

## The Ages 381

### Chapter 381 - The Grand-Orient Realm's Number One Softie

The news about the Earthorigin Sect's army entering the Grand-Orient Realm couldn't be concealed. The next day, it had spread throughout the Grand-Orient Sect. There was talk of a hundred and fifty thousand troops, on top of a hundred and eighty thousand Elysian purifiers. The Grand-Orient Sect, Onyx Sect, and Southsky Sect were panicked! The joy of their big victory three months ago had now been washed away.

Having sold the realm for support, the Elysian Emperor was reviled by the entire world. But so what? He didn't care about his reputation. All he wanted was to unify the Grand-Orient Realm.

"History is written by the victor. No matter what price he has to pay, the Elysian Emperor intends to be that victor!"

This was known to all. The Grand-Orient Sect was unaware of how much discussion and arguing the two armies had incited. All they knew was that the armies were headed for the sect. On the third day, they arrived in front of the Grand-Orient Mountains.

"Our opponents are becoming more and more formidable. At the beginning, there were only Cloudmist Sword School and Onyx Sect. But now, the Elysian Emperor and Earthorigin Sect's vice sect master marched with an army of three hundred and thirty thousand!"

Within the Grand-Orient Barrier, more than a hundred thousand Onyx legionnaires and Grand-Orient guardians faced a terrible crisis. If they knew that the ninety-nine imperial dragon pulses couldn't be restored, they would be in further turmoil. After all, there were two Sky Saint powerhouses personally leading the opposition.

The Grand-Orient guardians and Onyx legionnaires were in a precarious state. Even if they had Li Wudi, they lacked the resolution they had shown in the previous battle.

In this solemn atmosphere, the armies appeared outside the barrier, intensifying the tremendous pressure. The Elysian purifiers were red-eyed, having been humiliated by the Southsky Sect. The past three months had been miserable for them. Finally, they were here for revenge!

Their densely packed lifebound beasts roared, shaking the Grand-Orient Mountains. Even the Grand-Orient Barrier trembled.

In fact, there might be fewer than the purported three hundred and thirty thousand troops, since some might sneak into the Abyssal Battlefield when the barrier weakened to take the opportunity to attack through the Bottomless Pit, destroying the barrier from within.

"Jun Shengxiao, the great sinner! This time, they mean to burn their bridges."

There was low morale among the Grand-Orient Sect and Onyx Sect. Resistance did little to help mental frailty, and a gloomy atmosphere had enveloped the masses.

Frowning, Tianming looked straight ahead. This was a tense moment. Together with Li Wudi, Ye Shaoqing, the Onyx Emperor, and several others, he stepped out of the barrier, arriving before Heaven's Elysium's army. Since they immediately returned, they weren't noticed.

Compared to the enemy, the Grand-Orient Sect and Onyx Sect certainly lacked in numbers. The other side had a hundred and forty Elysian elders and a hundred Earthorigin elders—at least five times their numbers.

These people stood in front of the armies. Heaven's Elysium was headed by Jun Shengxiao, three Cardinal Kings, Jun Niancang, and more than a hundred elders, while the Earthorigin Sect had its vice sect master, Yuan Hun, junior sect master Yuan Zhen, and a hundred elders. Behind them were the red-eyed, murderous Elysian purifiers and disdainful Earthorigin defenders.

From where Tianming stood, the enemy's armies seemed endless. Both beastmaster and lifebound beast gathered and roars filled the air. Their might and majesty rendered their opponents breathless.

"Why did Li Wudi and his people leave the barrier before the battle?"

With that, all eyes fell upon Li Wudi. Just then, he pulled out an item from his spatial ring and smashed it on the ground. Upon closer inspection, it was a golden head.

"The East Cardinal King!"

At that moment, all Elysian purifiers shot fire from their eyes. Yes, this was Jun Dongyao's head.

Under their watchful gazes, Li Wudi raised his foot and stomped on the head. Narrowing his bloody eyes, he stared at Jun Shengxiao. The two armies were as silent as death, but in an instant, the Elysian purifiers exploded.

"Kill him!!!"

"Avenge the East Cardinal King!"

Unfortunately, it was one of their own who stopped them. Jun Shengxiao's fiery eyes focused on Li Wudi.

"Elysian Emperor, don't get me wrong. I don't mean anything, I just think it's a pity for Brother Jun Dongyao. After all, he never imagined that the father he worshipped for a lifetime actually would sell his land for glory. It's amazing how you could think up such a thing! Aren't you afraid your Heaven's Elysium ancestors might spit on you?"

His provocative gaze fell upon Jun Shengxiao, whose actions were reviled by the entire Grand-Orient Realm, outside of Heaven's Elysium. Within the Grand-Orient Barrier, countless people were cursing at him. On the other hand, the Elysian purifiers were seething in anger.

"Elysian Emperor, Heaven's Elysium brothers, don't listen to this man's nonsense. The Earthorigin Sect has come to help Heaven's Elysium quell the rebellion and save the people of the Grand-Orient Realm. The Elysian Emperor's important contribution will be praised by future generations," said the vice sect master of Earthorigin Sect, Yuan Hun.

"Yuan Hun, you shameless bastard. You might as well come clean about the fact that you're here to profit from our misfortune. You can keep those grandiloquent words to yourself. You're not fooling anyone," sneered Li Wudi. He pointed the Crimsonblood Saber at the Elysian Emperor. "Jun Shengxiao, I heard that you're the strongest man in the Grand-Orient Realm. But in my opinion, you're just the

number one coward! I'd like to see just how much of a softie you are. Do you have the courage to engage in a fight to the death with me?"

As soon as the words fell from his lips, the entire army was in an uproar. Li Wudi's courage was shocking. In truth, the masses looked forward to a battle between the strongest of the Grand-Orient Realm.

In a sect war, battles between the strongest were inadvisable, since such battles would affect morale. However, the strong side would usually refuse the challenge because it was unnecessary.

"Jun Shengxiao, come out and get beaten!" As Li Wudi spoke, he smiled provocatively and sliced the golden head beneath his feet in half. "If you don't agree, I'll cook this right in front of you. Would you like to taste fried golden meat?" His provocation was simply ridiculous.

But this was Li Wudi's style. He loved and hated in extremes, was generous to his relatives, and showed no mercy to his enemies. After all, he was now shouldering the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Was there a need to pay attention to morality in the face of his enemies?

Naturally, Heaven's Elysium was furious. All of their fiery gazes turned to the Elysian Emperor. Although they had an advantage, they hoped the Elysian Emperor could slay Li Wudi with his own hands. Then, their great army would completely destroy the Grand-Orient Sect.

"Elysian Emperor!"

The army directed their passionate outcry toward the Elysian Emperor.

"Brothers of Heaven's Elysium, don't fall for it. Our strength is far superior to theirs, so we don't have to take risks at all. When we destroy the Grand-Orient Sect, the Elysian Emperor will have plenty of opportunities to slaughter Li Wudi!"

Still rational, the Elysian elders declined on behalf of the Elysian Emperor. It wasn't because they didn't believe in his strength, but because Li Wudi was no ordinary person. If they went along with his plan, they might get caught.

How would the Elysian Emperor react? He smiled and said, "Li Wudi, don't use a child's provocation on me. It'll be your turn to die soon enough, but not now. I'll make you watch the fall of the Grand-Orient Sect, so your death will be more enjoyable."

His tone was calm enough to convince Heaven's Elysium. He wasn't going easy on Li Wudi, it just wasn't his time yet.

"You're really amazing, to be able to portray a coward so beautifully and with such refinement." Li Wudi shot him a thumbs-up.

In truth, many Elysian purifiers were still a little upset. After all, Li Wudi had been so provocative that all of them wanted him dead at once. It was obvious that Li Wudi's plan to defeat the enemy by capturing their leader had failed. Many felt a sense of foreboding. Just as the Elysian Emperor and Yuan Hun were about to begin attacking, Tianming walked out.

"Jun Nianchang, she's already dead, so why do this to her? Moving her around like frozen seafood?" Tianming noticed the crystal coffin beside Jun Nianchang.

This time, everyone's attention was focused on Tianming. Son of Li Wudi, he had killed Yueling Long in the Realm War and snatched away the Grand Orient Sword! If it hadn't been for that, the Elysian Emperor would wield the sword in a head-on fight against Li Wudi.

Tianming's smile met Jun Nianchang's bloodshot eyes.

"Are you still able to smile with death approaching?" said Jun Nianchang.

"Of course. After all, the ingredients for this fried golden meat aren't from my head," Tianming echoed Li Wudi. During critical moments, if one wasn't hard on the enemy, how could one protect one's relatives and friends?

"Tianming!" Jun Nianchang could no longer resist.

"Brother Jun, don't bother talking to him. He makes no sense," interjected Yuan Zhen.

"Who do you think you are? Do you have the right to speak?" Tianming turned his hostility on Yuan Zhen instead.

This was his real goal!

"What did you say?" Yuan Zhen was stunned. This was the first time someone of the same age had spoken to him in such a manner.

"I asked who the hell do you think you are, Tortoise Knight!" Glancing at the Hellshaker Black Tortoise at Yuan Zhen's feet, Tianming couldn't help laughing. He had to bestow this title to Yuan Zhen. After all, the first to strike had the advantage.

'Tortoise' was a taboo of the Earthorigin Sect. At this moment, the fiery gazes of all of the Earthorigin Sect troops flitted toward Tianming.

"What are you looking at me for? Aren't you a group of shrinking tortoises?"

No matter how demoralized they were, the spectators laughed thanks to Tianming's vivid description. Being a proud man, Yuan Zhen exploded with murderous intent.

"What are you trying to say, Li Tianming?" snarled Yuan Zhen.

"I'd just like to know if you're like your lifebound beast. Is shrinking your head into your tortoise shell and shivering all you can do?"

"Say it again and I'll pull your tongue out!"

"You're all talk but no action. If you dare, come on then. Don't be a softie like the Elysian Emperor."

Yuan Zhen smiled maliciously.

"Don't listen to him," said vice sect master Yuan Hun.

Tianming's provocations were meaningless.

"Uncle, give me ten breaths' time!"

After all, youths were different from Jun Shengxiao. Yuan Zhen stepped forward, his gaze burning.

"I understand. You want a fight to the death?"

"Yes, but you don't have the guts."

"Fuck off!" roared Yuan Zhen. Even the ground before him shook.

"Yuan Zhen!" warned Yuan Hun.

"Ten breaths' time! I'll kill him immediately. How dare he speak that way! I must tear his mouth apart!"

As Yuan Zhen spoke, Tianming drew the Grand-Orient Sword and stepped onto the battlefield.

"The Grand-Orient Sword!"

Many were only now aware that Li Wudi had actually handed such a precious weapon to Tianming. At that instant, their expressions shifted. Although they knew this was probably a trap, its allure was too great.

The Realm War determined the ownership of the Grand-Orient Sword, which couldn't be seized afterward. However, during the sect war, the Elysian Emperor would be allowed to hold the sword if Tianming was killed. Once the Elysian Emperor won the war and unified the Grand-Orient Realm, the Theocracy of the Ancients wouldn't care, would they?

The Elysian Emperor and Yuan Hun exchanged meaningful glances. Since they didn't stop Yuan Zhen, neither would the others.

What everyone was thinking was—Three months ago, Tianming's strength was equivalent to the third level of Heavenly Will. How could he compete with a genius at seventh-level Heavenly Will?

Many Grand-Orient and Onyx Sect members appeared forlorn. Like Yuan Huitian, many of them had personally witnessed how close Yuan Zhen had come to killing Tianming. How would he face the enemy?

Among the crowd, Li Wudi was the only one who casually folded his arms and smiled. Everything was under control; all he had to do was watch the show.

"Earthorigin defenders, watch the clock! Ten breaths is all I need!" yelled Yuan Zhen. With the Hellshaker Black Tortoise, he charged directly into the battlefield. The two young men met right between both armies and commenced a battle of life and death.

### **Chapter 382 - A Storm Of Blood**

"Tianming, if you hadn't escaped last time, your corpse would be rotting by now. How the hell did you get the courage to provoke me? Have you grown tired of living?!" As Yuan Zhen spoke, he stomped on the ground. A large crack extended from his feet all the way to Tianming.

The gigantic fifth-order saint beast, the Hellshaker Black Tortoise, crushed the ground with its four heavy legs. Although its body was huge, it was rather agile. As its limbs and head retreated into its shell, the tortoise drilled into the earth. The hard ground became as soft as the sea as a huge ball of soil rolled toward Tianming.

"Brother, this tortoise shell is too hard. Meow Meow and I will have difficulty breaking it. Coupled with its shrinking head, we might not be able to deal with it," said Ying Huo.

Dozens of snakes made from unyielding energy condensed around the tortoise. They seemed thicker than Meow Meow's Ninefold Chaos Thunderscape, and almost indestructible.

"Such a hard tortoise shell can only be split by the Grand-Orient Sword, so I'll leave Yuan Zhen to you. Make sure you beat this arrogant dog to pieces!" Tianming charged forth while communicating with Ying Huo and Meow Meow.

"God, you're so longwinded!"

This time, Meow Meow didn't transform into his Regal Chaosfiend form. After all, it was more lethal with its tiny body now. In the midst of the huge earthquake, a flash of flame and a black lightning bolt descended. With Feiling's Temporal Field, their speed soared.

Feiling's ability had improved in all aspects, since she'd recovered from using Soulburn. Previously, her Temporal Field could only slow down the enemy, but now she could speed up her teammates as well. With one accelerating while the other decelerated, their combat effectiveness was enhanced.

The black cat was enveloped in its Ninefold Chaos Thunderscape. Although its body was small, its Chaos Disaster was explosive. Countless electric snakes poured from the sky, all of which were headed for the top of Yuan Zhen's head.

Wherever the black lightning landed, the ground was as charred as black as charcoal. And in that endless rain of lightning, numerous flames flickered.

When Tianming had mastered the second stage of the Shenxiao Sword Art, Ying Huo and Meow Meow's combined fighting powers reached a greater strength with the fusion of thunder and fire.

Voidgod Sword Intent!

"Take this!" Ying Huo's Infernal Haze enveloped Yuan Zhen, its innumerable duplicates appearing densely packed around him. Amidst the confusion, Ying Huo slashed its Goldflame Featherblade in four successive moves, each strike stronger than the one before.

The first strike, Countercurrent! The second strike, Starfall!

Yuan Zhen also wore heavy armor on his body, a defensive bestial weapon with ten saintly heavenly patterns. Its shape truly resembled a tortoise shell. Despite the lack of elegance, its defense was amazing. The thick, heavy soil armor managed to resist Ying Huo's Voidgod Sword Intent and Meow Meow's Chaos Disaster.

"Can such tiny beasts be considered lifebound beasts? You're an embarrassment to all lifebound beasts!" Yuan Zhen chuckled coldly. Ten breaths was almost over. If he couldn't defeat Tianming soon, he would be humiliated.

Yuan Zhen pulled out a huge black battleaxe from his spatial ring. It was frighteningly cold and had a blood-red face on its surface, complete with eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Staring at Ying Huo and Meow Meow, it sneered coldly. It obviously possessed illusion-type abilities. This was the saintly bestial weapon, the Phantom Battleaxe, which had eleven saintly heavenly patterns. Such precious weapons were a rarity among youths their age.

"I'd be shaming my ancestors if I had a bastard tortoise like you for a son!" Ying Huo rolled on the ground, bursting out in laughter. His laughing fit and the phrase "bastard tortoise" was a shame Yuan Zhen never had to endure.

"Go to hell!" With the Phantom Battleaxe in both hands, Yuan Zhen exercised an extraordinary heavenly battle art, the Mountrazer Canon. It was the strongest heavenly battle art of the Earthorigin Sect, and included forty-nine hacks. Even a mountain would crumble after forty-nine continuous hacks. After all, the strength contained in each successive hack increased.

Chaos Disaster slammed into the battleaxe. The electricity had Yuan Zhen's eyes rolling to the back of his head. Before he could react, the little chick had appeared behind him. With a wave of Voidgod Sword Intent, Ying Huo stabbed Yuan Zhen in an indescribable place.

"Ahh!!"

In that instant, fresh blood spurted. The battlefield broke out in fury. Many couldn't help but squeeze their legs together as they stared at the two devilish beasts. They had personally witnessed Yuan Zhen bleeding from his anus. Fortunately, he wasn't seriously injured, just enraged. His eyes turned crimson.

When he glanced at Tianming, monstrous anger and endless humiliation, as well as frustration, washed over his being. He watched as Tianming fought the tortoise that drilled out of the ground. Folding its limbs, the tortoise turned into an indestructible iron ball. It shot toward Tianming's head, spinning at high speeds.

Sacred Mountain Slammer!

Tianming narrowly escaped, but the ground cracked open once more. The earth was devastated by the tortoise's moves.

"Die!" roared the Hellshaker Black Tortoise. In a continuous display of its abilities, the tortoise unleashed Thousand Earthspike.

Thousands of spikes erupted, the sharp rocks penetrating the ground and locking on to Tianming's position. Although Tianming ascended into the sky with his Celestial Wings, the Thousand Earthspike exploded like arrows leaving the bow.

Countless Spatial Walls were erected in front of Tianming, blocking the tortoise's spikes. "My turn!" A cold light flashed past Tianming's eyes. In his hand was the Grand-Orient Sword that everyone longed for. At that moment, the Grand-Orient Vortex roiled and all the strength he possessed gathered in his Imperial Will. Ying Huo's Infernal Will and Meow Meow's Lightning Will condensed in the sword.

"Let's see how hard your tortoise shell is. Can you resist the Grand-Orient Sword?" At that moment, there was a combination of thunder and fire within Tianming. Both his infernalsource and thundersource integrated and immeasurable beast ki burst forth as the three Heavenly Wills merged. Half of Tianming's body burned with flames while the other half roared with thunder.

Shenxiao Sword Art, the second strike! This was the first time Tianming had put it to full use after mastering the move. White hair fluttering in the wind, Tianming rose to the sky and ferociously slashed down.

At that moment, many saw in him the shadow of Li Shenxiao, the legendary first ancestor. The power of thunder and fire merged with his Imperial Will, unleashing a suppression equivalent to two eternal emperors.

"Haha!" The tortoise seemed confident in its own defense. Like a sacred mountain, it spun from the ground and smashed in Tianming's direction. It had crushed countless opponents into smithereens with this move. In the face of Tianming, who had almost been punched to death by Yuan Zhen, it was full of fighting spirit and a monstrous momentum.

The Grand-Orient Sword sliced down at the top of that spinning mountain. Sparks flew and flesh was ripped apart as the tortoise was split in half. Blood splattered everywhere, turning Tianming's white hair red. The tortoise slammed into the ground, its blood flowing like a river.

The tortoise never spoke a word because it never imagined it would be split in half. Of course, it knew that Tianming's sword was a terrifyingly powerful divine weapon. But even then, it didn't believe an infant like Tianming could exert the sword's power. As a result, it paid the price with its life.

The battlefield fell into absolute silence. This was what Yuan Zhen saw as soon as he turned around: his lifebound beast, known for its defense, had been slaughtered by Tianming's sword. The scene was so unbelievable he was momentarily stunned.

"Tianming!!" Yuan Zhen let out a terrible roar, his eyes blood-red. By this point, he had almost forgotten about Ying Huo and Meow Meow. Having fallen into extreme madness, his face was distorted into a bitter grimace. Legs shaking, he charged toward Tianming.

"Tortoise bastard Yuan Zhen, it's your turn. Let me ask you now, who's the loser?" Tianming threw his head back in laughter. Amidst the sparks of lightning and flames, his Celestial Wings fluttered and afterimages of his figure flashed past as lightning gathered on the Grand-Orient Sword.

Fulguros Imperius! His sword was swift and fierce. Enveloped in black lightning, the sword in his hands was bursting with infinite power. Yuan Zhen's insides were torn apart, his pride and self-confidence horribly trampled on and his reason overwhelmed by rage. Could he still recall the arrogance he had previously shown? After three days, Tianming's performance made him sit up and take notice. What about three months?

"You're dead meat! The Earthorigin Sect's army will destroy your entire family! We'll slay the entire Grand-Orient Sect and leave nothing behind!" cried Yuan Zhen. The death of his lifebound beast meant his life was ruined. He never expected Tianming would have the courage to offend the Earthorigin Sect.

"Stop bragging!"

Just as Yuan Zhen was about to execute the Mountrazer Canon, a cold laugh sounded in his ear. As soon as he remembered the devil-like little chick, his hair stood on end. Then, he felt a chill under his crotch.

### **Chapter 383 - Well Done!**

Yuan Zhen abruptly turned around. Between the sparks of lightning and flames, Ying Huo's Pyros Imperius pierced an indescribable place.



"Ahh!!" Yuan Zhen turned red, his body convulsing as he let out a tragic cry. In a rage, he lost his mind and wanted to kill Tianming, only to find that the little chick had snuck an attack from behind. The lethality of Pyros Imperius left a bloody hole in his bottom.

At the same time, Chaos Disaster rained down on Yuan Zhen's head once more, dealing severe damage. However, Yuan Zhen remained standing and swinging his battleaxe at Tianming, a clear sign of his tenacity.

"Farewell!" Wrapped in black thunder, a fiend-like Tianming swept past, dragging the Grand-Orient Sword across the ground. A charred ravine was left in the ground.

In the instant Ying Huo pierced Yuan Zhen's bottom and Meow Meow's Chaos Disaster struck, the Grand-Orient Sword flashed, unleashing Fulgueros Imperius. With a thud, the Phantom Battleaxe flew out. Eyes wide, Yuan Zhen was decapitated and his body collapsed to the ground.

Archfiend in his left hand, Tianming hooked Yuan Zhen's head and swung it back. Turning around, Tianming held out the youth's head toward the hordes of Heaven's Elysium and the Earthorigin Sect and roared, "Yuan Zhen is dead! Earthorigin Sect, you shrinking little tortoises, come on then, kill me!"

His words were spoken boldy and fervently, and the silent battlefield detonated with monstrous rage.

In fact, when the Hellshaker Black Tortoise was slaughtered, the Earthorigin Sect had several powerhouses coming to rescue Yuan Zhen. However, Li Wudi was no weakling. His Ancient Infernalblood Kunpeng spewed out a bloody torrent that converged into an ocean, forcing Yuan Hun and the others back at once. In that instant, Tianming slew Yuan Zhen and used his head as a provocation. Yuan Zhen's tragic death had the Earthorigin Sect seeing red.

"He killed Yuan Zhen!"

"God, Yuan Zhen is the Earthorigin Sect's junior sect master. They're clearly taking advantage!"

"I seem to recall that he was on par with Yueling Long three months ago. At seventh level Heavenly Will, Yuan Zhen was the most talented Earthorigin Sect genius!"

"What kind of cultivation speed is this?!"

They couldn't hide the shock, incomprehension, stupefaction, hatred, humiliation, impatience, disbelief, and other emotions. Clearly, Tianming possessed courage and strength, as well as incredible resources. Logically speaking, the Grand-Orient Sect should aim at Heaven's Elysium and steer clear of provoking the Earthorigin Sect.

"He killed the Earthorigin Sect's junior sect master. They were originally here to take advantage of our misfortune and might not have given their best. But now they've gone mad!"

the furious Earthorigin troops joined the outraged Heaven's Elysium. Holding up Yuan Zhen's head, Tianming looked out at the enemy's troops with fiery eyes. "I'll hang Yuan Zhen's head on our Sacred Mountain for every disciple to spit on. What can you tortoise bastards do?"

With that, he turned to Li Wudi, who flashed a bright smile, grabbed Tianming's shoulder, and gave him a thumbs-up. Then, the two returned to the barrier with the others.

"Kill him!!"

This was the most hatred Tianming had ever provoked, and it was at Li Wudi's encouragement. Otherwise, he wouldn't dare offend the Earthorigin Sect.

"Well done," praised Li Wudi.

"I'm done. It's your turn next, you old drunkard. Don't drop the ball," said Tianming.

"Don't worry. How many we can kill today depends on how much hatred you've managed to provoke," laughed Li Wudi.

By this point, Li Wudi and the Grand-Orient and Onyx Sects' powerhouses had passed through the barrier. As they walked, they saw countless Grand-Orient guardians and Onyx legionnaires staring passionately at Tianming.

"You have our admiration, Junior Sect Master!"

Before the battle had even begun, the Earthorigin Sect's junior sect master was slaughtered. Yuan Zhen's fear-filled gaze was still vivid in their minds. Such an exciting scene boosted the Grand-Orient Sect and Onyx Sect's morale, and the flames of war had their blood boiling as they cheered for Tianming. Time makes the hero, and today, that man was Tianming.

The courageous battle had enhanced the two sects' combat effectiveness. On the other hand, the Earthorigin Sect had been disgraced.

Headed by Li Wudi, the powerhouses gathered on the Sacred Mountain. They watched Heaven's Elysium and the Earthorigin Sect's armies roar as they surged forth. The densely-packed lifebound beasts and their beastmasters rushed into the Grand-Orient Barrier.

The earth quaked and the mountains shook as impassioned cries rocked the sky. This was the most dangerous moment in the history of the Grand-Orient Sect. There was a huge disparity in strength between both sides, so the results of this life and death battle would be revealed in a quarter-hour. Although they couldn't personally witness it, they knew that Jun Shengxiao and Yuan Hun would be at the forefront of the battlefield, especially since the latter was thunderstruck before the battle.

"If I don't destroy the Grand-Orient Sect to avenge Yuan Zhen, how will I answer to my father and eldest brother!" Although he was surrounded by black robes, his heart trembled violently as the green glint in his eyes flashed.

"Li Wudi is too bold. He dared kill your junior sect master! He thinks his talent is so great that he can walk around with his nose in the air. Brother Yuan Hun, you can't let him go!" The light in Jun Shengxiao's eyes were icy. In truth, he was happy to see this happen, having previously been worried the Earthorigin Sect wouldn't give their all. Now, everything was going as he desired.

"What other means does Li Wudi have that makes him so bold?" Yuan Hun led his army into the barrier, which lacked imperial dragon pulses.

"It may be a bluff," replied Jun Shengxiao.

No matter the reason, it was too late for caution, since the Earthorigin Sect's army had already charged forward with him, together with Heaven's Elysium's army. With such rage, he couldn't call them back.

"This Grand-Orient Barrier is useless! Where are the imperial dragon pulses? If they don't come out, we'll be able to destroy the Grand-Orient Sect in less than ten breaths!" Yuan Hun wrinkled his brows. The weaker the sect appeared, the more suspicious it seemed to him.

According to various indications, everything Tianming had done was to deliberately arouse their anger.

At the moment, Yuan Hun and Jun Shengxiao had almost made it out of the barrier. They were facing thirty-three sacred peaks. The three hundred and thirty thousand-strong army had all entered the barrier, filling it completely. Amazingly, there was not one Grand-Orient guardian in the barrier, and the spirit hazards posed no hindrance. When Jun Shengxiao and Yuan Hun looked up, they saw a bloody-haired man sitting on top of the Ancient Infernalblood Kunpeng, a strange smile rising to his lips.

"Jun Shengxiao, let me warmly remind you, don't underestimate the Li Saint Clan. Upstarts like Heaven's Elysium can't comprehend our foundations. But you can choose to tremble on your knees."

What did he mean? At that moment, all of the multicolored barrier spirit threads turned red at the same time, resembling blood vessels. Their numbers increased by more than ten times, covering the entire area of the thirty-three sacred peaks. It seemed as if the land beneath the Grand-Orient Sect was covered with a bloody net.

The most dazzling change came from the Sacred Mountain. In the Grand-Orient Sacred Hall, the powerhouses of the Grand-Orient and Onyx Sect were gathered. Li Wudi had instructed them to wait there for orders. The present situation made Huangfu Fengyun and the others nervous; upon hearing the deafening roars, the elders seemed despondent.

Just then, the ninety-nine barrier nuclei before them were suddenly stained with blood. Like red dye thrown into clear lake water, the color instantly spread. Then, the barrier nuclei began dividing, splitting into two and then four. In the end, each barrier nucleus divided into sixteen. Thus, the number of barrier nuclei had increased by sixteen times. Every powerhouse at the Saint stage could set foot on a crimson barrier nucleus.

"What is this change?"

At first, they were shocked, but they were experienced folk. After hesitating for a moment, infinite power seemed to explode in each of their eyes. Obviously, this was Li Wudi's trump card. Although no one knew what would happen next, they immediately stepped up to the nearest barrier nucleus and contributed their strength to operate the new barrier.

At the same time, the barrier spirit threads began absorbing beast ki from all the Grand-Orient Sect and Onyx Sect disciples. Spirit threads were wrapped around every disciple, including more than forty thousand Grand-Orient guardians and nearly seventy thousand Onyx legionnaires. Not one of them had entered the battlefield, but they served to power the bloody barrier, so a formidable force was born.

In almost an instant, that force exploded within the range of the Grand-Orient Barrier. When the enemy's troops charged forward to kill, blood ki suddenly appeared from the land under their feet and a thick, bloody fog enveloped the entire battlefield. The new barrier had replaced the old Grand-Orient

Barrier. This was one that Tianming was very familiar with. He had practiced within this barrier every day, but this time, its scope had expanded dozens of times, engulfing the thirty-three peaks.

"The Bloodbane Barrier!"

When the answer was finally revealed, Tianming was dumbfounded. He recalled that Li Wudi had tasked him with comprehending the Bloodbane Barrier; however, he'd never imagined that the Bloodbane Barrier guarding the Li Mausoleum would replace the Grand-Orient Barrier.

### **Chapter 384: Ultimate Counterattack**

Qingyu had said that the Bloodbane Barrier was the number one barrier in the Grand-Orient Realm and didn't need to be activated or fueled, for it could power itself. Yet now, it had increased its coverage by sixteen times. In other words, the Bloodbane Barrier wasn't a true self-powered barrier. When it absorbed the life energy of everyone within it, it could expand to protect the whole sect. Tianming finally knew what trump card Li Wudi was holding.

At that moment, Li Wudi's deep, righteous voice rang out within the terrifying barrier. "Jun Shengxiao, Yuan Hun, do you understand now? The Bloodbane Barrier is the most powerful barrier in the history of the Grand-Orient Realm! For tens of thousands of years, nobody dared to attempt to enter it! They were unable to enter Li Mausoleum. But did you really think our ancestors were afraid of people desecrating their graves? Did you think they would value their graves more than the lives of the countless generations of disciples that would come after them? You people just don't understand what kind of righteous people our ancestors were. Their charisma and foresight isn't something you lot can understand!

"Now, let me show you the true trump card of the Grand-Orient Sect. Want to step onto our turf and end our long-lasting legacy? We'll make sure you die here and now. Your blood shall be sacrificed to the Bloodbane Barrier!"

Everyone in the sect teared up as they finally understood that the ancestors of the Li Saint Clan had predicted that the future generations would eventually decline. So, they had long made preparations and created the Bloodbane Barrier as an ultimate weapon to be passed down through the generations.

If it weren't for their survival depending on it, Li Wudi wouldn't have brought it out. After all, nobody would dare step into their territory in fear of the barrier if word got out, so they wouldn't be able to heavily wound Heaven's Elysium. When the power of the barrier surged, the Grand-Orient guardians didn't even need to join the fray themselves. All they had to do was become one of the sources of power the barrier could draw from.

"Everyone from the Grand-Orient Sect and Onyx Sect, give the Bloodbane Barrier your power!"

"Yes!"

It was time for their ultimate counterattack. The thick, bloody mist swallowed up the massive invading army. The Bloodbane Barrier had far too many targets to kill, so its retaliation definitely wasn't as strong as when people entered Li Mausoleum, but even so, it was terrifying enough.

Within the thick, bloody mist, countless rays of blood-colored wind, fire, water, earth, and lightning kunpeng apparitions engaged in an unbridled slaughter. The moment someone was injured, toxin from the bloody mist would enter their bloodstream and cause them to bleed to death from their orifices.

What was more terrifying was that the thick mist caused many people to lose their way within the barrier. The mist covered an area ten times as large as the Grand-Orient Barrier. It was just like a giant bloody beast that swallowed the whole army into its stomach before slowly digesting them all. Just like Li Wudi had said, corpses of their enemies piled up and rivers of blood began to flow.

Even then, the corpses weren't preserved, as the Bloodbane Barrier disintegrated them before absorbing their energy, whether it be the bodies of beastmasters or carcasses of lifebound beasts. The more lives the barrier took, the stronger it became. Though it had only just begun, a staggering number of people from Heaven's Elysium and the Earthorigin Sect were crying out in pain. Blood-colored spirit hazards were unleashed all across the barrier, ushering in even more shrieks of agony. The sight of corpses being absorbed by the barrier made for an even more nightmarish scene.

"The Bloodbane Barrier is the punishment the ancestors left behind for those who attempt to wipe out the legacy of the Grand-Orient Sect."

It was rather fair—anyone that didn't invade them wouldn't be killed. If their enemies still wanted to kill them, they had better be ready to be killed in return. Today, Heaven's Elysium was once more shaken, but far worse than the time before. Within the bloody mist, Jun Shengxiao and Yuan Hun grew ever gimmer. The Elysian Emperor was about to spout blood from rage again.

"Retreat! Retreat!" Even though those words were humiliating, it was his only choice. He almost sounded like he was crying when he ordered the retreat, though he didn't even need to say it, for the Earthorigin defenders and Elysian purifiers had long since started running away. How could they fight an enemy they couldn't even see? Some were so terrified that they even tripped as they ran, only to be trampled to death by the lifebound beasts of their allies.

"Aaagh!"

"Run! Run now!"

"Heaven's Elysium lost! The Grand-Orient Sect won!"

An atmosphere of doom and despair had clouded their heads.

Seeing the huge victory, everyone in the Grand-Orient and Onyx Sect tried even harder to fuel the Bloodbane Barrier with their energy.

"Godfather, will the barrier be able to kill off all the Elysian purifiers and Earthorigin defenders?" Tianming asked as he watched the slaughter.

"There's no way it'll be able to. Do you think they're helpless? The Bloodbane Barrier is powerful, but its area is too wide. Too much of its power has been spread too thin for it to be able to envelop the entire army. With so many of them, it won't be hard for them to find an exit. The best we can do is kill as many as we can. Killing them all is out of the question; it's not our ancestors that are controlling the barrier, but us," Li Wudi explained.

"Got it." Tianming felt that it would be too terrifying and easy if they could kill off the entire invading army with a single barrier.

"Our goal today is to heavily wound Heaven's Elysium and the Earthorigin Sect so they'll have a hard time attacking the Southsky Sect."

"Won't the Earthorigin Sect come back for revenge for their loss today?"

"I doubt they'd dare. They only came because they thought we were easy pickings. If we didn't give them a show of force, they'd think the Grand-Orient Realm was full of pushovers. Not to mention, while it looks like the Earthorigin Realm is unified on the surface, internal conflict isn't uncommon there. They also have quite a few enemies in hiding, waiting for them to suffer a huge loss. The only way to deal with greedy folks like them is to rip their talons out and get them to flee. If we show weakness, they'll double down on us, understand?" That was the reason Li Wudi had gone all out and allowed Tianming to kill Yuan Chen, luring the Earthorigin defenders into the Bloodbane Barrier's range.

"I didn't know that before, but now I do." Tianming agreed with Li Wudi's assessment of the situation. There were many people who didn't know when to stop for their own good; their greed couldn't be sated by anything other than a sound beating.

"Our ancestors' foresight truly is impressive. As their descendants, we have to continue their legacy and protect the sect, so as to not disappoint them," Li Wudi said with a tear in his eye as he beheld the majesty of the barrier from afar. He should no longer have any regrets, having lived up to the name he shared with his ancestors.

"Godfather, you and Uncle Yang are both people who have influenced me deeply. Uncle Yang taught me to righteously wield my sword, while you taught me to be bold, ruthless, and live uncompromisingly to my own principles."

"Who's Uncle Yang?"

"My mother's friend, the potentate of Vermillion Bird's Heaven's Sanctum."

"Haha, that's actually your..." Li Wudi suddenly shut his mouth as he thought, Wait, that's your dad, Li Muyang, right?

"Godfather?"

"Come, let's see how badly they've lost!" Li Wudi pulled him onto his Ancient Infernalblood Kumpeng and entered the Bloodbane Barrier. Though the mist was quite thick, they were able to see the battle clearly. Heaven's Elysium was losing just as badly as they had thought, and the Earthorigin Sect wasn't faring any better, either.

"Haha, the Earthorigin Sect dared lust after the Grand-Orient Realm's lands,... They'll be spitting it all back out now. As for Jun Shengxiao, Heaven's Elysium's achievements over the past millennia have been ruined by his hands alone," Li Wudi said. He didn't care about holding back against the Earthorigin Sect, for showing weakness would only cause their foes to grow bolder. The only way to prevent future invasions was to utterly crush them here and now. The kumpeng flew out of the barrier and they saw many Elysian purifiers and Earthorigin defenders that managed to escape. Even though there were injuries here and there, they were all pale from the shock.

"Damn, the barrier's range is too small. Otherwise, at least two hundred thousand of them would've been killed!" Li Wudi snapped. Even so, he knew he was already pushing the limits of what the barrier could achieve.

"Heaven's Elysium lost at least sixty thousand, and the Earthorigin Sect lost around fifty thousand, yet we didn't lose a single soldier. This is truly magnificent. I wonder what Jun Shengxiao and Yuan Hun's expressions are like now?" Li Wudi said after a little more thought.

"Only two hundred thousand of their troops remain. Heaven's Elysium had two hundred and fifty thousand purifiers, but now a hundred and thirty thousand of them are dead. They're not much stronger than the Southsky Sect now. As for the Earthorigin defenders, fewer than a hundred thousand of them remain." Tianming was once more awed by how impressive the Li Saint Clan's ancestors were.

"If you hadn't killed Yuan Chen, the Earthorigin defenders definitely would've hidden on the sidelines, given how opportunistic they are. You truly did well, luring them in. You basically killed twenty thousand of them alone," Li Wudi said, patting his shoulder.

"Godfather, were you serious about challenging the Elysian Emperor?"

"Of course not. I knew that fellow wouldn't dare. Jun Shengxiao has always been a careful person. It's too bad that anger has clouded his judgment. I only challenged him to set things up for you."

"Set up?"

"That's right. While Jun Shengxiao could endure my first provocation, their group as a whole wouldn't be able to endure a second. As a natural consequence, Yuan Chen took the provocation and came out to die, dooming twenty thousand of his own in the process."

"Truly impressive." Tianming was quite impressed by Li Wudi's understanding of the enemy.

"That's a given. I've been looking into Yuwen Taiji and Jun Shengxiao for years. I know which buttons to push to get them to dance to my tune." Li Wudi was no doubt a most patient predator. It must have taken a lot of restraint for him to not use the Bloodbane Barrier during the first battle of the sect war. That had allowed him to rope the Earthorigin Sect into the slaughter as well.

The two of them headed toward the retreating enemy. When they arrived, those that had managed to retreat were gone while the ones left behind in the barrier had already been absorbed.

"That idiot Jun Nianchang... He's escaping with his frozen seafood again," Tianming said.

"That's awkward."

"Huh, so he wants to bury Yueling Long on the sacred mountain? Think he might try again?" Tianming wondered, watching the terrified enemy forces.

"Jun Nianchang does sound like he has some spunk, unlike his father. However, he now suffers from a stigma. I'm not saying he's necessarily evil. Heck, he might've been your friend had you met under different circumstances. It's just a shame that things played out the way they did."

"I know. People are varied and different. They might have the same goals, but entirely different ways to achieve them. Even so, no matter who it is, I will eliminate those who wish me dead."

That was his driving principle. He could accept Jun Niancang as he was, and even believed that he was a good person at heart, but that wouldn't stop him from killing him if the need arose. The only way out of an inevitable clash was for him to let go of Yueling Long, but was that even in the realm of possibility?

### **Chapter 385: Together Until Our Hair Whitens**

At the Grand-Orient Mountains, the army that escaped from the Bloodbane Barrier hurriedly gathered together. Many of them were injured, and some were even missing limbs. They had seen their comrades and lifebound beasts die and pile up into mountains before being absorbed nightmarishly by the barrier. Now, their morale was lower than ever. They felt the pressure of defeat weighing down so heavily on them they could barely breathe.

"E-Elysian Emperor... the North Cardinal King and West Cardinal King have perished! There are fewer than eighty elysian elders remaining, with most of them having been specifically targeted by the Bloodbane Barrier...."

"Elysian Emperor... another fifty thousand of our own have perished. Currently, fewer than a hundred and twenty thousand Elysian purifiers remain...."

These words made Jun Shengxiao feel like he had been pierced with three Venomdrake Spikes. It was no longer a matter of vomiting blood, the shock was causing him utmost torture. The rest saw the Elysian Emperor with his head lowered and hands clasped together, as if he was taking the news calmly. But in actuality, his innards were bleeding profusely and the muscle fibers in his body were so tense they were tearing.

"Heaven's Elysium is done for!"

"So much for unifying the Grand-Orient Realm. We haven't even managed to kill a thousand enemies, yet we already lost so many of our own brothers and sisters!"

"It's too horrid. We've been played by Li Wudi twice in a row! We've been goaded into getting ourselves killed!"

"With Heaven's Elysium being half crushed, there's no way the Grand-Orient Realm can be unified."

"What a shame! It's the most humiliating defeat to ever occur in the past millennia!"

"Elysian Emperor, admit defeat and cut our losses! Stop sending our comrades to their death and let's go back!"

Many of them had lost their souls, not to mention their dignity. The only things that remained in the Elysian purifiers' minds was terror and humiliation. They felt that the Elysian Emperor was no longer someone they could rely on, especially after how badly he had been toyed with at Li Wudi's hands. Continuing to follow his lead would only cause more of them to die for his ambitions.

"Elysian Emperor, I beg you, please retreat and let us recover for three thousand years before making another attempt to unify the realm." That opinion was shared by many.

"Men!" All of a sudden, the Elysian Emperor opened his eyes that were as bloodshot as Jun Niancang's. He now seemed like an injured lion driven only by bloodlust, vengeance, and what remained of his pride.



"Behead everyone who's spreading nonsense right now. Start with elders Zhao Qing and Qian Xun!"

"Understood!"

The Elysian Emperor still held absolute authority. Despite losing much of his subordinates' confidence, he was still able to dictate their life and death.

"Aaaah!" cried the ones that were killed by their own comrades.

"Jun Shengxiao, you've lost for sure! If this goes on, it won't take ten days for Heaven's Elysium to be ruined by your hands! There will no longer be a Heaven's Elysium in the Grand-Orient Realm!"

"The achievements of our ancestors will all perish at the hands of a selfish person like you! I don't need you to kill me! I'll end myself while I can still bring myself to face our forebears and ancestors!"

Before the two elders were killed, they ended their own lives as tears streamed down their faces. When the others saw their lifeless bodies, they watched without making a single sound.

They hadn't seen anybody who was so happy to die before. The words of the elders rang out nonstop in their minds. It was like a nightmare that had come true. Every one of them had family or friends that perished in the sect war. They had ended up like that precisely because they had underestimated their foes, and Jun Shengxiao, as their leader, should bear the responsibility for it.

Currently, Jun Shengxiao was so haggard that he couldn't even walk a few steps without stumbling slightly.

It wasn't too different on the side of Earthorigin Sect. They had sent an army of a hundred and fifty thousand people to take advantage of the situation, only to have their junior sect master killed along with suffering fifty thousand casualties without even managing to slay a single Grand-Orient Sect disciple.

"Vice Sect Master, how can we explain this to the rest of the sect when we get back? We've lost fifty thousand of our comrades! We didn't even manage to retrieve the junior sect master's head! If Vice Sect Master had stopped Yuan Chen at the start, instead of giving Li Tianming the chance to provoke him, we wouldn't have lost so many people!"

"Shut up!" Yuan Hun roared, finally quieting everyone down. There was no way he felt any better than Jun Shengxiao.

"Vice Sect Master, the Earthorigin Sect paid the price of fifty thousand lives. We have to retreat now! Ignore those idiots of Heaven's Elysium!"

"There's no way we from the Earthorigin Sect can retreat after losing fifty thousand. Do you want us to be a laughing stock throughout the entire Theocracy?!"

The elders began arguing with one another.

"Did you not hear that I asked you all to shut up?" Yuan Hun roared again.

The Earthorigin defenders fell completely silent. All they could do was swallow their words and sob.

"Yuan Hun!" Jun Shengxiao said as he came over. The two looked at each other and formed a mini heavenly pattern barrier for a secret conversation.

"Elysian Emperor, let us be direct. Even I didn't expect the bastards of the Li Saint Clan to have hidden their Bloodbane Barrier so well. The two of us have seen firsthand how powerful the number-one barrier in the Grand-Orient Realm is. Even if the whole Earthorigin Sect comes to fight, we may not be able to destroy the Grand-Orient Sect. Let's forget them! You won't be able to deal with the barrier within three thousand years!" Yuan Hun was so angry that he had lost all respect for the Elysian Emperor.

"It's not that hyperbolic. We only need another reinforcement of a hundred and fifty thousand troops from you. If we plan this out well, there'll be a way."

"Another hundred and fifty thousand? Do you think our sect has gone mad? There's no way we'll agree unless you also cede us the territory belonging to the Onyx Sect," Yuan Hun said with a smirk.

"Impossible!"

"Then your request is also impossible."

"Will your sect be able to endure the loss of your junior sect master and fifty thousand brethren?!"

"It's not a matter of endurance. It's whether we can afford to lose them. Do you think we have no enemies in the Earthorigin Realm? There's no way we can possibly take so much risk to help you take over the Grand-Orient Realm," Yuan Hun said solemnly. He was now more troubled than anyone else. He would definitely be taking the blame if he returned to the sect with these results. "Elysian Emperor, my advice to you is to retreat. Rest and recover for three thousand years and let your descendants carry out your ambitions. Forgive us for not staying any longer."

"Then return the Cloudmist Sword School to the Grand-Orient Realm."

"Aren't you a naive one? Did you think we'd actually spit out anything we've already swallowed up?" Yuan Hun said with a laugh.

Jun Shengxiao shot him a deathly gaze.

"Whatever. To be frank, I'm not going to go too far on account of our sects' relations. If you have a good plan, I'll play along with it, as long as it isn't as suicidal as what happened today," said Yuan Hun, making a slight concession.

"I do have a plan," Jun Shengxiao said, his voice as cold as a demon that walked out from hell.

"What is it?"

"We'll use the remaining troops we have to breach the Southsky Barrier and force Li Wudi to go there with reinforcements. We'll eliminate them after they leave their Bloodbane Barrier!"

"That's a tad bit optimistic. So here's my question: why didn't you take the Southsky Sect with the initial troops instead of telling me this after we lost so many?" It sounded like yet another suicidal plan.

"It wouldn't have worked back then, but it's different now. I have a plan they'll never be able to figure out."

"Pray tell."

Jun Shengxiao whispered something in his ear. Yuan Hun's eyes glowed once more as he looked at him in shock.

"You're crazy! Would you really dare do such a thing?!"

"Why not? I'm the Elysian Emperor, not some saint! Do you think the ancient conquerors did anything less than that? Why can they do it, but not me?"

"I don't care. As long as you take full responsibility for what you do, I'll have my troops tag along. You'll be solely accountable for the consequences of committing something so vile!"

"No problem. All you have to do is to send your Earthorigin defenders into the barrier once I breach it."

"Alright. I'll follow you one last time for camaraderie."

"Don't call it something so honorable. You're just trying to salvage whatever reputation you can for the Earthorigin Sect that."

"Haha, Elysian Emperor, you're truly an impressive person. You have my respect."

He had thought that Jun Shengxiao would retreat after this loss, but he didn't think he would go so far. Given his pride and dignity, there was no way he could retreat now. Had he done so, Heaven's Elysium truly would be done for. There would never be another day when they would reign unchallenged and unprovoked by the others. Not to mention, they would no longer be able to receive the support of the Earthorigin Sect. In other words, they would have given away the Cloudmist Sword School's territory for nothing.

"Time is precious. We have to head to the Southsky Sect before they can react!"

"Deal!"

Right as the suspense was reaching its peak, the two leaders concluded their secret meeting.

The Elysian Emperor announced, "Elysian purifiers, heed my orders. Head to the Southsky Sect with me! And don't worry, we will definitely win this time! Yuan Hun and I have come up with a surefire plan!"

The rest looked at each other with puzzlement. What kind of plan was it? Why didn't he use it in the beginning? Though nobody knew why, they knew they had no choice but to follow after witnessing how the Elysian Emperor had killed the dissenters without any recourse.

"Dad? What plan did you make? Don't tell me it's another suicidal move!" Jun Niancang asked when he caught up.

Jun Shengxiao turned back and saw him still holding the glass coffin with him. It looked ever so blinding and mocking to him.

"What did you say?" Jun Shengxiao asked with his eyes squinting in rage.

"I said, let's stop sending our men in harm's way!"

Shatter! All of a sudden, Jun Shengxiao appeared in front of him and slammed his palm on the glass coffin. The coffin, and the person within, instantly turned into powder and was scattered all over the place.

"Niancang, just watch. Don't say anything," he coldly said, then turned and left. Jun Niancang tried to grasp the crystalline dust in a panicked manner. It was the first time his father had done something equivalent to pushing a sword through his heart. His flesh didn't feel the pain, but his mind and soul cried out in agony.

"Long'er...." As he despaired, he watched the powder scatter all over the place. Amidst the strong winds, Jun Niancang's long, fluttering hair turned white.

### **Chapter 386: Flower in the Lifebound Space**

The battlefield had just been cleaned up, and the spoils from the fallen troops of Heaven's Elysium and Earthorigin Sect combined caused the wealth of the Grand-Orient Sect and Onyx Sect to skyrocket.

Spoils like these were crucial for the development of generations to come. While Heaven's Elysium was weakened from the loss of so many resources, the Grand-Orient Sect would only grow stronger. Currently, the entire sect was in a festive mood. Not only had they emerged victorious, but they hadn't lost a single fighter. There wasn't a better pleasure than that.

"Jun Shengxiao's Elysian purifiers are basically wiped out! They and the Earthorigin defenders combined have only around two hundred and twenty thousand men, which is no longer enough to attack the Grand-Orient Sect and Southsky Sect!"

"They have no choice but to retreat. Given that the Earthorigin Sect already has the Cloudmist Sword School's territory, they might no longer want to continue this farce."

"With the sect master leading us, and the junior sect master as our shining beacon of hope, our future is bright."

"After a thousand years, we'll once again be the rulers of the Grand-Orient Realm!"

As far as the Grand-Orient Sect was concerned, this victory was theirs. However, an elder announced at that moment, "Sect masters, the invaders haven't retreated yet. Instead, they're headed in the Southsky Sect's direction. Word has it that Jun Shengxiao intends to destroy the Southsky Barrier!"

"What?" Li Wudi, the Onyx Emperor, and the Onyx Empress were all equally shocked.

"Have they gone insane? How are they going to destroy the Southsky Barrier with so few combatants? They only barely have double the number of Southsky sentinels. Even if they succeed, they'll almost entirely die out! What's the point of that?" It just didn't make sense to the Onyx Emperor.

In fact, not even Li Wudi and Ye Shaoqing knew what they were up to. "Please double check if that's true," Li Wudi said.

Not long after, more scouts returned. "Sect Master, they are indeed headed for the Southsky Sect." Their expressions all shifted.

"Has Jun Shengxiao gone mad? Then again, why would the Earthorigin Sect join him in his fool's errand?" Ye Shaoqing wondered.

"No matter what, we can at least be sure Yuan Hun isn't one to lose his cool like that," Li Wudi said.

"Perhaps it's a tactic to lure us away from the Bloodbane Barrier so they have a chance to get us," said the Onyx Empress.

"Impossible. They have too many troops with them, so their movements can't easily be hidden. Outside the barrier, both sides can easily tell where the other is at all times," the Onyx Emperor said.

"Perhaps they have a trick up their sleeve we haven't thought about," Ye Shaoqing suggested.

"That's what I believe, too," said the Onyx Emperor.

"What about you, Wudi?"

"We'll send someone to monitor them for now. Report everything they're doing. I believe I'll make a trip to Southsky Sect myself," Li Wudi said with a furrowed brow.

"With all your troops?" asked the Onyx Emperor.

"No need. I have another idea in mind."

"What is it?"

"We'll send out an elite force of Saint stage experts. That way, we'll be able to travel much faster and arrive at the Southsky Sect before them. They'll take part in defending the sect, and we'll only need to leave a few behind here."

"Will all the saints be leaving?"

If that was the case, they would be able to gather around two thousand people who could fight against twenty to thirty thousand enemies from within the Southsky Barrier.

"That's right."

"What about the Bloodbane Barrier?" asked the Onyx Empress.

"The Bloodbane Barrier is a self-powered barrier to begin with. While it can grow stronger with active support, it's still powerful enough without it. Not to mention, it just absorbed near a hundred thousand enemies. The barrier should be able to hold up at its most powerful for more than a month. Even if all of their troops return, they'll have no way of taking the sect," Li Wudi boasted.

"Amazing!" The Onyx Empress and Emperor exchanged an impressed glance.

"This might be the right thing to do. An elite force of saints is far more mobile than a full army. They're also powerful enough. Not to mention, the Southsky Sect already has a thousand saints of their own. With you there, too, it should be more than enough," said the Onyx Emperor.

While it would be quite obvious that the Grand-Orient Sect was sending reinforcements if they sent all fifty thousand of their fighters, an elite team of saints would be almost impossible to detect, and it was

equal to half of their fighting strength in reinforcements. Not to mention, if they really did send out the bulk of their fighting force, it would be hard for them to retreat if this ended up being a trap.

"Shaoqing, you and the Onyx Empress shall take care of the battlefield cleanup and take charge for now. The Onyx Emperor and I will leave immediately with the other saints. The scouts will keep you updated on our whereabouts," Li Wudi said.

"No problem." The two of them nodded.

With the Onyx Empress' arms having just recovered, she still couldn't fight quite yet. As for Ye Shaoqing, he was about the only person Li Wudi could trust to hold the fort.

The saints of the Grand-Orient Realm included the elders and around three hundred hall masters from all thirty-three immortal mountains. In total, they numbered about seven hundred. The Onyx Sect, on the other hand, had quite a bit more. In total, the two sects had around two thousand saints.

"We're heading out now!" Li Wudi stepped out of the sacred hall as his kunpeng flew in from the distance and landed.

"Have the fastest lifebound beasts carry us toward the Abyssal Battlefield. We'll only need around two hundred for all two thousand of us!"

"Understood!"

The fast lifebound beasts, such as Huangfu Fengyun's Aircloud Godcrane, could fly at high speeds and carry around twenty people. It shouldn't be a problem for them to share during such an urgent time. One giant lifebound beast after another appeared, most of them avian types.

Right as Li Wudi was about to depart, Tianming suddenly flew onto the Ancient Infernalblood Kunpeng.

"What the heck are you here for?" Li Wudi asked, not knowing how to respond.

"Helping out the Southsky Sect of course."

"Let's be real. You're treating this like a field trip, aren't you?"

"Haha, don't accuse me without evidence! I'll just go and test my strength. Don't worry, I'll make sure to stay far away from those dragon pulses. I won't even give them a single look," he promised.

"Fine. Don't doom me now, you hear?"

The next moment, the lifebound beasts all dove into the bottomless hole that led to the Abyssal Battlefield. It would be much easier for them to travel swiftly there, as their enemy was bound to have fewer scouts on that side.

The group of elite saints ignored the wildbeasts and the thunderclouds as they streaked across the skies. Tianming had heard their discussion back in the sacred hall, and also believed that Jun Shengxiao was attempting a desperate final struggle.

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This elite unit was so quick that they soon arrived at the black seas near the Southsky Sect. The island on the Flameyellow Continent was completely enclosed by the Southsky Barrier, so the passage leading out of the Abyssal Battlefield was cut off. However, the island on the flip side wasn't protected by the barrier.

All they could do was surface through another abyssal hole near the island back on Flameyellow Continent, then fly to Southsky Island proper. For now, the barrier still seemed rather peaceful.

"Weisheng Tianlan!" The moment Li Wudi called out, quite a number of people showed up within the barrier, including Weisheng Tianlan, his father, and several elders.

"Why are you here?" he asked, surprised.

"There's been a change! We're here as reinforcements!" Li Wudi replied.

"Li Wudi, aren't you a badass? We just heard you used the Bloodbane Barrier to take out more than a hundred thousand of them! We were just cheering for you!" Weisheng Cangyuan said.

"Uncle Weisheng, you flatter me. The Bloodbane Barrier is something my ancestors left us. I'm just one of their descendants. If you really need to praise someone, praise our founding ancestor, Li Shengxiao."

Li Shengxiao was the ancestor of both the Li and Weisheng clans. The Weisheng Clan was fully justified in feeling proud of the Bloodbane Barrier's strength.

"They've already lost so many. Has Jun Shengxiao really gone mad?" Weisheng Tianlan asked. They had just been discussing what happened at the Grand-Orient Sect.

"I suspect that's the case too, but I feel things aren't that simple. What they're doing basically amounts to suicide on all counts. So, I figure they're trying to lure us into reinforcing you. That's why I decided to come here with only the saints ahead of them instead."

"Oh, Wudi, you're sounding like a mastermind now. Come to think of it, we should be ashamed to have been sitting here doing nothing while you were killing them. We didn't even send you reinforcements, yet you came for us," said Weisheng Cangyuan.

"By the way, what about your sect? How's it faring, now that you're gone?" Weisheng Tianlan asked.

Li Wudi explained how the Bloodbane Barrier worked to him.

"The founding ancestor really played favorites. The barrier they gave you is so powerful..." Weisheng Cangyuan said.

"Of course! It's a premarital asset!" Li Wudi joked. He looked toward the sea and continued, "Let us into the barrier, quick. Deactivate it first, and make sure to lead the azure dragon pulses away first before letting us in."

"Why?" Weisheng Tianlan asked.

"Just do as we say," Li Wudi said with a glance at Tianming.

"Sure!"

Finally, they managed to set foot on Southsky Island after having traveled so far across the ocean. The sky here seemed like a reflection of the ocean; it was a complete picture of endless blue. It was so beautiful that it would be easy to lose oneself while staring at it.

"The Southsky Sect is truly beautiful," Tianming said.

"I'm sure the people here are more beautiful, right?" Feiling teased.

"Haha, ahem...." He pretended to not hear it.

All of a sudden, he felt the third egg pulsing nonstop. It almost seemed like it was excited to come to the Southsky Sect. Ying Huo and Meow Meow watched the egg roll about in the lifebound space as if they were bored. All of a sudden, a fragrance could be smelled within the lifebound space.

Meow Meow stretched its neck out, sniffed, and said, "It smells so good...."

"What's going on? Did someone fart?" Ying Huo asked.

"Chicken Bro, nobody can have farts that smell so good." It kept looking around before it spotted an egg near the Prime Tower. It was the smallest egg of them all and looked to be about the size of a chicken egg. While it was small, its color was incredibly vibrant. It almost looked like a precious gem.

"This fellow's been farting the whole time!" Ying Huo came up to it and saw a slight crack on the egg.

Thick fragrance came through the crack, filling the lifebound space entirely with an intoxicating smell that made them think of a boundless sea of flowers.

Before Ying Huo could react, the colorful little egg 'jumped' and knocked him flying on his head.

"Is that a mutiny? I'm your captain!" Ying Huo said as it got up and rubbed its swollen head.

The little egg just wiggled from side to side, like an energetic young girl poking her tongue out, then rolled its way back to the Prime Tower.

The huge, two-colored egg, on the other hand rolled toward Ying Huo so quickly and excitedly that it almost flattened the poor chick.

"They're all rebelling! Watch your back or I'll cook you!" the little chick snapped.

"Chicken Bro, only sneaky fellows need to watch their backs. Are you a sneaky fellow?" the black cat asked.

"You watch out, and buzz off too." Ying Huo didn't know how to react. "Damn these little pesky critters.... Being the eldest isn't easy. I knew I shouldn't have hatched first."

### **Chapter 387: Blue Skies and White Clouds, Hell on Earth**

Under the blue sky and white clouds was a dense crowd. Tens of thousands of beastmasters and lifebound beasts were flying across the land. The beastmasters were split into two groups, one in platinum armor and the other clad in twilight-yellow armor that was much thicker than the former's.

All of a sudden, a sky-spanning killing intent spread across the whole place, causing the lifeforms in their path to run away in panic. Some distance ahead, the waves hummed in a steady rhythm.



The combined Heaven's Elysium and Earthorigin Sect's army was now at the edge of the landmass and about to cross the river to reach the Southsky Sect. A sense of foreboding was spreading across the remnant army; many people were staring blankly at the Elysian Emperor, still uninformed about what he had planned. They were just about to enter the battlefield on the ocean, and nobody knew whether or not they would be among the ones to get out alive.

At that moment, the Elysian Emperor raised his hand and stopped the whole army. "What place is this?" he asked.

"Elysian Emperor, this is a small archipelago in the south. There are three countries here, namely, Torch Dragon, Vermillion Bird, and Aquamarine. The land we're now standing on is within Aquamarine's borders," someone replied.

"Oh? So this small patch of land can also be called a country, eh?" Jun Shengxiao said with a mocking laugh.

The others didn't dare speak a single word, but just looked at him blankly. By now, his image and reputation had long crumbled.

All of a sudden, his gaze burned with passion. He looked at the Elysian purifiers and announced, "Heed my orders!"

"Yes!"

"In an hour from now, each of you is to capture three people from Aquamarine and gather here! Those who are unable to fulfill this order will be killed!"

Everyone was utterly shocked. It was far from difficult for a Heavenly Will Elysian purifier to capture three citizens of Aquamarine, who would be at Spiritsource at most. The more pressing question on their minds, however, was why.

"What are you waiting for?" the Elysian Emperor snapped.

"Understood!"

All of Elysian purifiers scattered, while Yuan Hun and the rest merely watched coldly from the sidelines. The Elysian elders looked at their leader with shocked and perplexed expressions. They had already guessed what he was about to do. "Wait! Halt!" cried a white-haired youth as loud as he could all of a sudden. Most of the purifiers recognized his voice, and at least seventy thousand of them stopped in their tracks, turning back to look at Jun Niancang.

His white hair was unlike Tianming's own; it reflected the pain of his inner psyche and made him look much older than he actually was. What was he planning to do by stopping the Elysian Emperor's order? Everyone watched as he glared at his own father with bloodshot eyes.

"Nonsense! Go away!" Jun Shengxiao yelled. The power in his voice almost sent Jun Niancang flying, but he managed to hold on.

He grit his teeth and continued his furious glare. "Father, what do you intend to do by capturing more than three hundred thousand innocent citizens of Aquamarine?"

"Niancang, shut up. You have no authority here. Have him taken away!"

Jun Niancang's other siblings surrounded him and tried to calm him down, but he managed to break free from them with a loud yell.

"Father, are you going to throw the innocent citizens of Aquamarine into the Southsky Barrier and force their sect to save those innocents while we attack?!"

His words sent waves of shock through the crowd. Some had already guessed that would more or less be the case, but had simply refused to believe it. Most of the purifiers now turned back and looked at their emperor.

"Dad! Would you sacrifice all those innocent lives for your dream of uniting the Grand-Orient Realm, or to soothe your frustrations from losing the war by your own incompetence? Have you gone mad?" Jun Niancang's eyes burned with utter rage.

Jun Shengxiao looked at him squarely and said, "Enough, Niancang!"

One of Jun Niancang's sibling's said, "Dad, come with us. He's still immature, so don't hold this against him." They shot their youngest brother an ugly look.

"Three hundred thousand innocent lives...."

"What kind of devilish plan is this?"

"This is a massacre!"

"How cruel must someone be to come up with a plan that uses innocents as cannon fodder?"

"It's no wonder this plan wasn't used from the start to deal with the Southsky Sect...."

Though they voiced their doubts, they didn't dare to say them loudly, knowing that crossing Jun Shengxiao now would basically mean their deaths.

"Dad, you can't do this. This goes against the righteous will of the heavens. It's nothing short of heinous! Doing something like this will definitely invoke divine punishment! I beg of you, let's stop fighting. Real men admit when they've lost, right? Is it that hard?"

Jun Niancang's tears were flowing like rain as he knelt in desperation. Each word that came out of his mouth felt like a slap to the Elysian Emperor's face.

Everyone was dead silent. The Elysian purifiers that had spread out before had returned and were blankly watching the whole scene.

Jun Shengxiao merely smiled.

"Hahaha...." He waved and had them let Jun Niancang go. He stepped forward, stretched out his hand, and touched his son's white hair.

Jun Niancang hugged his palm and asked, "Dad, let's go home, alright?"

"My son, you should know that we no longer have an option to turn back, now that we've reached this point," Jun Shengxiao gently said.

"No, all we have to do is admit defeat. We mustn't stray from the path our hearts point at and lose our bearings. That's what you taught me!"

"You interpreted that wrongly, my son. This is a world where the strong thrive at the weak's expense. The weak should perish, as is their duty. These people are nothing but ants to us. At least their lives will contribute to the unification of the Grand-Orient Realm. The unified realm will no longer have wars and conflict, thus their deaths would have been for a good cause. This is nothing short of an honor for them, understand?" he said with the gentle smile of a saint.

Jun Niancang's expression was bleaker than ever.

"Son, you've been to the Divine Capital before, so you should know about the Ancient Theocrats. Throughout the tens of thousands of years they've ruled the Theocracy of the Ancients, they've relied on sacrificing tens of thousands of lives to ensure the lasting strength of their bloodline. What I'm about to do today would be nothing but child's play for them. We're in the territory of the Theocracy, so why can't I do what they do?" he said with a smile that made what he said seem as natural as the fact that the sun rises and sets every day.

However, Jun Niancang took a few steps back and gave him a slap, staring at him with disbelief the whole time. "Dad, don't make excuses like that to justify this cruelty! Have you forgotten what the name you gave me meant? Jun Niancang, 'the gentleman that cares for all life'. This was the true path in your heart for the past two decades! Are you still on that path now?"

People started to mouth his name and recalled how the Elysian Emperor seemed on the day of his youngest son's birth. He looked completely divorced from his past beneficent self now.

"Dad, you've gone mad! Turn back while you still can!" Jun Niancang said, crying and shuddering the whole time.

"Go away!" The smile had long vanished from Jun Shengxiao's face. His words sent Jun Niancang retreating backward in haste and anger.

"Your sacrifice of countless innocent lives is a sacrilege! You're not fit for the title of Elysian Emperor, and you've made a mockery of the name you gave me! Jun Shengxiao, I'm ashamed to be your son!" he screamed as he coughed out blood.

"Scram!"

Jun Niancang was disappointed at the response he had heard over and over again, and had lost all hope. "Farewell!"

Perhaps, since the moment his father had destroyed the coffin that bore the corpse of his beloved, their relationship was already severed. They would never again be walking the same path. Jun Niancang turned and left. Even though he was shaking with sheer rage, he knew this was a decision he wouldn't regret making before two hundred thousand eyewitnesses.

Yun Zhenzhen sighed and chose to leave with Jun Niancang in the end. Nobody would know how terribly hurt Jun Shengxiao was by saying that. Jun Niancang was his most beloved son, after all.

"Yifeng, look after him for me," Jun Shengxiao said with his eyes closed.

"Yes, Dad," said his fifth son, Jun Yifeng, then he quickly tagged along with Jun Niancang.

After that, Jun Shengxiao opened his eyes once more and exuded killing intent. "Elysian purifiers, go. Now!"

"Understood!"

There was no longer anyone left to stop the Elysian Emperor. They charged into Aquamarine and inflicted upon them a tragedy. All of the required innocents, regardless of age or gender, were captured by the Elysian purifiers. The entire country broke down in tears, as they were helpless before the cruel adversaries.

"While the Elysian Emperor is quite harsh, we won't have a chance for revenge once the Earthorigin Sect leaves."

"Brothers, let's fight to the death!"

"The Elysian Emperor is right, what else can these weak ants do but struggle?"

The huge army captured nearly four hundred thousand fearful innocents from Aquamarine and headed for the Southsky Sect. Those who weren't aware might think that their army was six hundred thousand strong. Everywhere their army crossed caused endless blood feuds to form. But the Elysian purifiers had resolved themselves to fight to their deaths.

"Toss all of them into the Southsky Barrier! If the Southsky Sect doesn't turn the barrier off, the death of the innocents will have been on their hands, not ours, understood?!" Jun Shengxiao said with a warped sense of tranquility.

"Understood!"

The voices of acknowledgement were interspersed with countless fearful cries.

"Mom! Mom? Where are you?!"

"I'm scared!"

"Dad, don't kill my dad! Ah!"

"Why... why are you doing this? Are you all devils?!"

"Don't touch my husband, please! Forgive him!"

On that day, the skies were blue, the clouds were white, yet the sight at the oceanside was hell on earth.

### **Chapter 388: Life and Death Are Unfeeling, the Grand Path Is Universal**

Jun Niancang felt like his body was about to be torn apart. His body, soul, faith, and everything he had achieved in the past two decades were crumbling. Even the greatest pain life had to offer couldn't compare to this. He felt like a walking corpse on an endless wasteland after the collapse of the whole world.

Yun Zhenzhen followed behind and said, "Jun Niancang, let's go back to the Divine Capital."

"You should go. I want to die," he said with a shaky voice.

"Didn't you say you wanted to live free and unrestrained? Wouldn't it be nice to just get away and forget everything here?"

"I'm unable to relax with the weight of all those innocent souls bearing down on me," he said as he shuffled forward as fast as he could to leave.

"Fifth Brother, it's enough. Stop following me and go back," he said to Jun Yifeng, who was tagging along with an expression full of hurt.

"Niancang, I share the same opinion as you, but let's just let him do what he wants this one time. He's suffered too huge a shock this time. If he isn't able to get over this mental complication by doing what he has to, Heaven's Elysium might not survive."

"Wouldn't killing those mortals result in a complication in and of itself?"

Jun Yifeng couldn't find the words to respond. All he could do was tag along in fear of Jun Niancang dying or going missing. He would hate to never be able to see his younger brother again in his life.

Jun Niancang ran like mad, feeling like nothing but the rush of the wind could relieve the pain he felt in his heart. After some time, he came to a busy city. Feeling a little tired, he entered the merry place with a blank look on his face.

"Aquamarine used to look like this, too, yet many families have been eradicated by Heaven's Elysium," he said as he watched the denizens of the city go about their busy lives. He had heard somewhere that this was Vermillion Bird's capital, Ignispolis.

Feeling genuinely tired, he sat on the ground and watched people pass him by. He knew that those victims weren't just a statistic. Each one of them was just like the people passing him by. They were flesh and blood, had families, had loved ones, relatives, and siblings; they were alive.

Next to him was a tea shop. There were some young people engaged in a heated discussion within.

"You weren't there to witness the majesty of that azure dragon! It's truly huge! I heard it's a saint beast! I managed to see it when I went shopping that day, and it was magnificent."

"Li Tianming rode that dragon back to the Wei Clan."

"Back then, someone from Heaven's Elysium was attacking Wei Tiancang, but Li Tianming came back and killed him with one strike!"

"He's far too powerful. Who knew that Ignispolis could give birth to a genius like him?"

"I heard that he's now the junior sect master of the Grand-Orient Sect. He's someone who'll become the sect master in the future!"

"To be honest, on the day he killed Lin Xiaoting, I felt like he would definitely experience a meteoric rise. It turned out to be true after all!"

"I heard the dragon is his master's lifebound beast."

"I wonder how his chick and cat look after they've evolved. Did anyone manage to catch a glimpse?"

Everyone shook their heads.

All of a sudden, a white-haired youth came to the entrance and stared at them. "Friends, do you know where I can find the Wei Clan?"

"Wei Clan? Oh, you're an outsider, huh? They're situated within the Flameyellow Scions Institute. Just head down this street and you'll see the academy's gates there. Then again, no normal person can just enter the academy at their whim, not to mention meeting the Wei Clan. What business do you have with them?"

"Thank you." Jun Niancang merely thanked them and bowed, then headed to the academy.

"Is something wrong with him? Who would bow just for getting directions?"

"Yeah. It's like we helped him a ton or something."

"Well, weird people are popping out all over the place. This year especially."

In the distance, Yun Zhenzhen and Jun Yifeng swapped glances. They were surprised that coincidences like this could happen.

"Niancang, you really lucked out again."

.....

Back at the Southsky Sect, a guard came rushing in. "Sect Masters, Jun Shengxiao captured close to four hundred thousand innocent civilians and is headed toward us!"

The same report was echoed by a dozen other panicked scouts.

"The truth is finally out." Now, they finally knew what Jun Shengxiao was planning. Everyone in the hall fell dead silent, before bursting in seething anger.

"That's shameless!"

"Jun Shengxiao has gone mad!"

"How could he do something so heinous?"

"How did someone like that become the Elysian Emperor? This is inhumane! He's no different from a monster!"

"How could someone like the Elysian Emperor commit such evil?"

Everyone could guess what Jun Shengxiao planned to do with his captives.

"That's inhumane! Doesn't that piece of trash fear the Theocracy's retaliation?" Tianming asked. He had imagined all kinds of possible trump cards the enemy might have, but not one of them had been this savage. What kind of monster would use innocent civilians as cannon fodder?

"They're devils wearing human skin!" Feiling snapped indignantly.

"That's right. This will get really troublesome. It's not something Godfather and the rest managed to predict."

Though Li Wudi had planned to ambush Heaven's Elysium the past two times, there wasn't much they could do about this, even though they knew about the plan in advance.

"Sect Master, what should we do when they toss the people into our barrier?"

Countless gazes gathered on Li Wudi, Weisheng Tianlan and the Onyx Emperor. The three sect masters were now the key decision makers here.

"Those bestial ingrates!" Li Wudi cursed.

Weisheng Tianlan's eyes were filled with worry. "We can only power the barrier down, retract the azure dragon pulses, and save as many as we can."

"But saving them will allow the enemy to breach the barrier and kill us all the same! Not only will the innocent civilians die, but the Southsky sentinels will, too!" argued the Onyx Emperor.

"What else can we do? Watch as near four hundred thousand people get massacred?" Li Wudi snapped.

"Then all we can do is gamble and save as many as we can," the Onyx Emperor relented.

"Jun Shengxiao.... This wretched mutt had to rely on something so heinous just to foil us. I really have no words. Who else in the history of the Grand-Orient Realm has committed such a foul deed?" Li Wudi said.

"Nobody." Everyone shook their heads. There was no contingency plan for this, for there had been no precedent for such a heinous thing. What else could they do to stop Heaven's Elysium?

"Tianlan's right. We're being forced to take the passive position. The only thing we can do is decrease the barrier's power without turning it off entirely. We must make sure to mark our foes with it, at the very least. The moment we manage to save those that we can save, we'll launch our counterattack and slaughter those animals! Shaoqing has already received word about it, and should be sending as many as he can to reinforce us," said Li Wudi.

"How many can we actually expect to save?" asked the Onyx Emperor.

"We'll save as many as we can. Let's start preparing. All Southsky sentinels that train in the water type, prepare to make temporary small heavenly pattern barriers to keep the innocents safe within. Start immediately!" Weisheng Tianlan said.

The whole sect launched into a lot of busywork.

"Sect Master, why should we do all this? The blame for this atrocity lies on Jun Shengxiao alone. Even if the barrier kills those innocents, it's on him. Yet, if we try to save them, our sect will be put in danger!" asked an elder.

"Everyone, as fellow cultivators, if we can't maintain order and protect the innocents, we're no better than animals. None of us are saints. I've killed many, so I certainly am not one. However, not even I can tolerate the uninvolved losing their lives in our feuds. Cultivators like us should die without regrets. We

should die in a way that won't embarrass our descendants!" Li Wudi responded on Weisheng Tianlan's behalf.

"Understood!"

Though Li Wudi had a terrifying reputation, people could no longer call him a murderous demon after what happened today. The one with the dubious honor of bearing that title was Jun Shengxiao, instead.

"Tianlan, we'll count on you to save the innocents," Li Wudi said.

"What about you?"

"I'd like to see if I can take Jun Shengxiao's head on the battlefield!" he said with a murderous look in his eyes.

"Li Wudi, if you really manage to do it, you'll be a champion of the ages!"

"I'll try my best. If I don't kill that animal, I don't deserve to be a Li!" he proclaimed, then charged out with his blade. Right now, he was still in a period of rapid growth after his breakthrough. Who knew how much more powerful he'd become in three months' time?

Currently, the entire sect was busy brainstorming ways they could use to save the innocents.

"Godfather, the azure dragon pulses won't be used for now, right?" Tianming asked as Li Wudi was leaving.

"That's right. What are you planning to do?"

"I want to save people too."

"Aren't you afraid of dying? We're going to face animals that don't fear death. They're easily a few times your age."

"If I was afraid of dying, I wouldn't have come here in the first place. I'd like to exact justice on behalf of the heavens without any regrets."

"Well said, you truly have guts. Save all you can, but know that nobody will be able to protect you. Not to mention, you're a prime target for our enemies."

"Haha, Godfather, remember to give me a yell when they're about to deploy the azure dragon pulses. I'll make sure to slip away so I don't screw you again this time!"

"Fine. Make sure to be careful and don't die at sea. I won't be able to find your body that way, right?"

"I know," he said resolutely, then looked at the blue-clad girl behind him. They smiled at each other understandingly and resolved themselves to put their lives at risk.

All of a sudden, they fused into one and charged toward the sea without looking back. Li Wudi was a little taken aback by the speed at which Tianming vanished. "Damn, why do I feel like I triggered a death flag?"

Death didn't discriminate on the battlefield. How many brave heroes had perished upon them over the years? Even so, the grand path of exacting justice for the heavens is a universal one.



If it took one life to save tens or even hundreds, that deed would not be forgotten by future generations. The heavens would definitely not forsake the bravery of these just warriors.

Tianming didn't want to live as a genius in hiding, protected by countless others. What kind of unparalleled genius lived without being able to do as their hearts desired? What was the point of life if he lived in fear of death and chose apathy instead of righteousness?

At this moment, all he wanted to be was a normal warrior. He covered his face in seawater-resistant paint and put the Grand-Orient Sword away. Instead, he wielded Onyx Dragon and tied a rope to his left hand, which he would use to save others.

There was no need for a flashy weapon like the Grand-Orient Sword during a rescue operation. Now he was at the front line, facing down the combined army of Heaven's Elysium and the Earthorigin Sect. In Tianming's eyes, infernal flames burned and chaos lightning sparked.

### **Chapter 389 - The Final Battle**

When the army arrived, it was like a swarm of locusts descending upon the Southsky Barrier. Over two hundred thousand troops threw the innocent commoners at the huge globe in the ocean. The commoners were all bawling and screaming when they were thrown, but there was nothing they could do about their fate of being devoured by the barrier.

"ARGGGGH!"

"HELP ME!"

"I DON'T WANT TO DIE...."

"MOTHER! MOTHER!!"

The purifiers didn't care about the weak and threw anything that lived into the barrier, as if it had nothing to do with them. The Southsky Barrier was operating at high speed, and when those innocent commoners were thrown into it, they were instantly torn into pieces. The Southsky Sect could only recall the azure dragon pulses and decrease the barrier's power to the minimum. But even so, the commoners were instantly devoured when they were thrown at the barrier.

Kids were crying in the water. As they didn't have any beast ki, they couldn't isolate themselves from the ocean. In the end, their cries gradually died down as they drowned. It looked like countless people struggling in hell to Tianming. The scene unfolding before his eyes was too brutal, and not even kids were spared. The kids were young; they were innocent at their age, and they hadn't offended anyone. "Is being weak a sin...?"

"Heaven's Elysium!!" Tianming raised his head, looking at the purifiers and defenders. The barrier's power had already been weakened, and they could've just slaughtered their way in. There was no need for them to sacrifice so many innocent lives. On the other hand, the sentinels not only had to fight the army, but they also had to save lives, which made things harder for them.

"Brothers, there's no path of retreat for us! We must succeed!" the Southsky sentinels roared. They had to hold on until the news of Aquamarine's calamity reached the Grand-Orient Sect, then wait for the

guardians and legionnaires to come as reinforcements. Every single sentinel had been tasked with their jobs, part of them saving lives and part of them fighting.

Those defenders who were fighting passed through the crowd of commoners and stood at the front, fighting the purifiers and defenders. As for Li Wudi, he was leading over three thousand saints to fight at the front line. Standing on his Ancient Infernalblood Kunpeng, Li Wudi's crimson hair fluttered in the wind as he searched for Jun Shengxiao.

There was another group of sentinels creating heavenly pattern barriers to protect the commoners and shift them into the barrier. However, it was too much for them to face an army of over two hundred thousand, not to mention that they also had to save lives. It was the worst for kids. Most of them had fainted when they were washed away by the waves, and all they could do was wave their hands and feet around in the water.

"Damn it!"

"These bastards!"

The invading army had separated, so it wasn't easy to get rid of them. Not only did they launch their attacks at the sentinels, but they also wrought a more general sort of havoc. They could also be seen slaughtering the commoners. In a war, how many of them could maintain their clarity when their leader, Jun Shengxiao, had gone insane?

The battle in the ocean could only be described as brutal. It had just started, but the ocean had already been dyed red with blood and there were many corpses floating before Tianming's eyes.

However, he didn't have any time to sigh with sorrow at the scene. He had been busy with saving lives right from the beginning. The rope in his hand was a hundred meters long, and had been specially prepared. He had experience with whips, so controlling the ropes in the ocean to save the commoners who were struggling was a simple enough matter.

"Big brother, there's a kid over there!" Jiang Feiling said in a trembling voice. Before Tianming could even make his move, she had already controlled the Celestial Wings and brought him over there. Tianming was traveling at a rapid speed, which even exceeded the limits of the Heavenly Will Stage. That was because the Celestial Wings acted like fins, allowing him more efficient travel in the water. Moreover, the Temporal Field had also allowed him to race against time.

Tianming already had over twenty people tied to his rope, but most of them were beastmasters who could move underwater with their beast ki. However, the little girl before him couldn't do that. When Tianming arrived, her stomach was already bloated from the water she was choking on. Tianming immediately circulated his beast ki to force the water out of the little girl's system, but the little girl had already stopped breathing. There was a high possibility that she was already dead.

"Quick! Quick!" Jiang Feiling was sobbing as she urged. The Celestial Wings trembled as they sped to the nearest heavenly pattern barrier.

"Die!" All of a sudden, a purifier charged over from his left.

“Meow!” Meow Meow’s voice could be heard as it took on the Regal Chaosfiend transformation and rushed over, grabbing the little girl from Tianming’s embrace. As he tied his rope around Meow Meow, he yelled, “Ying Huo, protect them!”

Ying Huo was already on guard beside Meow Meow before Tianming gave the order and the lifebound beasts charged out of the ocean as quickly as possible. The purifier wanted to chase after them, but was suddenly interrupted by Tianming roaring, “Get over here!!”

A black figure dashed across the ocean to the purifier. When the middle-aged purifier raised his head, he saw Tianming, who was charging over with bloodshot eyes. “Those two lifebound beasts belong to Li Tianming! You’re Li Tianming!”

“You’re smart. So as a reward, I’ll send you off!” Tianming roared, unleashing the Voidgod Sword Intent—Myriad’s Only. He swung his sword four times, each swing more powerful than the last. The purifier was instantly killed before he could scream. If he called out Tianming’s name, he would surely have attracted a lot of attention.

“Let’s go!” Tianming quickly caught up to Meow Meow and carried the little girl, along with the other twenty people, into the heavenly pattern barrier. “Save the child first! She’s dying!”

Very quickly, someone came over to feed the child a spirit herb. In just three breaths, the child began breathing again and she opened her eyes. Fear was reflected in her eyes as she cried, swinging her limbs around.

“She’s alive! Big brother, she’s saved!” Jiang Feiling might be in her spiritual form, but she had tears rolling down her cheeks nonetheless.

Tianming let out a deep breath. He immediately called Ying Huo and Meow Meow back to the battlefield.

“Boss, it’s too chaotic! How many people will we be able to save?” Ying Huo sulked.

“Cut the crap. We’ll save as many as we can!” Tianming had never experienced this kind of scene. Perhaps it was common throughout the realms, but it wasn’t something he could accept. Honestly speaking, his head was still buzzing even at this moment, especially when he saw how the children were struggling in despair. It was something that he would never forget in his lifetime.

“Someone’s coming over! Protect the heavenly pattern barrier!” Before Tianming could even catch his breath, a team of thirty Earthorigin defenders charged over.

Those defenders could see many people in the barrier with just a glance. If they destroyed the barrier, the people that had been saved would die.

“Kill!”

Tianming’s bloodshot eyes were fixed on them. “Hold on! Shift the barrier back to Southsky Island!”

“Got it!” Perhaps it was because of the righteousness in their hearts, but the sentinels today were especially courageous and frantic.

“Kill them!”

People say that it isn't easy to differentiate good and evil on the battlefield. But there is an overall classification. Unifying the Grand-Orient Realm wasn't an evil goal, but using the lives of four hundred thousand innocent people as cannon fodder was beyond evil!

Tianming was disguised as an ordinary sentinel on this battlefield, and he had no idea how many people he killed. The battle was so frantic that he didn't even know how many times he escaped death. There were many times he had only escaped death thanks to the black arm and Celestial Wings. The Southsky sentinel's armor that he was wearing was heavily damaged, and he had several bone-deep wounds.

But fortunately, he managed to hold on thanks to the Prime Tower. The Prime Tower seemed to be in a rather good mood today, as the endless white radiance allowed Tianming's injuries to constantly recover.

"Hold on, brothers! Hold on! Continue saving people!" Perhaps because he had lost too much blood, Tianming started feeling dizzy. His vision was dyed with blood, and his ears were polluted with screams of despair. Shaking his head, Tianming turned around and grabbed a spear with his black arm.

The spear had nearly pierced him through. The Earthorigin defender wielding it was covered in blood as he tried to stab it into Tianming. "Die!"

With a swing of his sword, Tianming decapitated the defender. His vision began growing blurry, which was a sign that he had exhausted himself. But everyone on the battlefield was exhausting themselves, and he wasn't the only one.

"How many people did we save...?"

"I have no idea, but at least five hundred...." This number was practically the highest among all of the Southsky sentinels. The entire battlefield was practically hell right now, and it was all caused by the ambitious tyrant, Jun Shengxiao!

Taking it so far without any bottom line, just to achieve his goal, he's not qualified to become an emperor! He's not qualified to possess an imperial will! Many thoughts began rising in Tianming's mind and soul as he slaughtered the invaders. Was this the most righteous path? All of this felt real, and it had been deeply engraved in Tianming's heart. His understanding of the Imperial Will was increasing at a rapid speed amid the slaughter.

Strength should be used to protect and benefit lives, not to slaughter lives and flaunt one's superiority! The world has its own will and law. Masters should be righteous, with a heart as clear as a mirror. The world can only be peaceful and flourishing if the ruler is righteous! As for those who've lost their humanity, they'll suffer heaven's wrath! That's not someone that I want to become. I may not be a virtuous and impartial person, but I will never lose my humanity! Tianming still couldn't see through the profundity of Imperial Will, but right at that moment, the Grand-Orient Sword in his spatial ring and the Prime Tower in his lifebound space began trembling.

### **Chapter 390 - Grand-Orient as Life and Prime as Hear**

"What's going on?" Tianming was stunned when he sensed the changes in the Grand-Orient Sword and Prime Tower.

"Tianming, you show promise."

“Taking Grand-Orient as your life and Prime as your heart. There’s thousands of paths to becoming a sage, and you’ve already comprehended a part of one.”

Two illusory giants, one in golden robes and the other in white, appeared. They were the ones who spoke, and their voices resonated in Tianming’s ears.

“Seniors, may I know your identity?” Tianming was shocked deep in his soul.

“We’ll meet again if fate allows.”

“We’re gratified by your insight today, so we’ll help you.”

The two giants laughed and gradually disappeared. In the next moment, the Grand-Orient Sword and Prime Tower suddenly appeared before Tianming. Time seemed to stop as dazzling black and gold light gushed out from the Grand-Orient Sword, while white light shone from the Prime Tower. The radiance began expanding, and split in two before further splitting into four. However, that wasn’t the end, as it continued separating and charging into the battlefield.

Tianming was stunned when he saw the scene. The white light nearest to him enveloped the citizens of Aquamarine, forming a globe that protected them within. However, that was only a very small portion of it.

In the eyes of the purifiers, sentinels, and defenders, the white and black and gold globes of light suddenly appeared on the battlefield and enveloped those innocent citizens, protecting them. In that split second, the entire battlefield lit up, leaving everyone dumbfounded. The battle came to a stop for a moment as everyone looked at the globes heading toward the Southsky Sect.

No one could stop them, and the citizens of Aquamarine were safely brought to Southsky Island. When three hundred thousand people suddenly appeared on the island, the scene left the Southsky disciples shocked.

“What’s going on...?”

“I think I saw the Grand-Orient Sword and Prime Tower!”

“Don’t they belong to Li Tianming?” Many people couldn’t find Tianming. However, they did know that the Grand-Orient Sword and Prime Tower had turned the tide.

“These people seem to be saved....”

“Yeah! They’re saved!”

“Even the two divine artifacts disdain Jun Shengxiao’s actions!”

“Oh my god! The divine artifacts manifested!”

“What did Tianming do?”

The entire Southsky Island was briefly stunned before everyone turned to joy. Even Weisheng Tianlan could only blankly look at the additional three hundred thousand people on the island. Raising his head to look at the source of the light, he knew that Tianming must be in that direction.

“Although I don’t know how he did it, he saved everyone,” said Weisheng Tianlan. The shock on his face couldn’t be concealed.

“Then what the hell are you still standing here for?! Quick, bring them in! Open the barrier!” Weisheng Cangyuan urged.

Weisheng Tianlan immediately rushed back. “Elders of the Southsky Sect, listen up! Come with me to power the Southsky Barrier!”

They had been waiting for this moment to fight back. Weisheng Tianlan had gone insane, and so did everyone else. The Southsky Sect had managed to hold on! Although the surprise came from Tianming, every single sentinel was willing to fight to their last breath.

“Brothers—” Weisheng Tianlan roared, “—KILLLLL!”

There was no longer any cannon fodder in the Southsky Barrier; only two forces that were fighting each other. At the same time, the Southsky Barrier finally showed its terrifying side. The ocean surged and the marks on the purifiers and defenders lit up, and in the next moment, the ocean came crashing down on them, crushing their internal organs from the impact.

Although the invaders were still fighting in the barrier, the Southsky Barrier had targeted them, and its power had reached the pinnacle. Under the protection of the Southsky Barrier, the sentinels began their counterattack. Their opponent might have twice their numbers, but they didn’t seem so terrifying anymore. They even seemed vulnerable, and this was the purifiers’ third nightmare.

“Even the gods want Heaven’s Elysium annihilated!”

An unbelievable reversal had occurred. Everyone felt as if they were dreaming, and couldn’t believe their eyes. Just a moment ago, they’d had the upper hand and were just about to destroy the Southsky Sect. But in the next breath, the situation had turned against them.

“That’s the Grand-Orient Sword and the Prime Tower!” The truth started circulating on the battlefield. “The legendary artifacts are saving lives! That also means the Elysian Emperor will pay a great price for this slaughter! Those who help Heaven’s Elysium will also face destruction, and perish!”

As the tables were turned, a fatalistic sense of defeat began spreading among the invaders. It was like a sharp weapon that caused the entire army to collapse. Li Wudi and the others were all spreading it. The purifiers and defenders who were devoured by the barrier were still suffering, and when they heard those words, their hearts began trembling. Who hadn’t hesitated in using hundreds of thousands of people as cannon fodder? But they were just executing their orders out of fear of being beheaded.

“Jun Shengxiao will surely die!” the sentinels roared, and the azure dragon pulse appeared. Ninety-nine spirit hazards took the form of dragons and charged into the battlefield. “Those who surrender will be spared!”

The battlefield plunged into chaos once again. On one side was the sentinels, and the other side was comprised of defenders and purifiers who had lost their morale due to the actions of the Grand-Orient Sword and Prime Tower. Reality proved that morale was the key to victory in a war with unequal numbers. As the Grand-Orient Sword and Prime Tower had created a miracle, it had become the guiding

light of the Southsky sentinels at this moment. On the other hand, it was a nightmare for the invading army.

Slaughter was still taking place on the battlefield, but there were already purifiers and defenders who surrendered. It was especially so for the purifiers, as Jun Nianchang's words were still resonating in their ears. Not everyone was wicked; they were just forced by the ones who ordered them. Now that the tide of the war had turned in the Southsky Sect's favor, anyone who could see the situation clearly knew what to choose. After all, who would want to be together with Jun Shengxiao, becoming someone that would be condemned for years to come? Perhaps the Jun Clan didn't care about that, but there were definitely others who did.

"I surrender! I also look down on Jun Shengxiao! Today, Heaven's Elysium will be defeated!" Many purifiers ripped their armor apart and joined the sentinels, creating a domino effect.

Right at that moment, Li Wudi finally found Jun Shengxiao. He was outside the barrier, together with Yuan Hun. The two sects had sent practically all of their men in, but they had remained outside.

The green flames still burned in Yuan Hun's eyes. When he saw Li Wudi, he couldn't help but take a step back, as he was intimidated by Li Wudi's crimson eyes. Beside him, Jun Shengxiao held his hands behind him, and his hair fluttered in the wind. His eyes were also crimson, just like Li Wudi's. When he saw the Grand-Orient Sword and Prime Tower along with the Southsky Sect's counterattack, his face was even more distorted than Li Wudi's. With the defeatism spreading, it was equivalent to countless swords stabbing him.

"Jun Shengxiao, you're really unlucky. I'll be taking my leave first!" Yuan Hun cursed with an unsightly face. He turned to the defenders in the barrier and yelled, "Earthorigin defenders, listen up! Retreat immediately!"

For Heaven's Elysium, the Earthorigin Sect's retreat dealt another blow to their morale. But the moment Yuan Hun spoke, Li Wudi charged out of the barrier in their direction.

"Yuan Hun, why don't you give it another chance? I'm in a fourth-level Sky Saint, while you're in the third. We still have a chance of taking down Li Wudi, or even killing him. After all, he's courting death by leaving the barrier himself!" Jun Shengxiao smiled an eerie smile.

He killed Yuwen Taiji three months ago, and he's probably in the first level of Sky Saint stage—or maybe the second, at most. Furthermore, he's arrogant enough to not use the Grand-Orient Sword! Yuan Hun fell into deep thought. Honestly speaking, he wasn't willing to lose in this manner, and was only retreating because he couldn't see a chance at victory. But just when he wanted to leave, he'd never expected that Li Wudi would come after them all by himself. Perhaps this was their last chance to turn the tables in their favor.

"Why are you guys leaving after coming so far? Let's sit down and talk. Let me drink your blood!" Li Wudi laughed rampantly.

"Li Wudi, I'll leave with the Earthorigin Sect, and I promise that I'll not step into the Grand-Orient Realm for a decade. What do you think?" Yuan Hun proposed, but the Grand-Orient Realm he mentioned naturally didn't include the former territory of the Cloudmist Sword School.

“Nope. The defenders can leave, but you have to stay.” Li Wudi smiled.

“Why?” Yuan Hun squinted his eyes with a grim look.

“That’s because I want your Earthorigin Sect to tremble when they hear my name! I’ll make it so that none of you dare step into the Grand-Orient Realm in the future! And that includes the Cloudmist Sword School’s territory. Only death awaits if you return!” Li Wudi pulled out his Crimsonblood Saber.

“How naive. The Cloudmist Sword School’s territory is now within the Earthorigin Realm, and we’ve already starting establishing a presence there!” Yuan Hun sneered.

“I know about that. So you guys can do as you wish. Once I’m done with Heaven’s Elysium, I’ll go after the Cloudmist Sword School,” said Li Wudi.

As Yuan Hun and Jun Shengxiao exchanged glances, their eyes glowed with murderous intent. Yuan Hun initially didn’t want to stay here, as the death toll would increase for the Earthorigin defenders with every moment that passed. But now, he had resolved to gang up on Lu Wudi together with Jun Shengxiao!