and got the Imperial Tomb Army to come over.

The massive Ninedragon Imperial Tomb was a clear signal. After two hours, he'd made the rounds and had collected about thirty million of the Imperial Tomb Army, along with several tens of millions of the Fushen Clan.

"Let's return to the Myriaddragon Mountains first." The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb flew off.

Tianming should have been able to relax. Although the formation had been broken, they'd been able to give the Divine Palace Army heavy casualties and also preserve many lives. However, the three hundred million celestial orderians were still approaching and the sovereign's last words kept echoing in Tianming's mind.

He predicted that the final, decisive battle would happen within the month. It would definitely be very tragic. However, the problem was... the Voidword Shrine, Dreamless Celestial Nation, Sky Palace, the sovereign.... How many more secrets did he not know? And most importantly, could his godfather 'Li Wudi' still return?

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Tianming was almost back at the Myriaddragon Mountains, but he didn't know what to tell Qingyu. He actually still had some hopes for Li Wudi, that red-haired sovereign. However, for the golden-haired sovereign, he only had absolute hate!

That madman walked a path of destruction that cost the world. He didn't just not care about the lives of the Myriad Solar Sects, he also didn't even so much as frown over the heavy losses of the Divine Palace Army.

“When so many of the celestial orderians die, who’ll be left to fight Skywolf when it comes? The ones who truly harmed the sun will be you!”

Those who couldn’t be understood by others were known as madmen.

Chapter 1835 - Hidden Undercurrents

The astralscape above was vast and boundless. Past the flaming clouds, one could look at the countless stars that shone and ceaselessly changed. Yet the astralscape in view of Orderia wasn't static. There was a single star approaching it.

The astralscape's nature was one that necessitated a fight for survival between the worlds. The astralscape itself was like a dark forest, while the stars were like lifeforms within. The forest also had trees, boulders, and many other obstacles or hiding places, like valleys or crevices. In essence, while it looked like there was nothing in the cosmic aether but the dark void, many complex structures were actually hidden beyond. For instance, there were places with distorted space, astral abysses, astralcrypts, and even pathways to different dimensions. Word was that cosmic wildbeasts also roamed in the space between the stars, waiting for new worlds to form so they could claim them as their own.

Even with a divine astralship, traversing the cosmic aether was a dangerous affair. Tianming's voyage between the sun and Violetglory was like sailing between two nearby islands without truly reaching the wider sea. That was why he hadn't met any of the hunters in the dark forest so far. Despite the shining stars, it didn't change the fact that the astralscape was a place filled with darkness. As such, it would usually be too late by the time prey discovered the approach of the many hunters within the dark forest, much like sheep on flat plains being hunted by wolves.

A low, rhythmic hum was spreading through a zone in the astralscape. It sounded like a low growl of hunger from some kind of beast. There was a large shadow zone above Orderia that resembled a dark vortex. Any starlight that passed through that zone would be scrambled and swallowed up. As such, there were many lunar outposts under that zone with their miniature fusion formations. Like the Divine Moon Realm, the outposts were populated by their own races, similar to the divine lunarians. To them, Orderia was a far and distant place that almost seemed dreamlike.

However, they didn't really feel any sense of insecurity, as the shadow zone above them was far too large. Legend said that there was no end to it. Those who tried flying in without divine astralships would disappear forever, never to return. It was said that the shadow zone was a huge rock that blocked out the light of the sun, preventing it from being spotted by hunters in the cosmic aether, but in fact, that only created a terrifying problem: if hunters were ever to spot Orderia, their approach would also be obscured by the shadow zone. It would be too late by the time the prey felt the saliva of the hunters dripping down from above.

Currently, a majestic sight could be seen above the shadow zone. A brilliant light came shining from deep within, accompanied by the howls of countless beasts. Two white stars seemed to crawl out of the shadow zone. They were two white nova source worlds, so white that they seemed to oscillate between pale bone and brilliant radiance. One of the stars was larger than the other. They kept moving as they orbited each other, seemingly around a central axis. The orbit seemed to increase their velocity. On the surface of the stars, one would see a large wolf head that shone brightly in the darkness. It seemed to be staring at the shadow zone beneath it.

Countless howls came from both stars. The many denizens of the two worlds had bared their fangs in anticipation. They were completely unlike Orderia or Violetglory, the former a vigorous and radiant world that resembled a hot-blooded youth and the latter a mysterious and elegant noblewoman. The two white stars that had emerged from the shadow zone seemed cold, sinister, and bloodthirsty.

Seeing them was a disastrous omen. They were hunters that killed their prey without mercy. They reached the area above the shadow zone and continued descending. It seemed like it would take quite some time for the large binary system to pass through the debris-filled shadow zone, yet its collision with the sun seemed imminent. Waves could be seen in the seas of flame and bone on both stars. All of a sudden, two flashes of darkness emerged with a velocity ten times that of the stars, charging into the shadow zone. They vaguely looked like two white wolves, but in fact, they were divine astralships.

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The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb landed at the Myriaddragon Mountains. While the Nonacrypt Fushen Formation had been destroyed in battle, Tianming and his troops had managed to eliminate more than forty million enemies. Word of that had been sent back to the Myriad Solar Sects. In the eyes of their allies and enemies, it was a victory that was comparable to the battle of the Myriaddragon Mountains, with about the same number of enemies vanquished.

Even more crucially, the Myriad Solar Sects had managed to face off against the Divine Sun Palace's might even without a miracle like the ancient dragon imperials from the Primodragon Cave, obtaining victory with their own power. In fact, the likes of Li Tianyi, Li Mumu, Situ Yin, the Tumulus Pill God, and the Goldring Warlord had all been killed in the battle. Tianming had also managed to escape with the ship despite the sun emperor's pursuit, making him the biggest hero among them. During the battle of the Myriaddragon Mountains, he wasn't the main character, but this time he definitely was.

Word of their amazing performance had renewed the hopes of the cultivators that had to abandon their homes. Their spirits were at an all-time high, giving their morale a much needed boost. While the Fushens didn't feel like they had won, it was a huge victory for the alliance as a whole and some much-needed encouragement for the upcoming fight to retake their homes.

It was also a huge victory in Tianming's books. First, the number of Omniscient Threads he had had grown to nearly a hundred million during the battle. When he thought that the growth had peaked, the spread of news through transmission stones and word of mouth had increased the number to more than a billion, comparable to the number he'd had in Violetglory. They had deified Tianming, which in turn generated even more Omniscient Will for him to use, even though many of them hadn't been there to witness the battle themselves. Many of them weren't even gods, so the energy they generated wasn't that powerful, but they had large volumes of it to boast of and that number was still increasing even now, pushing his combat ability nearer to that of the sun emperor more and more.

His Imperial Will seemed to be growing just as quickly, allowing Tianming's cultivation level to reach the fourth level of the Solar stage. His own cultivation was still important, after all, even with the Omniscient Threads. Yet still, he couldn't quite bring himself to relish in the joy. The Sky Palace, the sun emperor, and Skywolf Star were completely overwhelming to learn about. Where would he start? It seemed like a deep new mystery lay before him.

Chapter 1836 - Solar Core

When Tianming emerged from the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, he could feel something different about the Myriaddragon Mountains. It wasn't just the increased number of people—in everyone's eyes, he could see the desire for and confidence in victory and a burning hot fighting spirit, and all of that had stemmed from the deified Tianming. Word of the celestial orderians running out of steam was spreading, and Tianming felt like he had back in Violetglory. The more people's hopes that he carried, the more pressure he was under.

The benefits to that was that he could grow so much stronger—to the point of being able to deal with the sun emperor—but there were also disadvantages. Should he fail, the Myriad Solar Sects as a whole would collapse. He had become their single point of failure. The tyranny of the sun emperor and the mystery behind Li Wudi's current status, as well as the incoming disaster that was the Skywolf Star, had all combined, putting him under huge pressure. He took a deep breath and returned their hopeful gazes. He decided to keep his worries to himself and smiled as he addressed the people.

"Fushen Valley was just the beginning. As long as we stick together, we will definitely emerge victorious!"

"Yeah!"

His words had reassured everyone. Tianming had earned his place as their leader with his staggering achievement, and even the likes of the Northdipper Swordsage would listen to his orders. Fushen Gongyi had also come to the Myriaddragon Mountains and would be commanding his troops according to Tianming's orders.

After addressing them, Tianming returned to Great Saintdragon Peak, where the Saintdragon Emperor and Long Wanying awaited him. Nobody else was there, and the two of them seemed quite relieved as well.

Long Wanying hurriedly stepped forward with concern. "Are you alright? Did you get hurt?"

"No."

"Then why do you look so down? Is it because we lost a lot of people at Fushen Valley?" she asked. It was thanks to the sacrifices of the fallen that the victory had been possible, yet even the survivors wouldn't be celebrating. It would be disrespectful to their sacrifice.

Looking at the two seniors, Tianming decided to share the burden of the foreboding news with them. "When I was leaving, the sun emperor told me some things that created a lot of doubts."

"No worries, let's talk about it. I know how much pressure you're under. It'll be fine." She had him sit down and made him some tea. The leaves were sourced from among the best divine herbs with amazing properties that promoted wakefulness. They were Long Wanying's favorite.

"The first matter concerns my godfather, Li Wudi." Tianming's origins from the chaos skyjail of the Flameyellow Continent were no longer a secret to Long Wanying and the rest. She had also been made aware of the so-called 'experiment' and knew how important Li Wudi was to Tianming.

"Aunt Ying, do you think he's still alive?" Tianming asked.

Long Wanying and the Saintdragon Emperor exchanged glances before she said, "Based on your description, it sounds like the Li Wudi from back then is still present in some capacity. But we aren't really sure about how these split identities work. That aside, I'm more curious about what he said about there being too many things that happened during his forty-odd years of slumber. Were those his exact words?"

"Yeah."

"As far as I'm aware, there was a time spanning ten years starting fifty or so years ago when the sun emperor didn't appear in public at all. What could he have been up to?" The normal assumption would be that he had left Orderia, but now it seemed that he had been busy doing something else.

"Either way, you're likely correct that he's lying about helping you by letting the Solar Wheel get stolen. It contradicts how he's been attacking the Myriad Solar Sects," the Saintdragon Emperor said.

"That isn't certain, either. Perhaps the current Li Wudi has changed since the last time they met. Back then, it seemed like he wanted all of you to be safe," Long Wanying said.

"Perhaps. Does that mean the godfather I knew won't ever come back again?" Tianming asked.

"Let's not jump to conclusions. Perhaps there's still hope. If only we could talk to this red-haired sun emperor to get more information."

Though Tianming had wanted to talk more, the red-haired sun emperor had been brought away at the end. "Alright, I'll keep hoping and push aside my grief for now." He took a deep breath and addressed the two seniors once more. "I still have a doubt and a nightmare to share."

Hearing 'nightmare', their expressions changed. They tried forcing a smile—if Tianming thought it was a nightmare, they knew it would be bad.

"Then, let's clear your doubts first," Long Wanying said.

"Alright. It concerns the Sky Palace...." He told them what the sun emperor had told him. "How do they control the lifeline of the Myriad Solar Sects?"

"Through the fusion formation," Long Wanying said after a pause. "The sun's fusion and astralguard formations are both controlled by a formation core, known as the solar core. It's split into two halves, one in the hands of the celestial orderians and the other in the Voidsky Realm. The latter falls under the Sky Palace's control. They can adjust the distribution of nova source using the formation. If sects go against the Sky Palace, they can stop the nova source from flowing out. That way, they have control over our lifelines."

"I see...." That wasn't too far off from Tianming's imagination. However, he had wanted to think that it couldn't be that ridiculous. If the Sky Palace controlled the nova source, they could choke them out at any time. It was no wonder the factions listened to what they had to say. "Couldn't the sun emperor just bust his way into the Sky Palace, rough up the old folks there, and take their half of the solar core? Wouldn't he be able to control the Myriad Solar Sects that way?"

"Well, he probably can in his dreams. Though, if it were that easy, the Sky Palace wouldn't have been controlling half of the solar core for so long. The sun emperor and celestial orderians aren't able to do

much about it because the Sky Palace is protected by the strongest formation in Orderia, second only to the astralguard formation. It's known as the Sky Palace Formation, a grade-nine divine formation. While it's small, covering less than a hundredth of the area covered by the Aeonidragon Formation, it's incredibly potent. Smaller defensive formations are the hardest to break through.

"The Sky Palace Formation, in particular, is like an extension of the sun's fusion formation. Even the complete Divine Sun Palace wouldn't be able to break through. In other words, as long as Sky Palace chooses to turtle up and hide away, nobody would be able to do anything to them. For instance, they're able to completely ignore what's happening to us during this crisis." Long Wanying helplessly shook her head.

Chapter 1837 - Sky Palace Formation

By now, everyone in the Myriad Solar Sects felt disdain for the Sky Palace. They had placed their faith in the institution, only for them to turtle up like cowards. Instead, they turned their hopes toward Tianming instead.

"Sky Palace Formation?" Grade-nine divine formations were probably the strongest ones available, second only to astralguard and fusion formations. Even the Aeonidragon Formation was only considered a grade-eight formation, showing how powerful the smaller Sky Palace Formation was. It was no wonder Yin Chen had had a tough time slipping inside Sky Palace, and the bodies it had left within had become dormant long ago.

As long as he isn't able to break through the formation, the sun emperor won't be able to obtain the other half of the solar core. He said the Sky Palace has been infiltrated by Skywolf. Does that mean that the sun doesn't even have an astralguard formation up and is ripe for invasion? Tianming thought. He hadn't told the seniors about the imminent invasion just yet, and that point gave him even more doubts. Skywolf is approaching us, yet half of the astralguard formation is compromised. I bet the sun emperor is desperate. But if that's the case, why'd he pick now to invade the Myriad Solar Sects? Even if he eliminates every faction, he still wouldn't be able to take down the Sky Palace, right?

The sun emperor's true motivations were a mystery to him. Was he really trying to protect the sun, or just trying to avenge Li Wushuang? Tianming didn't think he was trying to avenge the troops he had lost at the Myriaddragon Mountains. He didn't seem like the type to care for their deaths at all and only wanted to destroy the defensive formations of the Myriad Solar Sects. Could he just be a madman?

"Tianming, what's that nightmare you mentioned?" The two seniors seemed rather worried.

"I need to show the two of you the star map from the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb." He opened the map and pointed at two bright stars. "This is Skywolf. The distance it was from the sun has shrunk by a quarter compared to what it was when I was in Violetglory. The sun emperor was the one who told me of the imminent invasion by Skywolf. I believe that he's the only one who knows about it. None of the other celestial orderians do. My star map proves his claim correct. I believe what awaits us will affect not just the Myriad Solar Sects, but the whole of Orderia."

The Saintdragon Emperor and Long Wanying's faces immediately turned pale at the mention of Skywolf. They seemed like they had difficulty breathing and were unable to tear their eyes away from the star map.

Even someone as stoic as the Saintdragon Emperor couldn't hold back a gasp. "It's one disaster after another... the heavens are truly merciless. It's no wonder you're under so much pressure." He knew better than anyone the terror Skywolf posed based on historical records. During the last invasion, the Sky Palace was still functioning normally and the sun had managed to stop the invasion with the astralguard formation alone while heavily wounding the enemy. Even then, they had suffered astronomical casualties. That was what a true astral war looked like. It made the war between the two sides of the sun look like a petty civil dispute.

"I'm stumped. Is the sun emperor a fool? Why attack us at this point in time? He could've allied with us and tried to see if we would be able to fight our way into the Sky Palace. Shouldn't securing our astralguard formation be the main priority? Yet now we're fighting so desperately among ourselves.... Are you sure the sun emperor isn't the one who's been compromised by Skywolf?" Long Wanying spat.

"That doesn't sound likely. Even the leader of Skywolf might not be as powerful as the nonabane sun emperor," the Saintdragon Emperor calmly deduced. "But still, we have a wave of trouble to come before we even overcome this one. Tianming, how much time do we have until Skywolf reaches us at this rate?"

"They're moving slower than divine astralships, so it'll take six to nine months. I'll guess eight. That's assuming it can't accelerate more," Tianming said.

"We can pinpoint its location with the star map. Will we be able to move the sun away to escape?" Long Wanying asked.

"No. To move the sun, we have to have a complete solar core. With the Sky Palace in this state, how would we be able to escape? Not to mention, the records show that Skywolf is a binary star system. It's unique in that the two stars are able to influence each other's orbits for propulsion. Now that they've targeted us, there's no way we can outrun them," the Saintdragon Emperor said.

"Dammit! Granny Yuan Long is in the Sky Palace. How could she be compromised just like that? Why didn't we get any inkling of it?" Long Wanying was feeling too emotionally distraught.

"I went inside there before. I felt that all seven of them seemed rather... off, in some way," Tianming said. Nobody had any idea how the infiltration happened. "By the way... the sun emperor said that since I'm a Sky Palace disciple, I should be able to enter the Sky Palace Formation."

"He said that? Even we can't be certain of that. For the longest time, we knew of the formation, but it's never been deployed until recently. Normally speaking, you wouldn't even be considered a member since you aren't five hundred yet. Though you do have the Sky Palace stigma, so maybe you can give it a try."

"The issue here is that the sun emperor wants you to go there. What're his plans? You're the backbone of our operation, wouldn't he be jumping with joy if something happens to you?" Long Wanying said, frowning her brows. "That's right. He mixes truth and falsehood together and we can't tell which is which. He also said that I could gain control over half of the astralguard and fusion formations," Tianming said.

"You can? Based on what? Even if the stigma allows you entry and you're able to defeat the Warlord, which means you should be able to face off against the five remaining members, it wouldn't be easy to

defeat them. Even if you gained control, wouldn't the sun emperor have even more trouble dealing with you since you'd be out of his reach inside the formation?" Long Wanying said as she pondered.

"That isn't necessarily the case. Tianming isn't like the Sky Palace—his heart lies with us out here, so he wouldn't stay cooped up inside their Formation. As long as he gets the solar core and leaves with it, the sun emperor will stand a chance of taking it from him. Maybe that's why he wants him to go in," the Saintdragon Emperor said. With the five remaining Sky Palace members inside the formation, there wouldn't be anything the sun emperor could do about it.

"If there's even a chance to defeat them and get the solar core, I should at least try. But we still have to consider the traps lying in wait, especially without knowing what's going on in the Sky Palace." Tianming seemed willing to give it a chance.

Chapter 1838 - Wushuang Halfway

Long Wanying lightly tapped Tianming's shoulder. "Let's do this. Head to the Sky Palace to get the solar core and activate the astralguard formation to stop Skywolf's invasion. We should still have time to do that. We can at least try to see if you can go through the Sky Palace Formation, but you don't have to go all in first. The three hundred million celestial orderian troops are still marching south and the sun emperor has returned to refuel the nova source in his Divine Sun Palace. After a few days, he'll no doubt take action against some other sect, so we'll have to focus our attention here. Since we'll need you even more at that time, you can't leave. This might just be the sun emperor's plan to draw you away from us, so we have no choice but to put Skywolf's approach on the back burner for now, at least until we can learn his true intentions."

"Guess that's the only choice we can make for now," Tianming said. The sun emperor had yet to stop his attack on the Myriad Solar Sects. The rest of the celestial orderian troops were still marching south, and nothing short of full resistance would suffice.

"How's the evacuation of the Fushen Clan and the second- and third-rate sects going?" the Saintdragon Emperor asked.

"It's proceeding fine. They're scattered, but they're moving faster than the army that's marching south. By the time they arrive, we should be able to settle down the refugees in the other first-rate sects. The Group of Celestial Maiden Halls has also made preparations to evacuate. The tens of millions of troops that remain in the Divine Sun Palace have occupied Fushen Valley, led by the Deluge Emperor. They aren't taking any other action for now, and I doubt they'll make a move before the Divine Sun Palace can start moving troops again," Tianming said. That had bought the alliance desperately needed time and was one of the key goals of the battle at Fushen Valley.

"Pay more attention. Perhaps the sun emperor will use the Divine Sun Palace to transport some of the three hundred million troops somewhere else," the Saintdragon Emperor said.

"Will do." They had to be prepared for all possibilities and wary of the sun emperor's moves.

"Even though he makes it sound like he has good intentions, that won't change the fact that the tyrant is still sending troops south to exterminate us. Even if Skywolf or the Sky Palace are our enemies, it doesn't change the fact that the celestial orderians are still our enemies," Long Wanying said. She would never forgive the sun emperor no matter what.

After their discussion, Tianming was no longer confused. However, he still had some worries, like his dynasty on the Flameyellow Continent, though there was nothing he could do about it. There were far too many people there and there was no way he could move them all to the sun during such a time. The Myriadragon Mountains wouldn't have the space for them either.

It was impossible to tell the intentions of the sun emperor. He could be more of a sadist than Sovereign Xi was, given how he was already culling lives by the millions without breaking a sweat. If he could do that to the so-called higher lifeforms of Orderia, he definitely wouldn't care about the mortals of the Welkin plane, and that was Tianming's crippling weakness.

"We should keep word of Skywolf's approach from spreading. It might cause a mass panic," Tianming said.

"Yeah."

"I'll go to my sister in the meantime," he said as he stood up.

"Go ahead. The girl has been suffering quite a bit lately, so take care of her."

"Alright."

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Great Saintdragon Peak pierced through the clouds like a flying dragon. Atop it were many ancient and refined buildings. It was the quietest part of the Myriadragon Mountains, even after they had taken in around a hundred million refugees. The other peaks were all filled with people no matter how tall or vast they were. While it would be fine in the short term, many would no doubt crumble if they had to stay in such cramped arrangements for a year or two.

Tianming knocked on the door of a building at Great Saintdragon Peak. "Qingyu, Feng, it's me."

"Ah, Big Brother, don't come in!" came a shriek from within.

Tianming blushed, imagining what the two young ones could be up to inside. This was going to be awkward.

However, he was overthinking it. Lingfeng opened the door soon after with a gloomy look. "Qingyu's not doing very well and doesn't want to see you."

"Is it because of the old gods' blood?"

"Yeah...." Lingfeng looked down with a bitter smile. "It's getting more and more serious. She seems to be suffering."

"Then I should check it out all the more."

"I also think you should console her. I have no way with words at all and never know the right thing to say. All I can do is worry, sigh...." He grit his teeth at how helpless he was. If only he could console her better.

"Don't worry." Tianming entered the room with him.

Qingyu was huddled in the corner of a dark basement. "Big Brother..."

Tianming felt a wince of pain when he saw her. Li Wushuang had been so ugly that children would be frightened to see her. It looked like Qingyu's transformation had progressed halfway there. While her body still seemed fine, the transformation of her looks was no doubt nightmarish for a girl like her. Any other person would have already gone insane.

"Big Brother, stop looking...." She looked down and gripped her fists, her red and sharp nails digging into her palms and drawing blood. Even her voice was hoarser than before.

Tianming had wanted to tell her that he'd seen Li Wudi, but couldn't bring himself to. How could he tell her that her father was probably gone for good? He knew that Qingyu was a strong kid that had gone through many trials, but he doubted that even he would be able to take a mental shock like that if he were suffering from her ailment, so he chose to keep quiet about it.

"Big Brother, did you get news of my dad?" Qingyu anxiously asked.

"Not yet. He might still be in the Divine Sun Palace."

"Alright. Tell me if there's news as soon as possible."

"Will do." He approached her and gave her a close look, suppressing the rage he felt for the sun emperor. "It does look worse than before. How are you holding up? Is it affecting other aspects of your life?"

"No.... Apart from turning uglier, everything else is getting better. I have far more energy than before and a good appetite. Big Brother, stop worrying about me. As long as you and Feng don't abandon me, I'll be fine as long as I don't have to go out and meet others." Even as she said that, her tears flowed nonstop. She was far from as nonchalant as she wanted to appear.

Chapter 1839 - Xenoworld Gate

"Big Brother, I'm really fine. Dad told me the virtues of those who can endure hardship. I doubt he's doing any better than I am, anyway. Both of us are rather unlucky. We don't seem to be able to catch a break. But it's fine. These hardships will just make us stronger, and I'm not afraid. Just don't worry about me. I heard about your courageous deeds. I'll patiently wait until the day you defeat that demon and won't cause you any trouble. Feng will take care of me, so don't fuss too much over me," Qingyu said while forcing a smile and secretly trying to wipe her tears off.

The smile made her look even uglier, but that only sharpened Tianming's volition. His hatred for the sun emperor was no longer something that could be taken back. No matter what the red-haired sun emperor told him, he would just consider it a mere diversion.

"Yeah. I'll look after her all the time," Lingfeng earnestly said. No matter how Qingyu's looks changed, he would never change how he looked at her. He had never known how to lie, so none of his words were to be doubted. With the two of them seemingly able to handle this themselves, there was little else Tianming could say.

"Big Brother, is there any hope of saving dad?" Qingyu asked.

"We'll have to wait and see. Based on the current situation, there's a chance I might be able to defeat the sun emperor. As long as I can do that, it should solve all of our problems."

"You're relying on the legacy of the Primordial God-Emperor, right? Do you have a billion threads now?"

"Yeah."

"That's great! You only had a billion in Violetglory and were able to deflect the primalwinger overlord's attack. You should be close to that level of power now, right?"

"I'm probably still quite far off. Both of them are sovereigns, but one was old and weakening while the other's a nonabane in his prime. It isn't really an apt comparison. The sun emperor has no rival in Orderia. Even the top ten sect masters and the seven from the Sky Palace working together might not be able to match up to him. I bet I'll need ten or a hundred billion threads at least."

"Is that so.... I believe you'll succeed! Definitely!" Qingyu held her hand out, but hurriedly pulled it back at the sight of the horror. Then she awkwardly smiled and quietly said, "Sorry for showing you something unsightly."

Tianming hated the fact that she had become so sensitive about her looks. He talked a little more with her and had Ying Huo and Meow Meow come out to lighten the mood. After a while, it was time to leave. The sun emperor had just finished charging the Divine Sun Palace, so he would be making his next moves.

"Feng, send my brother off. I won't be going," Qingyu said. No matter how much her mood had improved, she wouldn't leave the basement. Within the darkness, at least she wouldn't be able to see herself. There was no way she didn't mind how she looked now. The cry she uttered when she had recognized Tianming's voice was a sign of how deep and instinctual her fear was.

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After leaving the basement, Lingfeng seemed to have something he wanted to say.

"What's wrong?"

"I want to help you kill the sun emperor." Lingfeng's eyes were bloodshot.

"Your legacy is different from mine, and you don't have Imperial Will or Omniscient Threads. The gap between your level and the sun emperor is hard to overcome."

"That's right. However, I also obtained something else from my legacy that might prove useful. It's a kind of boost that's similar to your Omniscient Threads," he resolutely said. He had been waiting for this for a long time. Having spent the most time with Qingyu, he knew how much she had suffered, so he hated the sun emperor with a passion, enough to want to slaughter his entire family.

"Well, let's see what it can do." If it was useful, Tianming would be more than happy to have Lingfeng join him.

"Alright." Lingfeng's eyes seemed to redden with hate.

Tianming felt a flickering aura about his body as it was being forced out. As he had been busy with his battles, he didn't have the time to pay attention to the others' mental states. He watched as the black-haired youth took a spot in the woods and gathered more and more heavy aura around him. His Primordial Gate began releasing some kind of piercing demonic aura that immediately enveloped Tianming. He felt like he was drowning in a world of darkness, extinction, and solitude filled with corpses and blood. In fact, it resembled the hellish battlefield in Fushen Valley where countless lives had been reaped! Tianming didn't think that Lingfeng would be able to recreate such an environment, but with an even more despair-inducing effect. He found it hard to breathe.

Lingfeng's Primordial Gate continued spinning, squeezing out a wave of light to form a black and red mist that began swirling into a vortex. It looked like a gate that continued to expand wider.

"What is this?" Tianming took a look inside and saw an odd world within with contorted beasts and creatures. It looked like a nightmarish world with a dreamlike nature. He was all too familiar with it. "It's the xenomemory space!"

It was indeed the place he had saved Lingfeng from. He hadn't thought it would be possible for Lingfeng to open a direct path to that place with his Primordial Gate. Based on Meow Meow's ability, the space had another name: the Xenoworld.

"That's right. I think I'm linked to it through my Primordial Gate," said Lingfeng, his voice coming from the odd world of darkness with a hint of bone-shearing sharpness.

"I don't quite understand, Feng," Tianming said, trying to calm himself as he looked at the eerie Lingfeng.

"In other words, I can go between the two worlds at any time and can take a person or two with me."

"I see.... So it's like a method we can use to escape?" Going to an entirely different dimension seemed like a good way to shake people off. "Wait, Feng, if you go in, won't that Di Yi fellow notice you?"

Lingfeng shook his head and smiled. "I don't think he'll be able to. From now on, I'll be familiarizing myself with the Xenoworld and I'll know more about it than he does. Not to mention, this isn't a technique used to flee."

"Oh, right—you said it can somehow power you up for a time like my Omniscient Threads." Tianming's curiosity only grew as he looked at the Xenoworld Gate.

Chapter 1840 - Beyond Redemption

The Xenoworld was a place where caeli roamed, as well as the place where the divine wonderians had built wondersky realms. Tianming had used a dimensional rope to pull Lingfeng out of it, so he'd seen the eerie and dreamlike dimension with his own eyes before.

"That's right. It can allow me to use power that isn't mine for a short period of time." Lingfeng lifted both hands and stretched them toward the gate with a craving for power in his eyes. That desire had been born from the many times he looked at Qingyu and his hatred for the sun emperor. It was the same kind of hatred he had held for Autarch Qian and the Ancient Theocrats a long time ago. With Tianming often being apart from Lingfeng, he couldn't understand how the black-haired youth felt. If

even Tianming found the sun emperor unforgivable, how would Lingfeng feel about it, given that he had to witness Qingyu's suffering day in and out?

"Feng, how does it increase your power?" Tianming asked after calming himself.

"Do you remember what I was called in the Divine Moon Realm?" Lingfeng said with a smirk. Tianming found it rather mischievous and charming in its own right.

"I do. It was quite cool. Night demon, I think it was. The night demon and the Ninemoon Goddess. It almost sounds like something out of a fairytale." Tianming tried lightening the mood a bit.

However, that attempt seemed to completely go over Lingfeng's head. "Back then, I realized the effect I had on totems. It's like I could devour their totems' terra using my Primordial Gate. However, the gate hadn't been truly activated back then, so I could only devour low-level totems. After that, I tried not to use this ability to avoid attracting attention and hostility from totemancers."

"What about now?"

"My Primordial Gate has entered its second phase and unlocked the Xenoworld Gate. As I intermingled with that other world, I realized I could use the Xenoworld Gate to suck in vita and terra as well. The gate converts souls into pure energy that my vita can absorb, enhancing my abilities for a time." His expression seemed rather dark as he mentioned that. Naturally, his hostility wasn't directed at Tianming, but rather the celestial orderians.

"That means you'll be able to get stronger by defeating enemies and absorbing totems?"

"More or less."

"And you said your Xenoworld Gate can grind down a totem to be used to fuel your vita temporarily, right? What happens to the lost totems? Will they reform if the bane-ring is intact?"

"No. A bane-ring without terra is useless. Usually, when we defeat totems, the terra remains undamaged, allowing totems to reform. However, what I do involves destroying the terra," Lingfeng said.

"I see! It's a little like Xiaoxiao's Archaionfiend, but that creature deals with caeli and doesn't have good efficiency. Doing so also seems to injure it in some capacity, yet your Primordial Gate doesn't seem to come with any negative effects."

"That's right."

"However, there's a limit to the number of totems, right? The boost you can get from it should be limited." Surely, it would take an enormous number to match the number of Omnisentient Threads.

"Yes. Devouring the totems of tens of people wouldn't increase my soul power by much. But..." his eyes seemed to glow at the mention of that, "actually, even a beastmaster without bane-rings has a terra. Once their vita is extinguished, their terra and caelum return to nothing and scatter in the environment. Normally, not that many terra would scatter around just like that, but it's different on a battlefield! The battle at Fushen Valley had around tens of millions of casualties, and every one of those people had a caelum. If I absorb all of them, my soul power will rise to a point that even I'm not sure of! I'd definitely be able to help you out somehow! We can team up against that damn sun emperor!"

Lingfeng sounded more and more agitated as he spoke; he had nothing but hate in his mind. The revelation startled even Tianming. A person had a tripartite soul. The vita resided within the body, while the terra and caelum existed outside of it. The caelum was the key way the vita communicated with the laws of the world, whereas the terra interfaced with the vita and could be turned into totems. However, the main thing that underpinned the survival of an entity was the vita. Terrae and caeli were different from vitae in fundamental ways.

Tianming imagined what Lingfeng was trying to illustrate. He would appear with his Xenoworld Gate, absorbing the terrae dissipating in the environment for his own use, converting them into soul power. He was like a monster that could feast on souls, which was a terrifying ability to contemplate. Then again, his legacy should be similar to that of the Primordial God-Emperor's in some way. Tianming had Imperial Will and the Omniscient Threads, so it wasn't out of the question for Lingfeng to have his own impressive techniques. Despite the horrifying nature of the move, Tianming fully trusted him.

"Alright. I'll take you along to the next big fight. Show me how powerful the Primordial Demonlord's technique is. I still don't know too much about your ability, so just promise me you won't push yourself if you really can't, alright?"

"Will do. Thank you, Tianming." With Tianming's permission, Lingfeng was filled with fighting spirit.

"By the way... you mentioned vita in addition to terra just now, right?" Tianming furrowed his brow when he recalled it.

"Yeah. I can use both terra and vita. In fact, a vita is a hundred times more potent than a terra of the same level."

"Vita is the core of one's being and might be related to the cycle of reincarnation. Destroying it like that might be going against the fundamental workings of the universe, so let's not touch those," Tianming said.

"Got it! Unless...."

"Unless what?" Tianming glared at him.

"Nothing. No exceptions," Lingfeng said with a laugh. However, he resolved himself to do anything he could to save his loved ones, should they ever be in real danger. I can't just watch. Even if I have to suffer the consequences, I must do something.

Either way, Tianming believed that it was good news. Anything at all that could help alleviate their dire situation was a good thing. He believed in the power of the Primordial Demonlord, since his own legacy had helped him quite a lot.