

U. Warlord 791

Chapter 791: A Peerless Blade

Li Feng sucked in a deep breath. A sword weighing ten thousand kilograms? He could tell the mammoth was truly a wuxia fan...

The golden mammoth raised his sword. "My sword will strike at no nameless foe! State your identity!"

"I'm Li Feng, from Team Zenith!" Li Feng proclaimed.

The golden mammoth nodded gravely as he swung the sword with his trunk. A single, simple swing sent the whole valley trembling from the impact. The golden mammoth's near-limitless strength elevated the plain, unadorned sword to new heights.

"[Light Dragon's Remnants]!" Li Feng marshaled his genetic energy into the form of a large number of white dragons, which were all torn apart by the sword energy derived from the mammoth's swing.

Li Feng was shocked that a native of the third realm was able to produce sword energy.

The golden mammoth's sword energy was like a glacier, strong and unyielding, smashing into everything in its way.

"[Dance of the Incandescent Wyrms]!" Li Feng summoned dozens of serpents, flaring with blinding light.

Even so, the mammoth's unadorned blade smashed most of the serpents apart, leaving only a rare few who passed by unscathed. However, those serpents couldn't harm the golden mammoth through his staggering defense. His muscles were all bunched up, as though he were wearing a suit of heavy armor.

The mammoth's sword swung closer and closer to Li Feng, giving off an aura of blizzard and frost.

"[Arclight Dragon's Imprint]!" With a shout, Li Feng waved his left arm, around which a torrent of light-attuned genetic energy was gathering. It took the form of a gigantic dragon's claw, bearing down on the mammoth's blade.

The explosion shook the entire valley. As the ice and snow cleared, amidst a barrier of white light, Li Feng was hurriedly retreating from the golden mammoth.

Thankfully, the golden mammoth couldn't keep up. Though he was faster than the rest of his kind, his body was still made for lumbering rather than rapid movement.

"Just how did you learn such a technique?!" Li Feng was shocked by his strength.

The golden mammoth replied, "Not only do I frequently go to the draconian world to listen to stories about Earth's ancient heroes, I also hunt out in the wild. Every day, in blizzard or snowstorm, I swing my sword ten thousand times against the elements themselves.

"At first, the sword was so heavy that I could barely lift it up for ten swings, let alone a hundred, a thousand, or all ten thousand, but as I trained myself, the sword gradually grew lighter. The ten

thousand strikes that used to take me the entire day and night began to take up only the day, and after that, only the morning.

"Among the mammoths of the tribe, I didn't use to be anything special. As I continued my unusual training, however, I grew stronger and stronger. Even those who were once stronger than me have long since become unable to defeat me. Before I knew it, no one but the herdleader of the mammoths could do anything about me, and I became the successor to the herd!"

"Oh? Very well, then—take this! [Light's Bulwark: Draconic Fist]!" Li Feng punched forward, his right arm covered by radiant scales. A dragon of light materialized around his arm and shot toward the golden mammoth, who swung his blade once more.

The plain sword vanquished the dragon in a single swing.

"I had the herd make me an even heavier sword, with which I smashed apart the floating pieces of ice in the icy river. I slew the genetic lifeforms that emerged from the river every day for thirty years, until I was easily able to break the ice and even the frozen ground nearby. I grew so strong that even the herdleader had to be careful when sparring with me."

In other words, this was the tale of how a wuxia fanatic grew to become a wuxia protagonist himself...

Somehow, the golden mammoth, who had been so enraptured by wuxia legends that he began to train following those methods, had succeeded in his objective. Only his physique and racial constitution had allowed him to accomplish such a feat.

"[Light's Bulwark: Dragon's Teeth]!" Finding that his punch was useless, Li Feng charged up for a stronger attack. Concentrated light-attuned genetic energy surrounded him, producing sword energy so sharp the blizzard was pushed back in a hemisphere around him.

"[Light's Bulwark: Meteoric Fist]!" An arclight dragon appeared behind Li Feng. He punched forward, and the dragon shot toward the golden mammoth like a bullet from a sniper rifle. The light dragon left behind a starry trail, breathtakingly beautiful. The dragon clashed against the mammoth's sword in yet another explosion, one which tore apart the frozen ground.

The valley shook as though there were an earthquake. The walls to the valley began to crack, but neither Li Feng nor the mammoth were about to relent. The ground fell from their feet as the aftershock of the clash spread and reverberated around the valley. Huge boulders fell from the walls, smashing down by their heads.

The boulders were each the size of small mountains, but any which were about to strike the two combatants were obliterated by the aftershocks from the clash. As even more boulders began to fall and a landslide occurred, however, both Li Feng and the golden mammoth were forced to retreat. The two combatants clashed until they reached the mouth of the valley.

"[Birth of the Holy Dragon]!" Li Feng leapt high into the air and landed on the dragon's head, his sword gleaming brightly as though it had been dipped in liquid light. As he raised the sword to the skies, it glowed and expanded, morphing into a huge blade of light.

The blade parted the clouds and lit up the entire frozen tundra. At that very moment, Li Feng looked like a god descending from the heavens. The light dragon shot out toward the golden mammoth,

who again defended with a precise swing, one honed from years of training and refined to such perfection that Li Feng was unable to break through the mammoth's defense simply.

It would take more than what Li Feng had demonstrated for him to break through the mammoth's immaculate defense.

As Li Feng's dragon swooped toward the mammoth, so too did Li Feng himself charge forward. He overtook the dragon as the golden mammoth sliced the dragon apart, but Li Feng was too fast, his actions too sudden, for the mammoth to defend against his strike as well.

Li Feng's shining sword of light cut a long slash from the mammoth's shoulder all the way to his chest, leaving a scorching wound that caused the mammoth to wince in pain. His long years of training had saved his life; his muscles were thick and corded enough to prevent the injury from being too serious.

Li Feng slashed at the mammoth again—but the mammoth trumpeted in outrage and sent his blade crashing against Li Feng's own. The heavy blade smashed apart Li Feng's sword of light, sending a flurry of snowflakes into the air.

Suddenly, the golden mammoth stopped. "What's your sword called?"

Li Feng countered, "Is it important?"

The golden mammoth nodded. "The blade is your companion, your sibling and brother-in-arms, an extension of your very arm."

Li Feng scratched his head and sighed. "It derived from the soulshard of a peak-grade arclight dragon, and I obtained it in the second realm. Does that satisfy you?"

The golden mammoth nodded, then struck again with all the might of a frozen glacier.

Chapter 792: Sparing the Innocent

"[Birth of the Holy Dragon]!" Li Feng yelled out, defending himself once more from the mammoth's attack. He pulled out another blade, from which light began to gather. As he struck, dozens of dragons fell from the skies like meteors, shining against the snowy backdrop.

The golden mammoth suddenly announced, "My sword technique is known as the [Nine Wanderers]. After defeating countless foes all over the world, I headed to other nearby worlds to challenge whoever I could find. This technique was born of those experiences. I fought a large number of humans and draconians during that time. Warlord Chen Ruiming himself who gave me advice, and it was with his help that I finalized this technique for myself."

Suddenly, the golden mammoth's attack pattern changed. The froststeel blade in his hands shot out with surprising speed, blocking the starlight from Li Feng's technique.

"[Birth of the Holy Dragon]!" Dozens of sword slashes emanated from Li Feng, each with a starry splendor reminiscent of the Milky Way. The stars in the night sky shone brightly with the sword slashes, imbued with the power of the vast expanse of the galaxy. The starlight was so bright, so splendid that it would make any onlookers dizzy.

The golden mammoth blocked the attack again. Astoundingly, he even shifted the currents of air and sent the starlight from Li Feng's technique turning back on itself, forming eddies that sapped the technique of its energy.

However, even the mammoth was having a hard time with such a manipulation—Li Feng's attack was simply too strong.

"[Birth of the Holy Dragon: Arclight Slash]!" Li Feng lifted his sword high above his head. A silvery-white dragon emerged from behind him, merged with the sword, and sent a beam of light piercing the skies. Li Feng struck, and the sword slash morphed into a dragon.

The mammoth trumpeted, slashing forward with his heavy blade and breaking another of Li Feng's techniques with brute force, in yet another explosion of light and snow.

Li Feng frowned as yet another of his attacks was completely blocked.

The golden mammoth felt like a steel wall, impenetrable to anything he threw his way. None of his techniques had achieved their desired impact.

"I can't believe I have to show off one of my trump cards so early on!" Li Feng sighed, then sheathed his sword and returned it to his soulspace.

The golden mammoth frowned. "Why are you giving up so easily?"

"I'm not giving up. I simply intend on revealing a fraction of my true strength. I had intended on leaving this technique against the king of the realm of your world, but now, it looks like you'll be the first to taste it."

"[Light's Bulwark: Heavenfall]!"

Light-attuned genetic energy gathered on Li Feng's fist, compressing once and again. His fist began to glow with white light, but in far more muted a fashion than his flashy attacks moments ago.

Nevertheless, the golden mammoth knew he couldn't take this attack lightly. He charged forward, swinging his blade. The blade struck Li Feng's fist in what seemed like the explosion of a nuclear bomb.

All the light-attuned genetic energy that Li Feng had gathered burst apart in a splendid explosion that rocked the entire tundra and sent waves of snow billowing around the air. The snowy clouds high above them exploded in a cloud of frost.

Even the golden mammoth was forced back two stumbling steps. If he hadn't been prepared, the force of the explosion would have sent the heavy sword flying out of the golden mammoth's reach.

"[Light's Bulwark: Heavenfall]!" Light exploded in the sky with such force that space itself began to warp. Shockwaves roared through the air like thundering dragons.

Light-attuned genetic energy covered the skies and filled the entire space around Li Feng. The golden mammoth's eyes narrowed. "Just what are you doing?"

Li Feng, struggling to contain all the light-attuned genetic energy pouring through the skies, replied slowly, "You have your wuxia, and I have a man I need to catch up to. He once told me not to emulate him, but rather to learn from him—to incorporate his techniques into my own. I understand this, but when he shines so brightly in front of us, how can we resist the temptation to copy his success?"

By this time, the dark clouds above them had been replaced by glittering brilliance. Li Feng's strength covered the skies. "But I think there are more than two options than to emulate or to learn. No—I'll absorb his techniques and make them my own!"

Li Feng was a hunter independent of Zhang Lie, with his own thoughts and his own principles. Unlike the rest of Team Zenith, he chose to forge a different path.

"My techniques shall eclipse my captain's in strength!" Li Feng punched forward, causing the genetic energy to pour down like a flood. Thick, concentrated energy, like roaring dragons and galloping steeds, like sharp blades piercing heaven and earth, fell from the sky.

The golden mammoth concentrated all his strength on the blade and swung it in a wide arc, attempting to dissipate the genetic energy around him. However, that sword energy was drowned out in the face of Li Feng's genetic energy.

Li Feng's technique flattened the land until the valley itself became level ground.

The golden mammoth, caught under the onslaught of energy, suffered grievous injuries. However, his long period of training, of dedicating itself to the art of the sword, bore fruit. Despite the attack, he had stubbornly lived on, though his injuries were so serious that he couldn't even move his legs.

The golden mammoth murmured weakly, "To be able to die to a strong hunter like you—I'll have no regrets."

Li Feng didn't glance back. He flew off into the air.

The golden mammoth gritted his teeth as he slowly got back to his feet. "Why not strike me? Am I not worth your time?!"

Li Feng rolled his eyes. "Do you want to die?"

The golden mammoth shook his head. "No, but neither do I want to live with shame!"

"The king of this world commanded you to invade the draconian world, but you refused him, didn't you?"

The golden mammoth:...

If not for the golden mammoth's refusal, the silvery-white mammoth would hardly have been the one leading the charge against the humans. After all, the golden mammoth was the most powerful in the herd after the king of the realm itself.

The golden mammoth didn't deny Li Feng's charge. He grimaced. "I have very good friends among the humans. I can't change the herdleader's mind, but I can choose to obey my own principles."

"In that case, there's no need for me to kill you," Li Feng explained.

The golden mammoth called out to his back, "I know I don't have the ability to stop you, and it's rather thick-skinned of me for me to be making this request, but if you manage to beat the herdleader, would you mind sparing the life of my kin?"

Li Feng thought for a moment. "If you tell me where the herd is, or lead me to it, I'll consider your request."

Chapter 793: Blinded by Arrogance

As Li Feng negotiated with the golden mammoth, the blizzard around them suddenly grew far more intense, and the temperature dropped to a bone-chilling level.

A voice came from behind. "There's no need. I'm already here."

Li Feng turned around to see a twenty-meter-tall figure striding toward them through the blizzard.

The golden mammoth trembled. "Herdleader!"

The mammoth who appeared had long fur, glittering and crystalline like diamond. Wind and snow circled him. He had the stature of Optimus Prime. The mammoth herdleader commented, "I'm disappointed. You were unable to stop even a puny human. You became so weak because you spent all your time with the humans in the draconian world."

The golden mammoth began to cough out blood.

Despite the golden mammoth's injuries, despite the fact that the golden mammoth was to be the next successor to his title, the mammoth herdleader didn't seem to care for the golden mammoth at all. Instead, he harshly criticized the golden mammoth for failing his duties.

Li Feng frowned.

If nothing else, the golden mammoth had tried to stop Li Feng at the cost of his life. Even if he had failed in that mission, the fact that the mammoth herdleader was simply criticizing him without attempting to help with his life-threatening injuries was ridiculous.

"You've truly disappointed me. How dare you refuse my order to command the invasion troops, to criticize me in front of the other mammoths for turning against our allies, for nothing but these weak, puny humans! It's clear you don't respect my authority!"

The golden mammoth wearily raised his head. "I apologize, herdleader, but even now, I haven't changed my mind. The humans and draconians are allies to our world, and they've contributed to our survival in this frozen land. I refuse to turn my back on our allies when they're in need!"

If not for the humans imparting the mammoths their knowledge of military formations and blacksmithing, the mammoths would surely have a much harder time surviving their bitter climate.

The mammoth herdleader cried out, "Who made you my successor, and who has been protecting the herd all this time? Who elevated our living conditions? Not the humans, not the draconians, not our allies—but me! Without me, would the herd still be around?"

Li Feng laughed coldly. "Hah! As if you were solely responsible for your herd's welfare! Or do you claim that you've never received any kindness from the humans or draconians? Herdleader, you're far too self-centered!"

If not for the humans' knowledge, the mammoths wouldn't be able to hunt for food so easily, and neither would they grow strong enough as a race to begin invading their neighboring worlds.

More importantly, neither would they have been recognized by the will of the world.

The mammoth herdleader had worked hard to elevate the tribe, and his strength was hardly in question, but it would be inappropriate for him to claim all the credit.

Li Feng sighed. "What a pity. I wanted to have a look at the volcano around which the mammoths built their base, but you've already come to die!"

The mammoth herdleader snorted. "Given what you can see of our living conditions, shouldn't it be obvious why we're hoping for something better?"

"Yes, but to do so by betraying your allies is wrong!"

The mammoth herdleader pointed at Li Feng as he shouted to the golden mammoth, "Look, look right here, my young successor! Some random human is standing in front of me and criticizing me shamelessly and impolitely. This is all your fault. If you had attacked the draconians with the rest of the tribe, you wouldn't be lying on the ground as wounded as you are now! This is all your fault!"

The golden mammoth remained quiet upon hearing the herdleader's words.

The herdleader criticized him even more viciously. "If you had listened to me, there would be no humans pushing into our territory now—and you couldn't even redeem yourself by stopping a single human! You're useless, utterly useless!"

Li Feng interjected with a harsh laugh. "Useless? No, not him—but soon, you will be!

I had thought that, as the king of the realm and the leader of the mammoths, you would be far more insightful and open-minded, but you're just a petty and narrow-minded fellow!"

The mammoth herdleader twisted his head. "Do you want to die, human?"

Li Feng taunted, "What, you think you can kill me?"

The mammoth herdleader laughed. "Puny human, I could kill you with just one finger!"

Li Feng raised his head to the skies. "I wonder which race it was that had to submit and bow down to us for some information that we don't even use anymore?"

"You dare!" the mammoth herdleader howled, punching forward with a leg. Ice and snow shot forward, freezing Li Feng's face even before the main force behind the attack landed.

"[Light Dragon's Remnants]!" Li Feng's hands moved so quickly they were hardly visible, sending countless dragons of light flying out toward the mammoth and counteracting his punch. Light and ice exploded, and the frozen ground grew even frostier. Li Feng began to prepare another attack.

"[Dance of the Incandescent Wyrms]!" Li Feng summoned dozens of serpents, flaring with blinding light. They tore apart the shield of ice and snow around the mammoth and struck him directly.

However, the mammoth herdleader's skin and hair was even tougher and more resilient than the golden mammoth's. Li Feng's dragons of light were able to penetrate the snowstorm shield, but not the mammoth's hair itself.

The mammoth herdleader grinned, stomping out the dragons with his legs.

"[Arclight Dragon's Imprint]!" Li Feng, now clad in a suit of dragon armor, waved his left arm. A seal of light materialized around him.

The next moment, a gigantic dragon's claw struck the mammoth herdleader from above.

The frozen ground began to crack.

"[Light's Bulwark: Draconic Fist]!" Li Feng clenched his fist. His right arm, clad with light, was covered with scales. The scales began to move as an arclight dragon materialized, howled, and rushed toward the mammoth.

The mammoth herdleader reached out and grabbed the arclight dragon. "Is this all the strength you have?"

With a heavy stomp, the dragon dissipated into formless energy.

"[Light's Bulwark: Dragon's Teeth]!" Li Feng charged up for a stronger attack. Concentrated light-attuned genetic energy surrounded him as he shot forward in a beam of light.

The mammoth slammed a leg on the ground, causing a wall of ice to erupt. Li Feng's fist smashed into that wall. Subsequently, as the mammoth raised a leg and smashed the wall apart, Li Feng was sent flying. He stabilized himself in mid-air, then readied another technique.

"[Light's Bulwark: Meteoric Fist]!" An arclight dragon appeared behind Li Feng. He punched forward, and the dragon shot toward the golden mammoth like a bullet from a sniper rifle.

The light dragon left behind a starry trail, breathtakingly beautiful.

As Li Feng continued to punch forward like a gatling gun, the dragons he manifested broke apart the ice that the mammoth herdleader had created. Li Feng's rain of bullets was finally able to penetrate the mammoth herdleader's defense and wound his body.

Chapter 794: Li Feng Covering the Sky

The mammoth herdleader howled as a flurry of snow gathered around him and blasted toward Li Feng like a blizzard.

"[Light's Bulwark: Heavenfall]!" Light-attuned genetic energy gathered on Li Feng's fist, compressing once and again. As Li Feng struck, the beams of light sliced apart the blizzard.

"I'll admit you have some strength of your own!" the mammoth herdleader called out. He was forced back as concentrated light-attuned genetic energy left a scar on his head.

Li Feng unsheathed his sword. "[Birth of the Holy Dragon]!"

Li Feng leapt high into the air and landed on the dragon's head, his sword gleaming brightly as though it had been dipped in liquid light. As he raised the sword to the skies, it glowed and expanded, morphing into a huge blade of light.

The blade parted the clouds and lit up the entire frozen tundra. At that very moment, Li Feng looked like a god descending from the heavens.

The mammoth herdleader slammed his legs against the frozen ground, causing it to explode. Ice and rock erupted from its depths, piercing the light dragons that Li Feng had summoned.

Li Feng leapt into the air, his sword shining as it cut through the dark clouds that had gathered overhead. He left a long trail of light behind him as he swung downward.

The mammoth herdleader clamped the sword and halted its momentum with his two legs, but even he couldn't handle it all completely. Despite his astounding defense and musculature, the ground beneath his legs began to crack, sending a flurry of snow into the air.

The energy contained within the sword of light made his legs feel as though they were burning up.

The mammoth smashed his trunk into the blade of the sword, causing it to shake before it shattered.

"[Birth of the Holy Dragon]!" Li Feng yelled out, defending himself once more from the mammoth's attack. He pulled out another blade, from which light began to gather. As he struck, dozens of dragons fell from the skies like meteors, shining against the snowy backdrop.

The mammoth slammed his legs against the ground once more and invoked the authority of the king of the realm, teleporting huge glaciers in front of him to block Li Feng's attack.

The dragons struck the glacier, perforating it as though they were meteorites and sending shards of ice flying all over.

The mammoth herdleader kicked the glacier toward the center of the dragons, where it exploded. As he howled, he summoned three blades from the void. Each blade was made of froststeel, two fifteen meters long and one ten meters long.

Surprisingly, the mammoth herdleader used three blades, one for each foreleg and one held with a curled trunk. The mammoth sliced all the dragons apart in a blink. The herdleader announced, "It's been many years since I last picked up my blades—perhaps decades, or even centuries. You should be honored to die to them."

"[Birth of the Holy Dragon: Arclight Slash]!" Li Feng lifted his sword high above his head. A silvery-white dragon emerged from behind him, merged with the sword, and sent a beam of light piercing the skies. Li Feng struck, and the sword slash morphed into a dragon.

The mammoth spun the three blades he held like windmills, juggling his blades from left leg to trunk, trunk to right leg, and right leg to left leg. The rapid spinning sent a flurry of snow straight toward Li Feng. As the mammoth's blades spun faster and faster, the three blades seemed to turn into howling fans.

Li Feng's own sword clashed against those blades in a shower of light, sending rays of light drilling through the frozen ground and propelling flakes of snow into the air at such speed they began to evaporate.

Meanwhile, the mammoth herdleader spun his swords faster and faster, reinforcing and imbuing them with the strength, the strength of three thousand worlds. Li Feng's sword of light seemed to flag in comparison.

As his dragons were obliterated once more, Li Feng leapt high into the air, his body flaring with light. The light lit up the heavens, causing motes of starlight to glow around him, as though the Milky Way were descending from space.

When the starlight struck him, it exploded and struck the mammoth and ground beneath like a gatling gun.

The mammoth made use of the authority of the king of the realm to reinforce the three blades once more, augmenting his attack further.

"[Birth of the Holy Dragon]!" Dozens of sword slashes emanated from Li Feng, each with a starry splendor reminiscent of the Milky Way. The stars in the night sky shone brightly with the sword slashes, imbued with the power of the vast expanse of the galaxy.

The starlight was so splendid that it would make any onlookers dizzy.

Li Feng's silver dragon clashed against the three thousand worlds in yet another spectacular explosion, as though two galaxies were colliding.

The magnitude of the attack exceeded the threshold that could be supported by the world. As light flashed, the snowy clouds in the sky were blown away, revealing a patch of starless sky.

The mammoth breathed out clouds of white smoke, legs and snout trembling. On the other hand, Li Feng seemed to have energy in excess. Luminous starlight revolved around him.

Li Feng shook his head. "You're far weaker than the golden mammoth."

"What?" The mammoth herdleader was certain he had misheard.

"If you weren't the king of the realm, you would be no match for the golden mammoth!"

The mammoth herdleader was unable to accept Li Feng's judgment. "You mean to claim that I'm weaker than that fool?!" He was the king of the realm!

"You don't believe me? Let me show you the truth, then." Li Feng, his palm outstretched, reached for the sky. Light-attuned genetic energy exploded above him.

"[Light's Bulwark: Heavenfall]!" Light exploded in the sky with such force that space itself began to warp. Shockwaves roared through the air like thundering dragons.

The dark clouds above Li Feng and the mammoth herdleader had been replaced by glittering brilliance, as though the heavens were now a sea of light. Large numbers of arclight dragons frolicked in the sky...

Chapter 795: Three Blades, Combined

The mammoth herdleader's eyes narrowed. As he glanced at the frightening power coalescing in the heavens above him, he found himself trembling involuntarily. All he could do was forcibly calm himself, trumpeting his rage and anger, then sheath his fifteen-meter-long blades. He pounded the ground with his legs, causing the entire world to tremble.

In order to block Li Feng's wide-range attack, the mammoth herdleader invoked the authority of the king to teleport a whole mountain range over.

As Li Feng waved a hand, the light-attuned genetic energy morphed into a roaring river that poured down on the mammoth herdleader like a flood.

Countless thundering dragons, like sharp knives that could rend earth and sky, hurtled toward the mammoth.

The mountain range that the mammoth herdleader used as a defensive barrier exploded. The flood of dragons struck the mountain range like a nuclear warhead exploding. Huge boulders were sent flying into the sky. Blocks of ice cracked, producing rainbow glimmers in the air when struck by incident light.

Li Feng's technique surpassed rationality.

The mammoth herdleader stomped his legs once more, annihilating the boulders that seemed liable to crush him with frost so cold it shattered the boulders and turned them into naught but dust.

As he trumpeted, his three blades combined into one. Sword energy flared, and the blades formed a humongous shadow that dwarfed everything in sight. So sharp was the sword energy emanating from his blade that a boulder flying toward him was cut in half upon entering a boundary of a few dozen meters from the mammoth.

"Let's end the battle with this blow! [Light's Bulwark: Thousand Dragons Soaring]!" Li Feng shouted. Dragons of light materialized and circled his arms. As he punched upward into the sky, all his genetic energy condensed in his fists, launching dozens of dragons into the sky.

The dragons' cries sounded like peals of thunder as they swooped through the air, thousands of them in all.

Li Feng's technique mirrored Zhang Lie's [Fists of the silent Sea: Hundred Dragons Soaring], but it was considerably faster.

Thousands of dragons suddenly appeared in the air, shrieking in cacophony. On Li Feng's command, however, they all descended from the skies in a meteor shower.

The mammoth waved his blade and vanquished a few dozen, but the dragons came in such numbers that the mammoth simply couldn't deal with them all.

Even so, despite the steep numerical disadvantage, the mammoth seemed at ease. He began to spin and rotate like a whirling dervish, forming a hurricane of frost and blade around himself.

The combination was astounding. Snow from the ground was sent flying back up into the sky in what seemed like a localized blizzard.

Li Feng drew his sword once more. Light-attuned genetic energy gathered on his blade. As the blade shone radiantly, Li Feng closed his eyes and recalled a memory of Zhang Lie fighting. He opened his eyes once more, eyes glowing, as a technique manifested from him.

"[Birth of the Holy Dragon]!" Li Feng cut forward. The overflowing sword energy materialized in the form of a light dragon that tore apart the mammoth's technique. It struck the mammoth's three-blade combination and dissipated into thin air even as it forced the mammoth stumbling back.

Li Feng glanced at the sword in his hand, downcast. "As expected, I can't just make up techniques in the heat of battle!"

The mammoth herdleader glared in disbelief. Li Feng's expression and undeveloped technique—was that something he had come up with on the spot?

Was Li Feng testing new techniques on him during this battle of life and death?! The mammoth herdleader was fighting for his life, but Li Feng thought so little of him that he was simply treating this battle like mundane practice!

The mammoth herdleader's rage flared. The ground resonated. Ice cracked. The mammoth flew into the air like a rocket.

Li Feng calmed down, concentrated, and gathered his genetic energy again.

"Perhaps like this?" The sword technique that Zhang Lie had once used replayed in Li Feng's mind, once and again. Li Feng ignored the mammoth charging toward him.

The mammoth herdleader invoked the authority of the king of the realm as he teleported himself on top of Li Feng's head, his three blades whirling. "Die!"

"Yes, just like this!" Li Feng's eyes opened wide as energy flared from his sword. "[Birth of the Holy Dragon: Realm of Heaven]!"

Li Feng raised his sword high into the air. Light-attuned genetic energy gathered around it, invoking the stars and even the will of the world itself.

The mammoth herdleader was visibly perturbed. "Impossible! How can anyone but me commune with the will of this frozen world?!"

A holy chant seemed to fill the air. The light-attuned genetic energy that gathered around Li Feng manifested as angel's wings surrounding him.

The golden mammoth, down on the ground, clambered out of a deep snowdrift, panting heavily. He felt as though he had almost died of suffocation.

Both Li Feng and the mammoth herdleader had deliberately taken the battle away from where the golden mammoth lay, or he would have long since perished from the aftermath of their attacks.

If a peak-grade lifeform were to wander into the fighting, it would have been killed near-immediately—and the rest of the attacks would annihilate even its bones. The golden mammoth was far stronger than an ordinary peak-grade lifeform, but he was heavily wounded.

As the golden mammoth glanced up at Li Feng, still amassing more and more light-attuned genetic energy with every passing second, he sighed. "To think you still had such an attack—I've truly lost!"

Although the mammoth herdleader was right beside Li Feng, he found that his fifteen-meter-long blades were unable to strike him, as though they were dimensions—no, worlds, apart. This had to be spatial manipulation!

The mammoth herdleader understood what was going on within moments. Li Feng had made use of spatial manipulation to field a barrier between him and the mammoth, stretching out the meters of space that lay between them into hundreds, thousands of miles.

"Laughable. Do you really think you're the only one who can manipulate space? Don't forget who the king of this frozen realm is!"

The mammoth spun the three blades he held like windmills and simultaneously invoked the authority of kingship to imbue his next attack. The three blades spun with the strength of three thousand worlds, spinning faster and faster, ever faster, and destroying the barrier that Li Feng had put in place between them.

Chapter 796: By the Volcanoes

Li Feng seemed completely unperturbed by the mammoth herdleader's counterattack. A hundred dragons wrapped around his sword, and his light-attuned genetic energy was forming complicated patterns around him.

As the light shifted and transformed, Li Feng's blade shot toward the mammoth herdleader.

The entire battlefield was filled with radiant light, holy and pure, as though Li Feng had opened the gates to heaven.

As the light receded, however, the mammoth herdleader seemed to vanish. Nothing was left behind; he seemed to have evaporated from the world.

The golden mammoth stared at the scene in shock. He had understood the principles behind all the blows that had been exchanged in the battle to date—all except for the very last blow.

Li Feng slowly dropped his sword and released a deep breath. "I was almost sucked into the attack myself. Better not to use something like this too much."

The golden mammoth's mouth was still agape; he had yet to recover from the shock of Li Feng's attack. Subsequently, a bloody blizzard descended from the sky—a rain of blood which had frozen over given the temperature.

As the heavens mourned for the death of the king, the golden mammoth finally came to his senses. "Just what was that final attack? Where did the mammoth herdleader get transported to?"

Li Feng turned to the golden mammoth. "Ah, you haven't died yet."

At the start of the battle, he had tried to move away from the wounded mammoth, but as the battle dragged on, Li Feng completely forgot about his existence.

The golden mammoth asked again, "Just what was that final attack? Could you be a wuxia swordsman yourself?"

Li Feng scratched his head. "How should I explain this... I don't suppose you're familiar with data modeling? Vector space modeling? Advanced mathematics? Conversion of energy, refining energy, the second law of thermodynamics?"

The golden mammoth shook his head more and more furiously.

Li Feng shrugged. "In that case, I won't be able to explain it to you."

The golden mammoth sighed. "To think that humans possessed so many other private collections of wuxia techniques! We mammoths have truly underestimated your kind."

Li Feng's lips spasmed. "I suppose they are... wuxia techniques... of a kind, but ones so complicated that you wouldn't want to delve deeply into them."

The golden mammoth sighed again. "In the end, we were far too arrogant!"

The mammoth herdleader's arrogance had gradually spread to the rest of the herd. The mammoths believed that, after they had learned some human knowledge, that they had eclipsed humanity entirely. They believed that their understanding of the world, built upon the foundations the humans had taught them, had long since eclipsed human knowledge.

Now, however, the mammoths were learning that they had been entirely mistaken.

The humans had hardly shared everything with the mammoths; they had simply passed on a small gift, one which didn't contain many core principles or advanced extensions of the same ideas.

After the mammoths learned and mastered this knowledge, after hunting became trivial for them and they were able to build stronger and more insulating shelter, they grew more and more arrogant. They believed that the information that humans had provided them were the limit of what weaklings like the humans could accomplish; that they, mammoths with far superior constitution, could advance themselves further.

The golden mammoth knew this to be a lie, but he had no way of proving it to the rest of the mammoths.

Li Feng nodded. "An understandable development."

The golden mammoth continued, "Ever since the king of the realm emerged from our herd, we no longer visited the other neighboring worlds as much. Instead, we isolated ourselves. Trying to change my herd's mindset will require a sudden shock."

Li Feng nodded, understanding what the golden mammoth meant. The mammoth wanted to shock his herd out of complacency, while Li Feng needed to acquire the proof of kingship. Their goals were aligned.

Li Feng asked, "But are you really willing to give up on the proof of kingship so simply?"

The golden mammoth nodded. "Even without the proof of kingship, we mammoths can likewise become strong."

The golden mammoth was wise beyond his years, so much so that Li Feng would have been a little worried as to just how strong he would become in the future if not for Zhang Lie's presence.

He countered, "Aren't you afraid that I'll wipe out all the mammoths after taking the proof of kingship?"

The golden mammoth replied, "I wouldn't tell anyone else where the proof of kingship is, but you're a different story."

"You trust me?" Li Feng was skeptical. He had only fought against the golden mammoth once; it was hardly as though they were old rivals.

The golden mammoth smiled. "If you were planning to kill all the mammoths, you would hardly spend so much time talking with me. Isn't that so?"

Li Feng nodded. "I suppose that's reasonable."

The golden mammoth continued, "Of course, the primary reason is that you've conveyed your feelings to me through your swordsmanship."

That... was a very wuxia-flavored answer.

Li Feng strode forward, lifted the golden mammoth, and slung him around his shoulders.

The golden mammoth suddenly requested, "Can you haul me on your back in a different position? This is how you'd carry me to the herd if I were your prey!"

"You're rather demanding, aren't you?" In the end, Li Feng didn't adjust how the mammoth was slung on his back.

Although the draconians had provided Li Feng with some information about the mammoth lands, this was the first time Li Feng had witnessed it for himself.

There were eight volcanoes in the region, with the one in the middle being the largest. The other seven surrounded the central volcano in a rough ring. All eight volcanos were active, and smoke trailed out of their craters. They warmed up the mammoths that gathered around them.

The golden mammoth explained, "Because of the warmer climate around the volcanoes, there are more prey in the region."

The lifeforms of this frozen world had unwillingly adapted to the cold; they preferred slightly warmer climates. Of course, that didn't mean that they wanted the climate of the equator rather than of the North Pole, but rather that they sought spots of warmth—exactly like the volcanoes would provide.

The nearby volcanoes meant that the ground around the mammoths wasn't frozen, and was far more convenient and comfortable than the rest of the land.

The genetic lifeforms tended to be active in the vicinity of the volcano. None approached the volcanoes directly given the presence of the mammoth herd and the fact that they wanted warmth, not extreme heat.

As more genetic lifeforms gathered around the volcanoes, so too did their predators. Thanks to the large numbers of lifeforms around, there were plenty of lifeforms for the mammoths to hunt. No longer did they have to wander hundreds of kilometers away or hunt on precarious terrain like a frozen river.

The mammoths even tried to grow plants and vegetables in order to add variety and essential nutrients to their diet, in the same way that housecats would sometimes consume weeds and wild grass to deal with the accumulated fat in their stomach.

In the past, the mammoths had had to trade for such precious supplies, but now, they could even grow their own sustenance.

Li Feng's eyesight was very developed, and he could see pillars of flame from afar, which rose and fell in sync with a pulse from the ground.

The golden mammoth explained, "We craft and forge our weapons from the earth's fire. Although we learned how to forge weapons from humans, it was far too expensive for us to maintain other types of forges in this weather. Our wise ancestors were the ones who thought of this idea."

Li Feng rolled his eyes. "And then, the intelligence and wisdom amassed throughout generations of hard work—your herdleader destroyed it all!"

The golden mammoth's face turned downcast. "I won't judge the herdleader for his actions. Although he had truly grown too arrogant by his demise, he has contributed greatly to the clan himself. His accomplishments shouldn't be judged by our contemporaries, but rather by our descendants."

Li Feng contemplated, "A wise leader making a terrible mistake near the end of his life? I can't help but feel a sense of déjà vu..."

The mammoth lands were divided into an inner and an outer sanctuary. The inner sanctuary consisted of mud houses, along with a simple wall formed from bricks of ice. The outer sanctuary had igloos.

Li Feng asked, "What separates these two regions?"

"The warriors live on the outskirts, while the women, children, and elderly live within."

"Oh? It looks like your herd is surprisingly harmonious." Li Feng was a little shocked that the warriors who fought on behalf of the herd were willing to sleep in such icy quarters.

The golden mammoth peered at him strangely. "You don't think we would separate our community into serfs and lords, do you?"

"Don't your warriors mind?" Didn't they think that shedding blood for the clan made them deserve better treatment?

The golden mammoth shook his head. "This frozen world is a worse place to live in than the draconian world, than wherever you humans live. The threat of frightening beasts lies all around us. I freely admit that. It's precisely because we need to protect our herd that we warriors have to fight, to guard, to defend. All mammoths, once they come of age, become warriors that contribute to the safety of the tribe."

The mammoths thought this a natural progression of life, but Li Feng somewhat pitied the mammoths for not having even the right to decide their own fate.

Peering carefully at Li Feng, the golden mammoth added, "You pity us? We disagree. Only a few talented mammoths are willing to become smiths for the tribe, and only because the herdleader forced them to. We never have enough smiths, since being a warrior is a matter of peerless honor."

Li Feng sighed. "It's clear that your herdleader was excellent at brainwashing the entire herd."

Chapter 797: The Impending Eruption

The golden mammoth shook his head vehemently. "No, this isn't brainwashing! Every mammoth wants to become a warrior, because only warriors can bring honor to their family, to contribute to the herd! If you want to be more realistic about it, becoming an outstanding warrior will allow you to improve your family's life."

"Yes, I understand. That's precisely what brainwashing is all about!"

China's gaokao [1] was precisely one such type of brainwashing—education is required to have a future, to get into a good university, and hence to obtain a stable career.

Without studying, it would be impossible for an ordinary child to surpass the likes of those born with golden spoons in their mouths—as if studying would bridge that gap! And what if those exam results that someone slaved for were stolen by a bribed, corrupt official? What then?

Li Feng shrugged. "That's brainwashing for you. Your herdleader gave you an incentive to become a warrior—to provide for your family—and inculcated you with those beliefs day in and day out, forcefully indoctrinating you to adhere to those beliefs! It might seem like he's trying to help you out for the future, but he's really stripping you of all other possibilities!"

The golden mammoth glanced curiously at Li Feng. "I'm not sure how you humans view this, but I don't see this necessarily as a bad thing. Don't you agree?"

Li Feng mulled it over for a moment before nodding.

In the context of the situation, perhaps it was sensible. Humans had the freedom to do what they wanted, but the mammoth herd needed as many warriors as it could generate to survive such trying conditions. If the mammoths were allowed to choose their occupations freely, the mammoth society would collapse near-instantaneously.

"Most of our current smiths were injured in battle and forced to become smiths because they had no other choice. Those are our igloos. They're where our warriors sleep, as well as our storehouses for food. It's very easy for food to spoil in warm conditions, but they can be kept for an entire year in our igloos without a problem." The golden mammoth pointed at an igloo in the distance.

As Li Feng and the golden mammoth walked closer to the volcano, the temperature began to rise above bone-chilling and into bearable.

The mammoth herd had really found an excellent piece of land.

Li Feng asked, "Aren't you afraid that the volcanoes might erupt?"

The golden mammoth shook its head. "We don't have anything to worry about. The king of the realm can suppress any volcanic eruptions!"

"Not anymore," Li Feng reminded the golden mammoth.

He wilted. "Even so, my kin and I won't leave!"

"Why?"

"Because the sheer cold and hunger are more frightening than death itself."

Suddenly, the ground began to quake.

The golden mammoth's eyes widened as he looked toward Li Feng. "I suddenly have a bad premonition..."

"What a coincidence. I do too." Li Feng put down the golden mammoth, then retrieved a restorative from his soul space. "Drink this."

The golden mammoth didn't hesitate. After doing so, his injuries began to heal at a rate visible to the naked eye.

As tremors continued to spread through the earth, many mammoths came out of their huts and igloos.

The golden mammoth gulped in astonishment. "This potion is marvelous. Is there any more?"

Li Feng noticed that the golden mammoth was so large that a single vial of potion wasn't enough to help him recover. He took out four more and passed them to the mammoth.

The mammoth herd leader had, as the king of the realm, been suppressing the eruption of all eight volcanos since he became king. Now that he had been killed by Li Feng, the volcanoes were finally unleashing their pent-up might.

The golden mammoth grumbled, "Why didn't you give me something like this earlier if you had it? You wouldn't have had to carry me on your back like a trussed pig!"

"I was afraid you would run off after recovering."

"Do I look like someone who would do that?!"

"There's no time to argue. Drink up—something's going to happen!"

The eight volcanoes were all trembling like pots of boiling water, as though they were charging up for something massive. If the volcanoes were to erupt and splash molten lava everywhere, where almost all of the mammoth herd was gathered...

The golden mammoth's injuries quickly vanished, and not a moment too soon.

With an ear-splitting boom, volcanic ash spewed into the air. All eight volcanoes began to erupt, and flaming boulders shot out of their craters.

"No!" Li Feng and the golden mammoth shouted at the same time.

Li Feng transformed into a beam of light and rushed into the air.

"[Light Dragon's Remnants]!" Li Feng marshaled his genetic energy into the form of a large number of white dragons, which crashed against the fiery boulders and caused them to explode like fireworks.

The golden mammoth rushed to the herd. "Are all of you alright?"

When the other mammoths saw him, they cried out in surprise, "The golden mammoth has returned! The golden mammoth's back!"

Some of the mammoths rushed up to it. "Just what's going on? We saw a rain of blood just now, as though the entire world were groaning!"

The golden mammoth cried out, "I'll explain the details later! Pack up—we can't stay here any longer!"

The mammoth herdleader had been compressing and compressing the energy of these volcanoes for many long years, preventing them from causing a disaster. As a result, the volcanoes had accumulated far too much energy than they should have, and even the king of the realm's authority was growing ineffective against them.

With the herdleader's death, that energy was right about to be unleashed on the mammoth herd.

The golden mammoth believed that the reason the mammoth herdleader had been so desperate to find sanctuary for the herd, even to the point of betraying his allies, was to find a new home for the mammoths.

The golden mammoth's thoughts were biased, of course, but it didn't matter. The mammoth herdleader was dead, and the golden mammoth would rather remember him as a leader forced to betray his allies than one blinded by arrogance.

The mammoths asked, "Where's the herdleader? Where is he?"

The golden mammoth shook his head. "The herdleader isn't coming back."

"What? What happened?"

"Did something bad happen to the herdleader?"

"Could the herdleader have deserted us?"

The mammoths began to panic, and the golden mammoth sighed. "The herdleader died in battle!"

"No! Impossible!" one of the mammoths cried out. "The herdleader is the king of the realm, invincible in this world!"

The golden mammoth shouted, "I'll explain it all later! We have to evacuate now—something's wrong with the volcanoes!"

Some of the mammoths seemed very confused. "Pack up? Where to?"

Chapter 798: Immediate Evacuation

Some of the mammoths became agitated the moment they heard that they were going to be leaving their comfortable homes by the volcanoes.

"I won't leave, we won't! This is our home. No matter what, we can't go back out into the freezing hinterlands again!"

"I'm going to stay right here and wait for the herdleader to come back. Once the herdleader's back, I'm sure he'll be able to resolve all our problems."

They remained unwilling to believe that the herdleader had died and were still expectantly awaiting his return.

The entire herd fell into chaos.

The golden mammoth shouted, "The herdleader isn't coming back! Everyone, we have to stay strong!"

Li Feng flew down toward the golden mammoth after having done a survey of the volcanoes. "That was just a preliminary eruption, which dislodged the ash and boulders in the volcano's crater. The next eruption will be massive.

"Have your herd pack up and evacuate immediately! We might be able to halt the eruption of one volcano, but not all eight—not unless your herdleader somehow revives from the dead, or if my captain shows up."

The mammoth herdleader had been invoking the authority of the king of the realm all this time in order to preserve the living habitat of his herd. He was able to stall the volcanic eruptions, but it was only ever a delay—even he couldn't prevent the eruptions completely.

During the many years in which the volcanoes were suppressed, they amassed a great deal of energy. The mammoths periodically vented that energy with their geothermal forges, but it was only a small fraction of the total energy that the volcanoes contained.

Li Feng and the mammoth herdleader's attacks had caused the entire world to shake and quake. The aftershocks from the battle was the trigger that finally initiated the volcanoes' eruption.

However, thanks to the mammoth herdleader's suppression, the craters of all eight volcanoes were blocked with ash and rubble. The first eruption had cleared out all that mess; the second eruption would be devastating.

Upon seeing Li Feng appear, the entire mammoth herd was in an uproar.

One of the mammoths shouted, "What's a human doing here? Are the two of you working together?!"

Another mammoth howled, "Golden mammoth, it must be your fault! You've long since wanted to become herdleader—and you refused a direct command from the herdleader to attack the humans! You must have taken this opportunity to backstab the herdleader with this despicable human!"

"Golden mammoth, I thought you were the strongest warrior of our herd, but you're actually just a despicable backstabber!"

"Did you make these arrangements with the humans well in advance? Right, you frequently head to the draconian world, don't you? You must have planned this!"

Li Feng sneered. "It doesn't look like you mammoths are as harmonious as you claimed."

Now that the volcanoes all around the herd were about to explode, the veneer of harmony around the herd had been warped and shattered.

"Enough!" the golden mammoth roared, energy bursting out of his body and quelling the mammoth herd. "The volcano's right about to explode. Now isn't the time for this!"

The other mammoths didn't seem to agree. "What do you mean, it's not the time for this? It's precisely because we're in such danger that we need to understand what's going on. Who knows where you might lead us otherwise!"

As the situation deteriorated further, the reputation and name that the golden mammoth had built up began to crumble.

"It has to be you—you were the one who killed the king of the realm, you're the one who wants to destroy our herd in cahoots with the humans!"

"Return our king to us!"

"The humans and draconians must not want to see us mammoths grow stronger! It's all because of them!"

Many of the mammoths picked up shards of ice and threw them at the golden mammoth.

The ice shattered on impact with the golden mammoth's body; his constitution was far stronger than would be hurt by the ice, but not his heart. It felt as though the shards of ice were skewering him alive. He had worked so hard for the herd; was this all he was worth?

The golden mammoth was trying to evacuate the herd to save them all, but none of them were willing to listen to or believe him.

Li Feng folded his arms and watched on as the mammoth herd argued. A barrier of light protected him from any projectiles the mammoths threw his way.

He was rather interested in how the golden mammoth would react, but that didn't mean he would help it, or even the rest of the mammoth herd. After all, it didn't matter to him whether the mammoth herd lived or perished.

As long as he could keep the golden mammoth alive, he would be able to obtain the proof of kingship.

Li Feng glanced up toward the volcanoes. The second eruption was nigh, and given the situation, it seemed as though the mammoth herd would be unable to escape calamity.

"Halt, all of you!" a weary but commanding voice rang out from within the herd. The voice resonated like a tolling bell, and the mammoths all froze the moment they heard the speaker.

They parted as an old mammoth, his fur snowy-white, emerged from their midst. "What are all of you doing? The volcanoes are about to erupt! If you don't move, you'll be dead!"

This old mammoth clearly possessed superlative status within the herd. The belligerent mammoths who had been targeting the golden mammoth stopped immediately, and all the mammoths hung their heads in shame.

Li Feng asked, "Who is this?"

The golden mammoth's eyes regained their color. "This is the elder of our herd, the oldest and most honorable of us all, as well as the teacher and mentor of the herdleader."

One of the mammoths pointed at the golden mammoth with dissatisfaction. "But elder, he—"

The elder cut him off. "Have you forgotten the herdleader's words?!"

All the mammoths fell silent as the elder continued, "If the herdleader isn't present, then we listen to his successor's commands! Everyone, listen to him no matter what!"

Despite the elder's words, one of the more recalcitrant mammoths still called out, "Elder, it's possible that this fellow worked with the humans to assassinate our herdleader! We can't take his words for granted!"

The elder turned to the golden mammoth. "Have you done anything to betray our herd?"

"No!" the golden mammoth shouted steadfastly. "I would never. May lightning strike me down, may blizzards freeze me over if I ever do!"

"Good, good child. I believe your claim."

Even so, some of the mammoths still seemed displeased. "Elder, are we going to believe him so easily?"

The elder snorted. "If he were to attack any of you, who present would be able to stop him? That he isn't doing so means that he's still the warrior, the champion we all know and respect. There's no time for any further discussion. Everyone, we retreat at once!"

Chapter 799: Complete Eruption

The elder's reasoning seemed a little farfetched, but the mammoths finally noticed the immediacy of their situation as the elder shouted again, "What are you all standing there for? Leave! Flee!"

The ground trembled far more intensely than before, and the volcanoes began spewing out ash and boulders once more.

This time, three volcanoes erupted in succession. Waves of heat buffeted the mammoth herd, and burning boulders arced down from the sky. Three headed straight for the mammoth herd.

While the mammoths gaped at the boulders in shock, the golden mammoth rose into the air, punching at the boulders with such force that they crumbled into pieces.

As the golden mammoth landed back on the ground, he shouted, "Quick! Run!"

No one was able to stop the eight volcanoes from exploding. Lava began pouring out of their craters as the entire sky turned a fiery red color.

The three volcanoes to the left, as well as the one in the center, had all begun to erupt.

Faced with the huge patches of lava, the mammoth elder's face turned white. "Our herd is done for..."

Even so, the golden mammoth had no intention to give up. He grabbed onto one of the other mammoths and shouted, "Lend me your sword!"

"Here!"

The golden mammoth turned around and grabbed a blade from the air, only to find his froststeel sword thrown by Li Feng himself. Li Feng had taken the blade upon defeating the golden mammoth, and he was returning it to him now.

The golden mammoth bowed in respect before turning back to the boulders, waving the plain, unadorned sword with his trunk.

The simple strike had been honed by endless repetition, leaving a long furrow in the ground which was quickly filled by the lava. The golden mammoth struck again and again, carving out strokes that formed a '#' in the ground, a makeshift seawall that would ideally divert the flow of lava.

The golden mammoth had come up with this idea after learning about how humans would build such seawalls to prevent the tides from ruining their sand sculptures.

The mammoth world possessed no sand or beaches, but in a moment of inspiration, the golden mammoth realized that this knowledge he had picked up from the humans could apply directly to this scenario.

The lava was indeed diverted, and didn't directly overwhelm the mammoth herd.

The golden mammoth turned and shouted, "There's no time to pack up! Run!"

The elder agreed. He too shouted, "Your lives are more important!"

Just then, the volcanoes erupted again—all five remaining. As huge quantities of rock and lava emerged from the volcanoes, the entire sky grew crimson, as though it had been lit on fire.

"[Dance of the Incandescent Wyrms]!" Li Feng summoned hundreds of serpents, flaring with blinding light, forming a lattice in the air that disintegrated the rock and lava. Li Feng, like a god descending from the heavens, was defending the mammoth herd alone against the eruption.

The mammoths stared at him from the ground, unable to believe that a human would be willing to help them out.

Li Feng shouted without turning back, "What are all of you doing? Run!"

Only then did the mammoths finally begin to flee.

The golden mammoth bowed his head again in gratitude. "Thank you."

He continued to divert the freely flowing lava.

The mammoths were absurdly strong. Li Feng saw one particular mammoth dig up the foundations of his igloo and run off with it on his back—and doing so at a pace comparable to those of the other mammoths as well.

As the eight volcanoes all erupted, the lava swamped the mammoths from all directions, and the golden mammoth's seawalls lost their effectiveness.

The remaining mammoths were trapped by the lava and unable to flee.

The golden mammoth cried out, "Is this a punishment from heaven for betraying our allies?"

"[Light's Bulwark: Draconic Fist]!" Radiant light gleamed, and the redness of the sky was drowned out with white. An illusory dragon of light descended from the heavens and tore a path out of the lava, allowing the remaining mammoths to flee.

The lava slowly consumed that path and the dragon itself, but Li Feng summoned it once more.

The golden mammoth's eyes were bright as he charged forward with his froststeel blade. "Let me help!" He struck forward with a simple blow, but one that had enough strength behind it to split mountains.

The lava was diverted to either side of the strike.

"Follow me!" The golden mammoth led the way as he continued waving his sword to split the lava and rock blocking their path. "Warriors of the herd, get into our defensive formation!"

The warriors hurriedly pulled up their shields and built a defensive perimeter around the mammoth herd. Meanwhile, the non-combatants gathered in the interior of the protective circle.

"We'll prevent the lava from reaching us!" the golden mammoth commanded.

The lava was slowly creeping over the path the golden mammoth had created with his sword, and all the mammoth warriors used their own techniques to defend against the incursion. Some kicked at the ground with their legs, while others summoned rocks with their genetic energy. As the warriors protected the women, children, and elderly, they finally made it out of the vicinity of the volcanoes.

The mammoths began to tear up as they looked back at their territory, which was now quickly being swallowed up by lava. That was where generations of mammoths had made their home.

Before them were boiling-hot patches of lava, with a shocking temperature that made them feel as though they were overheating, but their hearts were icy cold.

The mammoths had lost far too much—not just their territory, but also countless material possessions and life.

Although the golden mammoth had tried his best, there were some mammoths who had steadfastly refused to leave their homes.

Some of the older mammoths were content to die where they lived, and knew that they wouldn't be able to make it far without dragging down the rest of the herd. Of course, there were also some who were remarkably foolish, believing that their herdleader would come back and save them at the last moment...

Chapter 800: A New Leader

The mammoths weren't a populous race, and there hadn't even been ten thousand of them at their peak. Over a thousand warriors had died in the draconian invasion, and another thousand in the volcanic eruption, leaving fewer than six thousand in all.

Surviving, finding a new territory to claim as their own, and searching for food would all be problems in the near future.

The mammoths no longer tried to attack the golden mammoth; his actions in saving them from the volcanic eruptions spoke for themselves.

The golden mammoth was, by now, in a very fatigued state. He didn't know just how long he had been swinging his sword to prevent the incursion of the lava. If not for his training, if he hadn't spent years swinging his sword ten thousand times each day, he wouldn't have had the stamina to continue on. Even so, he had expended much of it, and he was panting heavily as he and the rest of the herd moved on.

As the mammoth elder walked over, the golden mammoth hurriedly perked up. "Is there anything else, elder?"

The elder inclined his head. "Please lead us, herdleader."

"Herdleader?" The golden mammoth glanced to his left and right.

The mammoth elder explained, "As the successor to the herdleader, now that the former herdleader has perished, we need you more than ever."

Li Feng smirked as he glanced at the mammoths from afar. He didn't stand with the mammoth herd. Considering that he was an outsider, it was fortunate enough that he wasn't being attacked on sight.

After all, Li Feng was responsible for killing the former mammoth herdleader, and he was indirectly responsible for causing this entire disaster.

Of course, Li Feng didn't regret what he had done. In the end, the disaster had been caused by the mammoths' greed and attacking the draconian world.

The golden mammoth shook his head. "No, no, how could I? Elder, you're the most respected mammoth in our herd, and you're qualified and experienced. You should become the next herdleader! What's more, you were the one who trained the former herdleader. No one but you could be qualified to take on this role!"

The mammoth herdleader shook his head. "You are qualified. I'm growing old, and my mind is starting to deteriorate. I don't know how much longer I can live, and there's no one else in the herd but you suited to the role."

The golden mammoth shook his head. "No, no, I can't!"

The elder continued, "You can. You must! Your reputation in the herd is soaring, and you've saved all our lives. During the eruption, I was unable to accomplish anything. It was your bravery, your courage, that saved us all!"

The golden mammoth replied, "No, elder—I only did what any mammoth warrior would do!"

The elder replied, "And it's precisely for that reason that you're qualified to become the next herdleader! You have the strength, the wisdom, and the courage to lead us mammoths to a brighter future. With your blade, you struck us a path out of disaster!"

Given the elder's insistence, the golden mammoth found it hard to refuse him. He looked toward the other mammoths, hoping to get their input on the matter.

One mammoth volunteered, "I apologize for my callous remarks toward you earlier. We shouldn't have suspected you of being in cahoots with the humans!"

"It's only thanks to you and that human that we were able to survive."

"Why don't you become the herdleader? You're the most suitable person for that role out of all of us!"

"Right! If it weren't for you, we would all be encased in lava by now. Your combat ability and attitude make you the perfect choice to be herdleader."

"We apologize for what we said, all of us! You're the only one who can lead us out of trouble."

Li Feng watched on coldly. These mammoths really did have somewhat disgusting personalities. Now that the entire herd was trapped in such a troublesome situation, they naturally turned to the strongest mammoth around, whom they had just spurned not a few moments ago—the golden mammoth.

If it were Li Feng, he would hardly be willing to drop the matter for nothing but a few words.

"Herdleader!" one of the mammoths called out, and the others followed suit.

"Herdleader!"

"Herdleader!"

"Herdleader!"

The golden mammoth, however, seemed to be coming around to the idea. The sparkle in his eyes made it evident that he was honored by their behavior.

Li Feng watched on, conscious of his role as a spectator and a spectator only.

The golden mammoth finally accepted the nomination. "If everyone's in agreement, I'll take on the role temporarily, then."

The mammoth elder began, "Herdleader, our first priority is survival. What should the six thousand of us do?"

The golden mammoth replied, "Do you have any thoughts, Elder?"

The mammoth elder thought for a moment. "Many years ago, the herdleader and I had considered plans for such an eventuality—if we were suddenly invaded by other worlds, or if our territory was somehow destroyed. Back then, the herdleader prepared a second home for us all. We'll be able to take shelter there."

The golden mammoth's eyes brightened.

The elder unfurled a map. "Only I and the former herdleader know about this location. It's worse than our original territory, of course, but it'll help us get our footing. The herdleader left large quantities of frozen meat behind for times of need."

The golden mammoth replied, "Wonderful! Our former herdleader was truly a visionary."

He had resolved all the mammoths' immediate problems.

The elder sighed. "He was simply planning for the future. But now..."

In the end, the herdleader had grown so arrogant that he had made a mistake from which he would never recover, but he had been a wise and thoughtful leader before that.

The golden mammoth replied, "Actually, the former herdleader might not have perished."

"Really?"

"He was sent to an unknown world, from which he might be able to return."

The elder shook his head. "Is that really different from dying?"

The golden mammoth fell silent.

The elder emphasized, "Don't reveal this to anyone."

The golden mammoth seemed perplexed. "Why not, Elder?"

"The herd is willing to accept you as its new herdleader, so you shouldn't instill them with idle hope, hope that might not come to fruition."