

The Ages 1901

Chapter 1901

The voidheart worm had been far harder to deal with than Tianming had thought it would be. It was even comparable to some of the strongest nemeses Tianming had faced, despite being a cosmic wildbeast. Normal wildbeasts wouldn't even begin to compare with its child spawns, let alone its powered-up form.

"As expected of a cosmic wildbeast raised in the Mysterium Cluster." Back then, Tianming didn't even have a concept to approximate the power of the Primordial Chaos Beasts, but the voidheart worm was probably like a starter version of their final form. "Skywolf also has these, I think, but how many? If they do, they must be much stronger than this one was."

With the astralguard formation deactivated, Skywolf could be seen in the sun's sky. Tianming didn't have time to relax.

"Little Li, come here! This is what you want!" Xian Xian had finished eating up the voidheart worm, leaving only a husk that contained a single object.

"Alright." Tianming entered the husk of the huge body and saw a glowing white object in the darkness. When he approached, he noticed that it was the size of a palace. No doubt, it was half of the solar core. As an object that regulated the functions of the fusion and astralguard formations, it wasn't surprising that it would be that big. As he looked at it, the husk of the voidheart worm crumbled into ash, revealing even more of the white solar core.

He saw countless intricate divine celestial patterns moving about the spherical object. It slowly spun like a miniature fusion formation, ancient and silently spinning according to the countless universal laws. A few mere looks would be enough to instill a sense of awe in people. Its divine celestial patterns seemed able to project the various sights of Orderia onto the surface of the solar core. Controlling it meant controlling half the sun.

"I wonder if the voidheart worm managed to completely control the solar core," Ying Huo asked as it flew around it.

"Probably not, or it would've cut off the nova source to the Myriad Solar Sects, or even dramatically lowered it to make us suffer," Tianming said.

"In other words, it probably only controlled the top layer, which manages the astralguard formation. The deeper layers of the solar core control the nova source distribution."

"That's right." The fusion formation was the essence of the sun and used to control its nova source. It was clear how important the solar core was. For any group to thrive, control of the solar core was essential, and it wasn't a surprise that it was kept within a grade-nine divine formation like the Sky Palace Formation.

"Give it a go, then," Ying Huo said.

"I have no idea where to start," Tianming said after giving it a thorough look. It wasn't comparable to the wheel formation of the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb at all, which could be activated simply by mastering the moves of the Ninedragon Tribulation. The solar core seemed far more complex.

"If a sub-intelligent cosmic wildbeast could do it, why can't you?" Ying Huo mocked.

"It probably used the seven Sky Palace members it controlled to do it, and even then it couldn't do much apart from slightly tweaking the Sky Palace Formation and the fusion formation." The voidheart worm had only recently grown stronger, after all. Before this, all it had done was hide within the Sky Palace Formation without showing itself.

Tianming studied it for even more time. "Oh, wait!" He had two things that could possibly help: the stigma of the Sky Palace and his black arm. Perhaps the stigma given to him by the wooden building could help. He headed toward the solar core.

"Ancestors above, I pray that this works." He knew that the Sky Palace had many secrets, including the wooden building. Perhaps the answers he sought were within the solar core. As he approached, his stigma lit up with the same glow from the solar core: a warm, white light. Before his forehead even touched the solar core, the 'void' character on his forehead emitted a few strings of divine celestial patterns that blended in with the solar core. "I thought the core of the sun would be burning hot, not just warm."

Tianming widened his eyes and observed the changes on his forehead. The stigma had linked up with the solar core in some way. Countless divine celestial patterns flooded back toward Tianming's body, wrapping him in a gentle energy that pulled him into the solar core. He found himself in a milky-white sea. Every single drop of water within was made of dense divine celestial patterns, each of them containing endless mysteries. The sea itself seemed boundless. Then, the water from the sea flooded toward his stigma.

"Huh?" He felt that he was connected to the solar core through the stigma. Right after that, information flooded into his head. "It looks like I can control it now."

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Perhaps that was why controlling the solar core from the outside using the stigma wasn't too difficult. The stigma seemed to lift from his forehead and became a sphere that floated before him. The little snow-white ball currently controlled the Sky Palace Formation, allowing him to open or close it. That alone meant that Tianming had become the owner of the Sky Palace Formation.

At the very bottom of the formation was the polar south of the sun, which was connected to the fusion formation. In other words, Tianming could open the formation and let the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb absorb a large amount of nova source, which could then be compressed into a miniature nova source within the ship to power it. That was good news in these desperate times. Tianming could finally see hope once more after the disastrous battle at the Myriadragon Mountains.

The white ball in his hand quickly sucked up all the water in the sea around him, leaving a blank world before him. He looked up and saw nothing but a horizon and something familiar: a dilapidated wooden building that was covered in moss. But unlike before, it looked realistic instead of the illusory form he had seen the last time. He had a feeling that he could open the door and walk right in.

"Perhaps the wooden building hides deeper controls, like the ones for the astralguard and fusion formations. It might also have to do with the origins of the Sky Palace. As for whether it's the Sky Plundering Palace from the memories of the Archaionfiend, maybe I'll find out there."

Tianming couldn't wait to enter the wooden building, but he had two things to complete before that. First, he walked out of the solar core. From the outside, it didn't seem to have changed, and the wooden building remained within. Relieved, he put his attention on other tasks. First, he would have to bring all the solarians and above of the Myriad Solar Sects into the Sky Palace Formation.

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The solarians were the most elite force of the Myriad Solar Sects. As the Sky Palace Formation was quite limited in size, Tianming could let only them in. As for the rest, they were spread out and homeless, though the celestial orderians didn't have the manpower to hunt them all down in the first place. They would also have to turn their attention to dealing with Skywolf's invasion, giving the Myriad Solar Sects much-needed time to recuperate.

"If the sun emperor insists on continuing the bloodshed and involving all the gods in the sun, he would need tens of billions, or even more troops to head south, covering every inch of land. It would be a complete genocide." However, it seemed like the celestial orderians didn't intend to take such action for now.

No cultivator could live in the wilderness without a proper base like the Myriaddragon Mountains in the long term, as gathering cultivation resources was a must. While it wouldn't be a big deal in the short term, stagnating for decades would result in the inevitable regression of their abilities. The Myriad Solar Sects could well fail without the celestial orderians even having to fight them.

As such, while Tianming and the Myriad Solar Sects spread out and fled, their end goal was to retake their bases, like the Myriaddragon Mountains and Fushen Valley, and restore the defensive formations. Being on the run for the long term would result in the celestial orderians wiping them out all the same.

The invasion of Skywolf had come at just the right time to help out the Myriad Solar Sects. Tianming decided to secure the solarian power base using the Sky Palace Formation as their main base. Around ten million of them were gathered outside the formation, waiting for Tianming's good news, and he didn't disappoint! He left the formation safe and sound as the crowds cheered for him.

"Tianming?!" Long Wanying was the first one to come up to him. Seeing how relaxed he was, she guessed what had happened, but that didn't stop her heart from anxiously beating or her eyes from tearing up.

When everyone turned and looked at Tianming, he dropped the pretense. "It was tough, but I dealt with it. We have a new base!"

Everyone cheered for the first time in a long while. The loss of the previous battle had caused many to lose hope, but that was just the kind of good news they needed to spark it once more. Many were crying tears of joy.

"Come in, everyone." Tianming recalled the wooden building that was within. He had come out before interacting with the building in order to lead them to safety first. It would be horrible once the sun

emperor discovered such a large gathering of solarian elites there. They would easily be wiped out by the Divine Sun Palace, especially if they were gathered in one place.

Most of those present were seniors who entered the Sky Palace in orderly fashion after Tianming opened the formation to them. There were less than ten million solarians in total, and soon all of them were brought into the small formation. They could only barely fit into the Sky Palace Formation, so their lifebound beasts would have to remain within their lifebound spaces.

"We'll have to stay cooped up here for the time being and wait for the chance to take our homes back. It is quite packed, but it's no big deal." Long Wanying basically called the shots within as the Saintdragon Emperor, Northdipper Swordsage, and others were outside. The remnant troops of the alliance still needed them, after all.

Tianming saw the devotion in their eyes. They were willing to hide and endure until their chance came. All of them were reasonable people who settled down without quarreling. They didn't bother him after entering and immediately tended to their injuries or started cultivating.

With their new base dealt with, Tianming piloted the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb to the bottom of the Sky Palace Formation, connecting it with the fusion formation. Then, he tried activating the bamboo tube formation to charge the ship and unlock its functions. The volatile energies within the fusion formation found a path and rapidly charged into the divine astralship, causing it to glow bright red.

To save some space, he moved the saplings out of the ship and temporarily planted them in several spots inside the Sky Palace Formation. The saplings were sentient and would eventually germinate and grow.

"Absorb more power for now. If we still have a chance in this world, you can properly germinate later," Tianing said to the saplings, who seemingly understood him. Tianming recalled the dead Azurecloud Divine Tree when he saw them. "These children are its legacy."

Finding a proper place for them to be planted was a sacred mission in his eyes. The saplings had been a great help to him during his recent voyages, but now Tianming was mostly certain that he could swap them out for an even more efficient power source: a miniature nova source. The divine astralship's formation activated itself, entirely covering it with dragon scales. It looked armored and ready for combat. A terrifying amount of nova source continued gathering within the ship.

Tianming noticed that the power gathered at the center of the ship where the Imperialdragon Palace was located. Not to mention, the space there seemed to be larger than the two 'eye sockets' of the Divine Sun Palace. "If it charges up to full, the miniature nova source of the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb could even be larger than the Divine Sun Palace's!" That was no doubt good news; he couldn't wait to see it at its full power.

"Now that the rest are inside and the ship is charging, I should check out the wooden building." He felt much more relaxed with the more critical tasks accomplished. Things seemed to be falling back into place after he had entered the Sky Palace Formation. Weisheng Moran didn't follow him in, however. Instead, Tianming gave her the task to stabilize the situation at Somnium. Regardless of whether or not their city would fall, the people should at least be protected.

"The Divine Sun Palace returned to the territory of the Myriad Solar Sects with troops. Their next target is the Frostsoul Imperium, so the Frost Empress should start evacuating now," Tianming told Long Wanying.

"They're already prepared," she answered.

Soon, the sun emperor would control all of the Myriad Solar Sects' territories and his true goal would be revealed. There was nothing the alliance could do to stop him. All Tianming could do was see if the wooden building would offer him anything that could turn the tides.

Before that, he went to check on Qingyu, who was accompanied by Lingfeng. Her situation had deteriorated even more. She huddled in a corner with Lingfeng, not speaking at all. Like terrified children, they merely moped. With there being basically nothing inside the Sky Palace Formation, Qingyu didn't even have anywhere to hide. No doubt that made her feel even worse.

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Having lost the battle at the Myriaddragon Mountains, Lingfeng had suffered quite a blow. He seemed a little anxious, despite his cold gaze.

"Don't worry. We'll have our chance," Tianming said, patting him on the shoulder.

"Got it." Lingfeng nodded and turned back to look at Qingyu with a hint of pain in his gaze.

"Big Brother, it looks like my dad might not be around anymore, right?" she said in a hoarse voice with her face huddled in her arms. She uncontrollably teared up as she spoke.

Tianming recalled the person that had been piloting the Divine Sun Palace while the sun emperor was out fighting. He really didn't know how to answer her question.

"It's fine," she said, gritting her teeth. "Big Brother, go do your work. I heard you were going to try to control the solar core. As long as you succeed, we'll have a chance. Dad isn't someone that'll just submit without a fight. If he's really going to die, he'll be sure to make a huge show of it to shock the world. I believe in him."

Tianming was happy that she could at least think optimistically. Even he had expected nothing but the worst. "Alright, let's get our feelings in order as we prepare for the next fight. Let's not overthink things before we properly verify them," he said for the benefit of himself and the other two.

"If I'd refined vitae instead of just terrae I could probably break the coffin and kill him!" Lingfeng said with his head lowered.

Stunned, Tianming caught Lingfeng's gaze. He knew that Lingfeng would have his own opinions on the matter independent of his own.

"At the very least, I'd only refine the vitae of celestial orderians," Lingfeng said, calmer that time.

Tianming understood why he thought that way. Lingfeng absolutely hated the sun emperor and wanted to help Qingyu through these hard times. Tianming knew that he was the kind of person who was nice

to those he cared about, but ruthless to his enemies. Either that, or it was the Primordial Demonlord's influence seeping through. The second grand battle at the Myriadragon Mountains was the strongest Lingfeng had ever been and there might not be another chance like that in the future, hence his frustration.

"Think about it another way. If he'd died too quickly, we'd be the ones facing off against Skywolf." Tianming didn't think Lingfeng's way of thinking was necessarily wrong. Everyone factored different things into their considerations. The best Tianming could do was to share his thoughts and try steering him in an optimistic direction.

"That's right! Feng, don't be so anxious," Qingyu consoled.

"Alright. I just... Brother Tianming, forgive me for saying that nonsense," Lingfeng said.

"It's fine. This is all just part of life and cultivation. Sometimes, life and the universe just mystify us beyond comprehension. I can be just as lost as you are. Everyone's concept of the world is different. I don't know what's right all the time, nor what the optimal action would be."

Lingfeng seemed much more relaxed upon hearing that. His path was clearly different from Tianming's, but Tianming wasn't willing to lose him. He recalled that Lingfeng had fought alongside him during the battle at the Myriadragon Mountains. While their paths had diverged, their feelings and mutual acknowledgment wouldn't change.

"I'll be going now. Wait for my good news!" Tianming said, looking affectionately at his 'siblings'. He was the eldest, so he had to play his part.

When he was about to leave, Qingyu finally looked up. The resemblance she shared with Li Wushuang gave Tianming a start. It was no wonder Lingfeng was so mad. Love made him lose his reason from the anger he felt. It seemed like he was constantly blaming himself for her situation.

However, Tianming realized that Qingyu reacted differently from Lingfeng. She could still smile to not make Tianming worry, not to mention there was still hope and desire in her eyes. That was something that Li Wushuang hadn't shown in the slightest. Qingyu had grown up in hardship and her spirit was forged to endure even more.

"Qingyu, you'll definitely succeed," Tianming said. She was simply no ordinary girl.

"I'm not afraid. At least, if he ever returns, I don't want to show him that I lost myself to my fate," she said. Even now, she still had hope for Li Wudi, in some part thanks to Tianming's own infectious confidence.

"Alright." Tianming left and headed toward the wooden building as many people watched him with hopeful gazes. This time, he felt completely different as he stood before the solar core. Talking with them had helped calm him considerably. Taking a deep breath, he stepped into it.

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Everyone turned and looked at the solar core to see if anything changed, yet one of the gazes seemed a little weird. It came from a purple-haired youth with a lackadaisical expression. The 'sky' character

appeared on his forehead from time to time. A dangerous look flashed across his violet eyes that seemed to turn into insectoid compound eyes that contained a hint of hateful intent from time to time.

"No matter. He'll be dealt with. Once Skywolf arrives, our Voidsky Organization will take care of the sun emperor before we deal with him. It's quite abnormal for a world like this to have a monster like the sun emperor. However, the rest of this world's denizens are much weaker than us Skywolves. Even if he works together with the sun emperor and raises the astralguard formation, it won't make much of a difference. He won't even necessarily be able to control the solar core," the youth said in an ancient voice.

"He can control it, as the stigma he has was granted by the will inside the core..."

The purple-haired youth wore a complex gaze as he looked around, eventually settling on a black-haired, red-eyed youth in the corner and a devilish-looking woman. "Hehe..." the ancient voice within him chuckled, "how interesting. Even though you're just a bug, you have good senses. Those two kids are the closest people to him. They also have a good relationship with Yu Ziqian. That's your opening. Once you deal with them, even if Tianming manages to control the solar core, we'll hold his weakness..."

"I see...." The youth grit his teeth as little raised spots appeared on his eyeballs. "I said that I'd get my revenge! Once you leave the solar core, you'll be faced with despair."

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The sky above was incredibly quiet. Occasionally, a few flashes of light swept across in the distance, but they eventually waned away. Perhaps they were flashes from the explosions of collapsing astral cores.

The astralscape of order was far too vast, so much so that the destruction of a world seemed like nothing more than a drop of water from a distance. To the cold and unfeeling universe, an individual's life and experiences were completely meaningless. They were just another instance of countless, repetitive permutations of arrangements of matter and energy. Only people could feel despair at the loss of life, but the universe couldn't care less.

Far in the depths of the cosmos sailed a divine astralship that looked like a bracelet. It gave off a crimson glow as it sailed ahead at high speeds, leaving a crimson tail of light behind. Within it was a group of people dressed in grand, crimson clothing. They seemed rather odd and were covered in many glittering jewels. The one who stood ahead of the rest looked far into the distant stars.

"What a desolate area this is."

"Emperor Qiang, we're almost there, right? Thank goodness for the wondersky realm. Otherwise, a journey like this would be incredibly boring," someone else said.

Emperor Qiang was the precentennial sovereign of the Crimsonjade line. His son was Long of the Celestial Beings, someone Tianming had fought in the Astraldome.

"We're almost there, but we won't be going to Violetglory yet. We'll head to the Welkin plane and look for a continent," Qiang said.

"Why? Wasn't Violetglory our initial destination? We'll have to change our coordinates if we want to head to the continent first. It isn't exactly convenient to drive by it," said a subordinate.

"We'll have to go to both, so the order doesn't matter. Additionally, the seniors said that the faction behind comma girl was rather insistent on leaving the grade-nine Grand-Orient Sword on the Welkin plane," Qiang said, furrowing his brows.

"The Welkin plane.... Don't tell me they come from the realm of chaos?!" said the subordinate.

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Qiang merely turned back. Though he didn't have eyes, his 'gaze' was terrifying.

"I'll shut up," said the subordinate.

"Huh?!" One of the faceless specters looking at the star map gave a startled cry, drawing attention.

"Emperor Qiang, take a look! Two star worlds appeared near the continent of our destination. They're probably stars of our Voidsky Organization, a binary star system. They must belong to specters as well and they're rapidly descending, a sign that they've identified prey and are beginning a full-speed advance. It appears that there's a minor star near our destination."

"Hunting, eh?" Qiang nodded, seeming rather disinterested.

"Based on their speed, we'll arrive by the time they start the attack. In all our time at Skyway Tristar, we've only heard of hunting at the outer reaches. It's the first time we've really seen a hunt in action ourselves."

All of them looked ahead with anticipation.

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Skywolf's second divine astralship had caused much damage to the celestial orderian homeland. The sun emperor quickly returned to curb their invasion. After charging up his Divine Sun Palace, he quickly returned to the territory of the Myriad Solar Sects. At the same time, the two hundred million troops that were already nearby were given the order to march toward the Frostsoul Imperium. Their morale was high from their recent victory and they felt unstoppable.

The sun emperor hadn't just crushed the largest resistance effort at Myriaddragon Mountains, but had also managed to kill a sovereign of Skywolf, bringing some unprecedented excitement to his troops. Even with the casualties they had suffered at the hands of the second Skywolf divine astralship, they were still on cloud nine.

In contrast, the Myriad Solar Sects seemed much more subdued than before. They were sandwiched between two powerful factions, the celestial orderians and Skywolf. The beastmasters that had remained within their territories had fallen numb in confusion.

Had Tianming been able to rebuff the celestial orderians during the grand battle, he would have been able to form Omniscient Threads with everyone in the territories, including all of the non-ascendants, but that chance had been lost. He currently only had threads with ten billion gods. Had he also gotten the faith of the non-gods, he would be a few times more powerful. But either way, one thing was for sure: the sun emperor and the celestial orderians had the power to dominate the entire sun. Even if Tianming didn't tell factions like the Emyrean Sword Sect to give up, they only had around tens of millions of troops remaining, which could barely face off against the three hundred million totemancers.

What happened next was within expectation. The celestial orderians easily took over the territories of the Frostsoul Imperium, Divinemight Dynasty, and Empyrean Sword Sect. Even the dreamless celestial nation and Wordless Shrine easily fell, let alone the wargodeans and Blueblood Starocean. When the very last formation, the Empyrean Sword Sect's, was taken over by the celestial orderians, that marked the final end of the Myriad Solar Sects. Not a single one remained untouched, and all of the resourceful territories were in the hands of the celestial orderians. If it weren't for the stragglers that remained, the sun emperor could have proudly declared the unification of the sun under his rule, but he didn't let that stop him. "Let it now be known that from today onward, the Myriad Solar Sects are no more. They've been wiped off the face of Orderia."

The declaration shook Orderia like a storm. It was a historic moment that the celestial orderians celebrated. Even though survivors from the Myriad Solar Sects remained, there was no way for them to fight back, especially when they didn't even have homes to return to.

"The sun emperor has fulfilled our ancestral dream and united the sun! He's unmatched, even among his predecessors! May the glory of his deeds live on forever!" The celestial orderians merrily celebrated their victory day after day, pouring into the streets to enjoy the festivities. It was a worldwide revolution a long time in coming, and the celebration would last a few months at the very least.

If the sun emperor had the Primordial God-Emperor's legacy, his people would elevate him straight to godhood! Yet not even the celestial orderians knew the surprise that awaited them. The sun emperor had an agenda for conquering the Myriad Solar Sects.

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At the northernmost part of the Myriaddragon Mountains was a chaotic and charred battlefield, littered with corpses. An ice-cold mechanical wolf lay upon it, not moving in the slightest as light glinted off its surface.

Suddenly, the flaming clouds above rolled apart, giving way to a gigantic golden head as it descended from the sky. The head's long, dragon-shaped hairs wrapped around the Greenvoid Abyss and tightly secured it. Then the ship was dragged all the way from the southern pole of the sun to the northern pole by the Divine Sun Palace. The two moving divine astralships caused quite a lot of commotion. Along the way, they displaced a lot of mortal beastmasters.

During the process, a middle-aged man with red hair returned to the Divine Sun Palace. The golden-haired sun emperor within turned and looked at him. There was an inexplicable feeling when their gazes crossed. The red-haired man didn't say anything, but merely walked past him and stepped into the Flameyellow Coffin before closing his eyes.

"One soul, two bodies?" said a beautiful soul tribulator woman. She was the sun empress.

"That's right." The sun emperor nodded.

"Then which body houses your divine soul?" Realizing the weight of her question, she paled and lowered her head. "I merely ask out of curiosity, nothing else."

"It isn't in either body. Instead, the coffin houses our soul," the sun emperor said with a casual shrug.

"I see...."

"It's about time. Let's welcome this miracle that belongs to the Flameyellow Imperial Star. This ancient formation has been sealed up for at least millions of years." The sun emperor walked toward the exit, which was the mouth of the gigantic head, and looked at the endless world of flames.

The empress nervously tugged at the corners of her dress. She hesitated for a moment before following in the steps of the sun emperor, taking glances at the person in the coffin from time to time with eyes filled with temptation and awe.

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"It begins!" Quite a number of reddish gold pillars could be seen in the north. "The Flameyellow Divine Pillars are all in place!"

Looking southward, sky-piercing pillars could be seen sprouting from Fushen Valley, the Myriaddragon Mountains, and Empyrean Sword Peak. Their color blended with the flaming clouds above and made them look like they belonged there.

"Our territory's hundred pillars and the Myriad Solar Sects' hundred pillars add up to two hundred." After the sun emperor said that, the divine patterns on the Flameyellow Coffin shifted as a formless force spread out from it toward the pillars and the entire sun as a whole. All of them began spewing endless flames while divine celestial patterns flooded toward the clouds above.

"Look, up in the sky!" Everyone in the sun was distracted by what was happening. They saw a gigantic reddish gold barrier replacing the clouds they were used to seeing above.

"That's an astralguard formation! We have a chance against Skywolf!"

Both celestial orderians and beastmasters felt relief at the sight. But soon, many began realizing that it wasn't the astralguard formation that had been recorded in history.

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The sun had suddenly and completely changed. Even from the Divine Moon Realm or the Flameyellow Continent, it clearly seemed like it was surrounded by a reddish gold barrier of some sort that caused it to no longer give out energy and light. Upon closer inspection, it was clear to see that a kind of dense energy flowed among the flaming clouds, forming a huge barrier that was tens of thousands of meters wide. Countless ethereal beasts swam about within the flames, densely packed together. It was like a paradise of beasts.

As far as anyone was aware, celestial orderians included, they didn't think that the astralguard formation could be something on this scale. It looked no different from a wall made of layers of thick steel, containing some kind of hard-to-discern energy. The only thing they were sure of was that the formation seemed to use nova source to power itself, and the consumption was no doubt on the high end. All worlds had a limited supply of nova source that could be exhausted one day, so using it correctly became an important topic of debate for countless generations. However, the sun emperor's current reign over the sun was unchallenged, so nobody could stop him.

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The Divine Sun Palace cruised along the bottom layer of the defensive formation.

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"The Flameyellow Guard Formation is both a defensive formation and a force of destruction! The fact that it exists shows that this star world's pre-antiquity records are true!" the sun emperor excitedly proclaimed with his arms wide open.

"We won't have to fear Skywolf with it around, right?" the sun empress asked, her eyes shining from the glow of the formation.

"Fear?" The sun emperor loudly chuckled and turned back to his empress. "Everything is going according to plan. There's never been a need to fear them. In fact, they should fear me! Just wait and see. When these so-called hunters arrive, we'll put on a good show for them."

The sun empress was quite relieved to see so much confidence in him. At the very least, this'll be a deterrent that can drive Skywolf away.... Not long after, she recalled someone else and said, "I just got word that Li Tianming managed to enter the Sky Palace Formation. Is he trying to kill the voidheart worm and obtain half the solar core?"

"It's pointless. With the Flameyellow Guard Formation, I managed to walk one step ahead of him."

"I see...." What she left unsaid was that the celestial orderians would be much safer if they managed to control both formations. "This should be the end of the war, right?" she said, looking at the war-torn ground beneath them.

"No more. From now on, the sun will be ruled by a single will. There'll be no conflict or war." Nobody would be powerful enough to challenge his will. "In fact, you'll never guess what kind of hidden potential this ancient star of ours has...." His laughter echoed throughout the stormy flaming clouds outside.

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In the solar core, Tianming found himself in a world of pure white. Not a single speck of dust could be seen. There was nothing but the wooden building itself, and it didn't seem far off. He felt a little nervous when he saw that unknown, yet strangely familiar building. What kind of existence was it for it to exist within the solar core itself? Was it a divine artifact? A plain building? Or some kind of illusion conjured by his mind? He would get his answer inside.

He approached it one step at a time. In a daze, he found himself standing before the wooden door. Looking at the old door, he felt like he was back at Flamehaven. That was the only place he remembered that had simple doors like these without any divine patterns carved on them, whereas in Orderia, even the doors of common buildings were reinforced with divine formations.

"Let's do it!" He was finally here. There was no need to hesitate. He stretched his black arm out and lightly pushed the door apart. It loudly squeaked, probably from ages of neglect. Some dust seemed stuck between the frame and the door, which fell off when the door was disturbed. Thankfully, it wasn't the child spawns of the voidheart worm.

He gave the door a harder push and saw a sight that he more or less expected. The interior was wooden, just like the exterior. He closed the door behind him and looked around. This was the outer part of the building and had nothing more than a single bench and table. On the wall opposite him were two small

doors, beyond which were two 'bedrooms', which made up the inner part of the building. Tianming wasn't in a rush to enter them, though, as there was already something interesting in the outer building.

There was an ink painting hanging between the two smaller doors that was covered in dust, which almost made him pass over it. Looking closer, he felt that the painting was the key to the wooden building. In fact, it was a painting into which caeli could go!

He came up to the painting and stretched his right palm toward it, attempting to wipe the dust off of it, but it didn't work no matter what he tried. It was as if the layer of dust had fused with the painting with the passing of time.

"I can't wipe it off?" Without doing so, he wouldn't be able to clearly see the painting, yet he didn't dare to use too much force lest it ruin the painting. "That's right, what about trying with my left hand?"

He hadn't used it in the beginning, as it was far too rough and crude. But when he recalled the Sky Plundering Palace, he had a gut feeling that the wooden building had something to do with the sky plunderers. That fact alone gave him quite a bit of excitement; after all, he was a sky plunderer to begin with. It was a most important part of his bloodline and origins, and any clue that could lead him closer to his lost legacy made him crave it more and more.

As he rubbed the painting with his left arm, it grew clearer and clearer. The painting depicted quite a lot of things, chief of which was a circular shape in the very middle of it. The other aspects of the painting seemed centered around the circle in the middle.

"I wonder if the circle represents a star world..." If that were the case, the other aspects of the painting wouldn't be hard to decipher. The many black dots probably represented people, and the outer ring around the circle represented the astralguard formation. There were some other weird objects surrounding the circle that seemed quite sizable.

"Are those divine astralships?" He touched the painting again and noticed something odd.

Chapter 1906

Each little dot probably represented a person, and some smaller beast symbols around it probably represented lifebound beasts. However, there were also some other symbols that were much larger humanoids. Those probably represented totems. Did those people all have totems and lifebound beasts around them?

Tianming looked at all the other black dots, and there were always totems and lifebound beasts nearby. Only a few were directly represented with projections, but one could still tell the difference between lifebound beast and totem symbols.

"What does this mean? Did the people marked here also have lifebound beasts and totems like I do?" Tianming wondered. All of a sudden, he saw a figure that utterly shocked him in the corner of that painting.

"This... this is?!" He was so stunned he didn't know what to make of it. Based on that icon's size, it depicted a divine astralship. While the ink painting could only display things in black and white, the details were faithfully recreated. The icon was actually rather familiar to him and had nine dragon

heads. "Isn't this the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb? Nobody knows where the Ninedragon Emperor managed to obtain it from, but it's said to have come from the depths of the astralscape of order...."

Tianming had left the sun and gone to Violetglory, and even experienced the Astraldome in the wondersky realm, so he knew that nobody would be able to travel far through the astralscape without a divine astralship. So how could anyone even get a divine astralship from somewhere in the astralscape of order? It simply didn't make sense! Without the Divine Sun Palace, even the sun emperor would be left stranded in Orderia. There was little doubt that the icon represented Tianming's Ninedragon Imperial Tomb; perhaps this was a record of its origins.

"The circle at the center of the painting looks like a flaming nova source world. Even if it isn't the sun, it's really similar to it." His feelings were all over the place as he pondered the implications. He felt like some fundamental truth was hidden within the painting, but this was all he could see. "I wonder what other secrets this painting has?" Using his left hand, he kept wiping dust off the painting until all of it was gone.

"Come out!" As he gazed at the painting, something odd happened without warning. The black circle looked like it had been ignited and seemed like it was burning. The monochrome ink painting suddenly turned colorful, and the images even started moving! The star at the center burned brightly as the lifebound beasts, totems, and people moved about on it. There were even quite a number of divine astralships flying across it. Tianming's face was illuminated by the flames coming from the star as the painting grew larger and larger before his eyes.

His caelum was completely sucked into the painting, which seemed to have unfolded into a world as real as the one outside. He soared along a flaming pathway as the view ahead grew brighter and brighter. All of a sudden, his feet left the ground and he appeared in the void of the astralscape.

"Huh?!" A shocking sight greeted his eyes. There was a gigantic ball of gold and red right before him, a flaming star! "Is this... Orderia?" Instinct told him they were one and the same, but there were some details that differed. This world seemed to burn even more brightly and wildly. There was even a formless energy that dragged him toward it. It felt like he was being thrown into flaming manna, powerless to resist. The shock he felt when he entered was only the start; there was more to come.

"How could this be?!" He just noticed that he was much further from the world than he had imagined. The closer he got to the world, the larger it seemed—its sheer size had completely messed up his sense of scale and distance. "Even the centermost Skyway Monostar of the Mysterium Cluster is only two hundred times the size of the sun, and that's a supergiant star! A deific-class world!"

The world that he was pulled toward seemed far larger than two hundred solar masses, yet somehow it visually resembled the sun, being surrounded by an endless sea of flame and stretching endlessly. It was filled with dense, vigorous nova source, instilling in him the fear of a super sun.

He had imagined how Skyway Monostar must look and was filled with awe back then, but the shock he felt when his eyes beheld the super sun was second only to how he felt when he saw the gigantic black and gold imperial star within the gate inside the Grand-Orient Sword. That imperial star seemed illusory, whereas this super sun looked as if it was right in front of his eyes. The mere crackling of the moving flames on its surface shook him to the bone. And he was but a mere spectator! The painting itself was pulling his caelum to orbit the super sun, striking in him a never-before-felt awe of the flaming star.

"Is that an astralguard formation?" He saw a reddish gold barrier surrounding that super sun. Beyond it were flames and countless people and lifebound beasts. There seemed to be armies of billions. Had his caelum been sucked in a moment later, he would be hearing Yin Chen describe the very same formation in the sky above them now.

"What's that?!" Countless people appeared within the formation. Tianming was utterly shocked by how clear the image was, but the people seemed to just pass right through him. There was nothing he could do but observe. They were dressed in a very ancient fashion, yet another clue that hinted at this being a record of ancient antiquity, but that wasn't the most shocking part. Instead, Tianming stared wide-eyed at these people who rode gigantic lifebound beasts, yet also had many totems manifesting from their bodies.

"These are... tens of thousands of experimental subjects?" The people that had both lifebound beasts and totems numbered more than a hundred thousand. They also seemed really powerful, with quite a few of them being sovereign-level figures. There was no way people of that level would have lifebound beasts bound with blood pacts. The strongest person he knew to do so was the dreamless celestial emperor.

Tianming, Qingyu, and Li Wudi were related to the sun emperor solely because of their status as 'test subjects'. Little did he know that there were so many others like them over here.

Chapter 1907

"Is all of this really true?!" Tianming couldn't believe what he was seeing. He noticed that the lifebound beasts these people rode were similar to those of the Myriad Solar Sects. There were dragons, black tortoises, phoenixes, qilins, and many other mythical creatures. Additionally, the totems were mostly flaming types! He felt a familiar sensation coming from them. Flying through so many of them at such high speed had made him quite dazzled.

The next thing he saw stupefied him even more. A huge object came floating up from the reddish gold barrier. It was a gigantic coffin with similar colors! It was so large that it seemed to be a divine astralship. It was connected to the defensive formation, as if it was its core, and it looked exactly like the Flameyellow Coffin that had smashed Tianming to near death.

He gave it a few more looks to confirm his suspicions. It was practically identical, down to each and every carving and fine pattern. Only its size differed. Tianming was almost certain that this was what the sun emperor had used to crush him.

"Does it mean that his coffin came from the super sun? Or...." He didn't quite know how to put it into words. While this super sun was far larger than Orderia, it felt far too familiar, just like the sun he had seen from Flameyellow.

While he pondered that, he flew past the coffin, only to be taken aback even more. He was plummeting toward a gigantic object with nine dragon heads. All of them seemed to look toward him like they were alive.

"The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb?!" he cried out in shock. This was unmistakably it! While its appearance seemed slightly different and it was much larger and more complete, with many unseen parts, his sense of familiarity with it was too strong. He was certain this was his divine astralship.

For the super sun, coffin, test subjects, and Ninedragon Imperial Tomb to all appear in the same place... he suddenly recalled the Ninedragon Tribulation technique. It had come from the Ninedragon Emperor, yet it was made to be used with totems as well. Why would the Ninedragon Emperor know a move that utilized totems if he was a beastmaster? Or did the move actually come from the world Tianming now saw before him? Did it come from the people that had both lifebound beasts and totems? This super astral world was so vast that it was hundreds of times more shocking to behold than heliacal-class worlds like Orderia and Violetglory.

Tianming continued falling toward the super sun. Flames entirely surrounded him and seemed without end. After a full hour, he only found himself past the layer of flaming clouds. If he hadn't seen the surface below him, he would have thought that he'd fallen all the way into the flaming core.

The world beneath him seemed vast and endless. There were many different biomes that he could make out, but all of them shared a constant: fiery rain that fell like meteors. Cities looked like countless bundles of dots from above and were densely packed together, showing how prosperous the world was. All the while, he felt really weird taking all of it in.

Then he looked up. "What's that?!" He was completely flabbergasted and didn't know what to make of what he saw. There were eight reddish gold pillars that stretched toward the sky from the surface of the super sun, all of them incredibly thick and covered in flames. They reached all the way into the flaming clouds. They seemed rather similar to the sky pillars he had seen back in Orderia. While those were smaller, he felt like they were the same thing.

"What does this mean? Does the sun emperor's plan involve this super sun somehow?"

He couldn't control where he went. Eventually, he slammed into the ground, phasing through it and the fusion formation below before ultimately finding himself at the core of the super sun. With a loud rumble, his caelum was suddenly swallowed by the flames and returned to his body.

"Huff... huff...." His eyes snapped open as he panted. The flames from before were completely gone, along with the burning sensation. He had found himself back inside the serene, wooden building. The ink painting before him lost its color and gradually returned to how it appeared before.

He stood there and blankly looked at the painting for a long while. He still had to ponder about what he saw, but for now he had no answers.

"What'd you see that dumbed you down so much? Don't tell me you saw some kind of beauty? Are you dreaming about the kids you'll have with her now?" Ying Huo said in a dirty tone.

"Shut up." Tianming took a deep breath and recounted what he saw. "What do you guys think?"

"Huh?" Ying Huo seemed to snap out of something. "What'd you say? I was thinking and didn't hear you."

The cat was asleep as usual. As for Lan Huang, its two heads were having a staring competition with each other. Xian Xian, on the other hand, complained about its hunger and asked when feeding time was. Tianming swore that he would never ask them about stuff like this ever again. Even though he knew the super sun, coffin, and Ninedragon Imperial Tomb were all related somehow, he was even

more surprised that the world was filled with 'test subjects'. However, he didn't know what any of it had to do with Orderia, if anything at all.

"Only Flameyellow calls Orderia the sun. Orderians usually prefer to call it Orderia and only use 'sun' as a nickname. Is there a reason behind that?" He believed that the wooden building must have had a good reason to show him all of that.

Chapter 1908

The final goldish red pillar of flame, especially, made Tianming connect the supersized star to the sun he was on, though he didn't have any proof. All he could do was keep guessing. That aside, there were two other rooms within the wooden building. Nothing stopped him from entering them. He looked around and realized that there was nothing else in the outer room apart from the ink painting, so he took a deep breath before entering one of the smaller rooms inside. "Let's hope there's some answers." He pushed open the small wooden door, which seemed like it would fall apart after eons of neglect.

The room seemed rather dark inside. Some light seeped through the gaps in the walls, letting him see what was within. It was a simple room with nothing more than a single wooden table. When he approached, he saw a twilight yellow-colored book that seemed like it had completely rotted away. In fact, it was more accurate to call it a bundle of yellowed papers with some text written on them.

"Perhaps this was how they recorded their history way back in antiquity. What in the world is this wooden building, for it to be able to last until today and even grant me the Sky Palace stigma?" He didn't dare to carelessly touch it. Instead, he squatted down to inspect the cover. There were only a few simple words on it. He furrowed his brows as he read them. "Void Plundering Tome?" It was quite a weird-sounding name. He pondered it for a moment, then jumped. "Wait!"

He used the eye on his left arm to inspect the mark on his forehead, then looked at the 'void' character on the book. The two were identical. "That isn't the Void Plundering Tome, it's the Sky Plundering Tome!"

He had finally found something! The 'void' character on his forehead was probably how 'sky' was written in ancient times. The modern character for 'sky' was probably a corruption of the old character that represented 'void' in ancient times. So this was the true Sky Palace stigma that the wooden building granted! [1]

"Granny Yuan Long and the others' stigmas usually don't manifest, so I have no idea what theirs look like. Gan Gangan's looks just like the character for 'sky', unlike mine. Maybe it has something to do with the voidheart worm. It might have come from it and never had anything to do with the Sky Palace in the first place."

It wouldn't be hard to test the theory. He simply had to look for records of the Sky Palace from before the arrival of the voidheart worm. There would probably be depictions of the stigma borne by previous generations of Sky Palace members. Tianming figured it would be the same as his. The 'void' stigma was an ancient way to write 'sky', and it was the true stigma given by the wooden house.

That reminded him of another issue: did the stigma have something to do with the Voidword Shrine of Orderia and Skyword Shrine of Violetglory? "Perhaps it's just a coincidence." The two shrines had been left behind after astral wars with Skywolf way back when. Not to mention, the Voidsky Organization that

Skywolf had belonged to included the faceless specters, as in, 'void' of a face, which was why the mysterians liked to use 'void' [2] and 'sky' [3] in their names. The names of the two shrines thus probably originated from the Voidsky Organization, which itself probably had little to do with the ancient way the 'sky' character was written.

He put that line of inquiry on hold. It was just a guess, after all. More than that, he was occupied with the Sky Plundering Tome he had found. He was even more certain that the Sky Palace had something to do with the sky plunderers at this point in time. There was nothing like them across the entire astralscape of order. He took a deep breath as he flipped open the cover to search for answers. Perhaps he would even find the origins of the Sky Palace and a clue to the visions he saw in the ink painting.

He saw a thin row of words on the title page: 'Chronicler: Li Qingwan of the sky plunderers'. Those words stood out to him like no others! More and more, he was convinced of his guesses. The Sky Palace could actually be the Sky Plundering Palace that the Archaionfiend recalled in its jumbled memories. As for Li Qingwan, that was probably an ancient ancestor of Tianming's, though he didn't know how far back. It was probably so far back in antiquity that it would no longer make sense to even count the years that separated them.

The sun had existed relatively untouched by outside forces for ages, allowing the celestial orderians and Myriad Solar Sects to sort of coexist for more than two million years. Anything further back beyond their origins would be considered part of myths. If they were passed down at all, word of mouth or just plain narrative corruption would blur much of the truth of what was said. Apart from the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect, who had recorded their origins all the way to the Primodragon Cave, most other factions couldn't even trace their histories back to their origins.

Time itself wiped away all marks left on history with little exception. After long enough, even the memories of the most glorious empires would be eroded to dust. Even history books or records would rot and fade away, let alone signs of civilization.

Tianming continued flipping through pages as his fingers shook. The next page had more text, and the way it was written seemed even more ancient. It took some time for him to recognize the characters, and much guesswork was also involved.

"The ninth era... Era of Chaotic Skies... During the first year of the Myriadriver calendar... mine people were... to an imperial-class world invited... Flameyellow Imperial Star... Our purpose was naught but... the construction of the Sky Plundering Palace at the imperial star's south pole... from which the flameyellow divinities look proudly at the rest of the universe can...." Those were the main points of that page. Tianming looked it over a few times and was sure of what it said.

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"The ninth era is also called the Era of Chaotic Skies. That and Myriadriver calendar refer to some point in time. 'Mine people' might refer to the sky plunderers." What he couldn't figure out was what 'imperial-class' meant, as well as what the Flameyellow Imperial Star was.

"As far as I know, there's heliacal-, skypiercer-, and deific-class worlds.... Where does the imperial class rank? Is it better than the other three?" Ying Huo said, curious. However, it and its siblings didn't stay long and went off to mess around.

"Imperial class?" Tianming recalled that painting from before that depicted the super sun. It did seem much larger than the Skyway Monostar in his imagination. "Is that what an imperial-class world looks like? One that's much more powerful than all the other classes of worlds?"

1. 天 for sky, 无 for void. Fun fact: 無 is the Traditional Chinese character which has been replaced by 无 in Simplified Chinese, but 无 isn't a recent creation either. Wiktionary speculates that 无 could be an ancient variation of a few characters, among them 天.

https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E6%97%A0#Glyph_origin ?

2. read: wu ?

3. read: tian ?

Chapter 1909

According to the understanding of the people in the Mysterium Cluster, the only deific-class worlds were the powerful worlds located at the center of the universe. If even they weren't aware of imperial-class worlds, one would have to wonder how powerful they truly were. Then again, Tianming didn't think the Mysterium Cluster was the center of the universe at all, so he didn't hold their prejudices.

"The one fact we should never doubt is the endless vastness of the universe and the infinite length of time!" Everyone that looked up at the sky would see how breathtaking the universe was. The Flameyellow Imperial Star alone had already taken Tianming aback.

The words on the first page of the tome depicted the construction of the Sky Plundering Palace. There were only a few pages in the Sky Plundering Tome, each of which only had a few short passages, so it would take a lot of pondering for him to fully understand the scope of what had been written. The second page had about the same number of words.

"Two eras had the flameyellow divinities taken... for the construction of the Flameyellow Firmament. To power and dominance they had risen.... Being subordinate to us, inherited our will to bring prosperity to the universe they have!"

That page was much easier to interpret. The powerful flameyellow divinities were just a subordinate faction of the sky plunderers, which went to show how powerful the sky plunderers really were. The first page detailed how they were invited over to the Flameyellow Imperial Star. In other words, the flameyellow divinities had asked them for protection.

Tianming flipped to the third page and things suddenly seemed to change. "The twilight of the tenth era, the Era of Primordial Antiquity.... The prosperity of the flameyellow divinities invert to ruin... powerful internal strife... dualgod bloodline waning... conflicts mounting... ravaging countless lives... no longer under rule of my race.... Internal strife concluded after the fall of the imperial star... the core flameyellow divinities a fate of extinction experienced... the dualgod bloodline forever extinguished... my race... left with no choice but to abandon the Flameyellow Imperial Star... left the spirit of our people behind to protect the fallen star world...."

The third page had much more content than those before it. He was quite surprised when he read it. While the description of that page seemed bleak, it was clear how terrifying that war must have been for a star world to fall so far in the aftermath, and it was allegedly due to internal strife. That could only

mean the rise of a new faction. There seemed to be many underlying factors, but as someone so far distanced from past events, Tianming could only use his imagination to fill in the blanks. Though he was still befuddled, he had a rough guess about what had happened.

Impatiently, he turned to the last page. "The racial consciousness of the sky plunderers... turned into the wooden building... purpose: leading the denizens of the fallen world... into a new era.... Flameyellow Imperial Star shall henceforth 'the sun' be called... distancing from the Flameyellow Firmament... the dualgod bloodline was into two split... never to return.... Hope and solace for... what remains of Flameyellow... to enjoy a time of restful peace before... nova source runs out..."

It seemed that his guesses had been confirmed by the contents of the last page.

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"Dammit!" Ying Huo snapped. "I discovered a huge secret! The imperial-class world, Flameyellow Imperial Star, is the sun! It's Orderia! I'm a genius!"

Tianming watched it jump about like a madman.

"Really? Chicken Bro, you're a genius!" Lan Huang said.

"Yeah! Little Li, on the other hand, just stood there dumbfounded the entire time," Xian Xian said.

Tianming swore he would lose his mind if he spent more time with this lot of idiots. That aside, he couldn't calm down after learning what he had. He even found it rather hard to believe. "The sun used to be an imperial-class world? So the Flameyellow Imperial Star devolved into Orderia? What about its astralguard and fusion formations? Aren't they only heliacal class?"

When he closed the tome, he realized there were more words on the other side. "For the peace of the survivors... a spark of the dualgod bloodline was left.... My people have for the fallen imperial star... heliacal-class fusion and astralguard formations constructed... over the remains of the Flameyellow Guard Formation and the Flameyellow Fusion Formation... to protect the surviving remnants and disguise the imperial star's true form....

"The core of these heliacal-class formations... the form of the solar core took... two parts of one whole... one half is held in the new Sky Palace the wooden building picked... other half controlled by the surviving remnants.... Though the imperial star has fallen... the original fusion formation persists undamaged.... The cores of both of those original formations, the Flameyellow Coffin and Ninedragon Cruiser, in the imperial star remain.... Should one of my kind this place arrive... ruin not the peaceful rest of these survivors! Leave these two original formations untouched!"

Tianming understood it all now. The original two formations of the Flameyellow Imperial Star referred to the Flameyellow Fusion Formation and the Flameyellow Guard Formation. The astralguard and fusion formations of the current sun had been created by the sky plunderers for the survivors of the internal conflict. Half of the solar core remained in the Sky Palace while the other half was in the possession of the celestial orderians, which lined up with what was stated in the tome.

In other words, the people of the Sky Plundering Palace had completely left after the imperial star fell. All they left were the wooden building—which was the soul and intent of the sky plunderers—and a new Sky Palace that would carry on their will to ensure a stable and peaceful final era for the surviving

denizens of the sun. In other words, the survivors never had a Sky Plundering Palace, only a Sky Palace. The sky plunderers were long gone. It had been millions of years since the sun had taken its current form. Still agitated by learning the truth, Tianming flipped through the tome a few more times.

"From the records, it sounds like my people are powerful, but benevolent. After the fall of the imperial star, they still protected the remnants of its people and warned future generations to not disturb the peace." Tianming would never be able to reach out to any other sky plunderers, if they still existed. This tome and its writer, Li Qingwan, were the only links he had with his bloodline.

Plundering didn't sound like something to be proud of, but their way of justice was something Tianming strove for. It wasn't just a mistaken feeling—he really felt it inside himself! The final words that begged for the peace to be undisturbed was a sign of trust from his forebears. The sun was what the Flameyellow Imperial Star had fallen to, which explained many things. He got his feelings in order before tackling his former doubts with what he had learned.

Chapter 1910

"The dualgod bloodline..." Tianming looked at himself, "if I'm not mistaken, it traces back to people that have both totems and lifebound beasts. They used to be the core of the flameyellow divinities, who are supposedly already extinct. That's why Qingyu and my existence is a shock to the world." He wondered how powerful the totemancer-beastmaster hybrids of antiquity were. "The only question that remains is whether the Flameyellow Firmament still exists." Any strife, internal or not, always had a victor. Perhaps they still laid claim over the place, but had changed the name to something else.

That aside, there was one truth that he figured the celestial orderians and Myriad Solar Sects wouldn't accept. "To think that the ancestors of the celestial orderians and Myriad Solar Sects are the same! Both sides descended from the very same flameyellow divinities!"

It was hard to imagine the two sides that had millions of years of conflict behind them being distantly related like that, even if that relation had diverged eons ago. Even if the truth was revealed now, there was little chance that either side would develop any goodwill for the other. History would only be relevant after the considerations of the present day were addressed. The regression from the imperial star to the sun already marked a new page in the history of the two peoples.

"The records of the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect state that their ancestors were normal humans that gained dragon lifebound beasts after they discovered the Primodragon Cave, but that's probably just a founding myth rather than actual history. After all, nobody in the new age experienced the downfall of the imperial star. The truth has long been buried in the sands of time. Perhaps the sky plunderers intentionally wiped out that history to protect the remnant survivors and prevent information of the past from leaking."

Tianming decided he would ask the Saintdragon Emperor about the historical authenticity of their origins later. Based on the Sky Plundering Tome's information, that seemed no more than a legend. If it was indeed historical fact, the origins of the beastmasters of the Myriad Solar Sects apart from the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect still remained unaddressed. After all, the Emyrean Sword Sect and other sects didn't have the Primodragon Cave to grant them their lifebound beasts.

All that remained in his mind was one last question: did the Flameyellow Continent have something to do with the Flameyellow Imperial Star, seeing as it shared the same name? There was also the chaos skyjail within it, which the Sky Plundering Tome had no records about. The name of the Flameyellow Continent sounded ancient, but so far he didn't see any way to find out more about it.

"After gathering all this information, the true goal of the sun emperor in attacking the defensive formations of the Myriad Solar Sects is becoming clearer." The Sky Plundering Tome stated that the core of the Flameyellow Guard Formation was the Flameyellow Coffin, which seemed to have another function apart from just being a divine artifact. It was likely even more terrifying than the solar core, and able to control the defensive formation of the Flameyellow Imperial Star.

"So even if the sun emperor couldn't enter the Sky Palace Formation to bring down the voidheart worm and take full control of the solar core, he could still fight back against Skywolf using the Flameyellow Guard Formation. Not to mention, since he has the Flameyellow Coffin, he's probably aware of the true history of the sun, as well as the fact that both sides are descended from the flameyellow divinities."

The truth had finally been revealed. It was no wonder the sun emperor was so confident. With the Flameyellow Guard Formation, the cultivators of the sun could even face off against Skywolf, which was probably four times mightier than the sun. The ancient imperial-class astralguard formation probably significantly evened the odds. There would be no need for the solar core at all. Not to mention, the losses suffered in regaining control of the Flameyellow Guard Formation mostly lay on the side of the Myriad Solar Sects, after all. Their former territories were hotspots for nova source, which powered the Flameyellow Guard Formation.

"It looks like everything was predetermined long ago. There was no stopping it."

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The sky plunderers of old had asked for the peace of the sun to not be disturbed, yet the very one to wake up the ancient formation was none other than a descendant of the flameyellow divinities. By now, what Tianming did was no longer considered disturbance or interference.

"Perhaps this is a good thing. At the very least, the sun can't fall to Skywolf." With a greater enemy before them, there was nothing he could do against the sun emperor for now.

Yin Chen told him that the Flameyellow Guard Formation had finished setting itself up. Tianming didn't need to see it for himself, as he had already seen what it looked like in the ink painting.

He flipped through the Sky Plundering Tome one more time. "The Ninedragon Cruiser?" Based on the huge divine astralship with nine dragon heads that he had seen in his vision, he could be sure that it wasn't something of alien make. Instead, it was a divine astralship of the flameyellow divinities! The Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, as it was now, wasn't its complete form, while the one Tianming saw in the vision could be. Not to mention, the tome stated that it was the core of the Flameyellow Fusion Formation. If a divine artifact could serve as a formation core, Tianming wouldn't be surprised if a divine astralship could do the same.

The Flameyellow Fusion Formation might be an imperial-class formation, too, and fusion formations were generally more important than astralguard formations. Tianming had unwittingly obtained a trump card of his own that was even superior to the Divine Sun Palace and Flameyellow Coffin.

"Perhaps the Divine Sun Palace is also a relic left behind by the sky plunderers...." The problem now was that Tianming hadn't unlocked the part of the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb that served as the core of the fusion formation. "Does it have something to do with the ninth strike?"

The Ninedragon Tribulation itself could be something that had been passed down since antiquity. "I wonder how many other amazing things were left behind by the flameyellow divinities in this fallen world!"

There was still much of this vast world to be excavated and explored. Tianming knew that time was short, so he had to master the ninth sword strike as soon as possible. By then, he would have an answer to whether or not the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb was actually the core of the Flameyellow Fusion Formation. If that really was the case, it would be a chance to take back some of what he and the Myriad Solar Sects had lost. At the very least, he wouldn't let the sun emperor reign unchallenged on the sun.

"An imperial-class divine relic like the Flameyellow Coffin must have many secrets. Maybe some of them have to do with the matter of the 'test subjects'. Perhaps the sun emperor used them to recreate the dualgod bloodline that was lost? Maybe the Li Saint Clan inside the chaos skyjail are related to celestial orderians in some way...."

Li Wudi had told him that the celestial orderian founding ancestor was also named Li Shenxiao, but Tianming hadn't been able to verify if that was the truth. However, the celestial orderian myths did state that their first founder was a nonabane. Perhaps that was a legend as well. After all, there was no way the celestial orderian founding ancestor just manifested out of nothing. He had to have been birthed by someone. Maybe this 'founding ancestor' was just one of the first people to be born in the later solar age.