

Village Head 1271

Chapter 1271 Preparations For The Exploration

Taking care of them wasn't an issue. With his mother's divine gift, he had created several clones, each assigned to stay with his children. He would ensure they were properly trained to avoid any future difficulties.

During this time, Orion also announced his status relationship with Ilse, Zera, Avarielle, and Margona. While Zera and the two goddesses within her were surprised but held it in, Orion's mother was also astonished by the sudden revelation. She grilled him with questions about when their relationship had first begun.

The other women weren't surprised. They merely interrogated Ilse, helping her understand her status in the household. Ilse had expected they would treat her with more reverence and respect after she joined, considering that no one could match her status except for Aerialia, General Reynold, and a few others.

Unfortunately, she was treated as casually as the women treated the rest of their sisters, and her castle, which was supposed to be a temporary residence until they created a more suitable home, suddenly became a permanent one.

The only compensation she received was that the women now freely allowed her to use their Divine Mandates as she wished, returning them when she was done. For Celia, Vivian, Meldra, and Saria—who weren't overly interested in acquiring power but were still fascinated by their capabilities—it was a perfect way to learn the full potential of their Divine Mandates without lifting a finger, which the rest saw as an opportunity and followed suit.

Ilse seemed the most excited about this arrangement. During this time, she didn't pester Orion about having a child but instead locked herself in the Golden Palace, only returning to attend to her duties or speak with the rest of her sisters.

Orion realized that he had not only gained an incredible companion, but the women had also gained another fantastic sister, and they were putting her abilities to good use.

As for Zera, she and the two goddesses within her were also heavily interrogated. Having lived in isolation for thousands of years, suddenly becoming the subject of interest among a circle of unique goddesses made them feel awkward, as they were treated like they had already become part of the household. The only one to take advantage of this was Margona, who became a well-known figure

almost instantly, even outshining Ilse. The already lively household became even more vibrant despite the events transpiring outside.

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It was finally time to leave for the Spirit Realm.

Orion was preparing to return to the residential area of the Mysteries of the Twelve Step Stairs with Grace to pick up Sylvalis. Thanks to the efforts of Grace, Anara, and the Nymphs, Sylvalis finally opened up to speak with them directly. However, at the moment, he found himself being held down by his wives. "When I return, I promise that we will continue for as long as you desire," Orion said, observing as Lyra tied down his left hand with her hair and Meldra held his right hand with a vine that she had constructed out of thin air with her gift. He was just inches away from the door. Behind him was a spacious, luxurious bedroom with a bed stretching from one wall to the other.

Scattered across the bed and floor were his wives, sprawled out, their bodies glistening with sweat, and each one lying in their own juices, covered in his semen. All three of their intimate areas were leaking with it, and their bodies twitched in pleasure, still reeling from the aftereffects of their activities. The only ones who could move but weren't present were Isadora, who was being cared for because of their unborn child, Anara, Dariya, Malaia, and Saria, who were currently in the Nymphs' home universe, helping those infected with the Mother Seed Cells settle into their new worlds.

Considering all the traumatic events the Nymphs had been through, they needed all the support they could get.

Another reason for their absence was that they had sensed his dilemma and had left to avoid being coerced by the rest of their sisters into ganging up on their husband. Among the races of Paradise, the Nymphs were ranked as the most peaceful. Orion made a promise in his heart to visit them first once he returned from the exploration. For now, he needed to figure out how to escape his current situation. Orion began to reconsider whether turning his wives into goddesses had been a good idea—if this continued, he might end up being the one lying defeated on the bed rather than them.

At that moment, the double-handled door was flung open with a loud bang, hitting the wall.

Ilse stood at the entrance, dressed in a simple, deep blue, single-strap midi dress with golden embroidery. Two beautiful blue earrings complemented her attire, and rows of intricately crafted golden bangles on her wrists jingled with her movement.

Ilse wrinkled her nose and pinched it, assaulted by the pungent scent that filled the room. She glanced at the two naked, mature women behind him before focusing on Orion. "I'll be waiting outside," she said, turning around and walking down the corridor.

Suddenly, Orion felt Lyra's grip on his hand loosen. Instantly, he transformed into a streak of lightning and shot out of the room. Tendrils of electricity closed the door behind him, sealing it shut.

Orion reverted to his human form in the hallway.

At that moment, Derry's face emerged from the intricately carved wooden door adorned with jewels. She smiled at Orion. "I'll take care of them and put them to sleep. You should go so you're not late."

Orion nodded, leaning in to give her a kiss on the cheek, much to Derry's delight.

He turned to Ilse, who was leaning against the wall, waiting for him. "Sometimes I wonder if I made the right decision," Ilse sighed. "Let's go. We don't have much time to waste."

Orion nodded, ignoring her initial words.

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On a bright blue world with sixteen habitable planets within its solar system, at the top of an enormous mountain, usually battered by heavy blizzards, but strangely calm at this moment.

Orion carried Sylvalis in his arms as he looked at the Prismeron Divine Apostles, Lyndon, Leona, Leif, Carl, Brane, Zara, Seth, and Zogar, along with his bonded demigod servants and the clones of his wives—rather than wielding their divine mandates, they all bore divine artefacts given to them by Ilse. Beside him were Ilse and Zera, while behind him stood a Spiritual Link Point.

The Prismeron Divine Apostles, led by Flintor and Iris, numbered eighty-two in total. His bonded demigod servants, led by Iyalis, numbered around two hundred and two. His wives' clones numbered thirty-two. Altogether, their total force was a staggering three hundred and twenty-eight, counting Zera, Avarielle, and Margona as one entity since they shared the same body.

With three hundred and thirty-five of them in the divine realm and ninety in the mortal realm, their strength at the peak of mortal limits, they formed a formidable force. However, even with such a force, they were unsure if their strength would be enough against their enemies.

Orion cleared his throat and said, "You should all be aware of the plan already, so I will keep this brief. We have no idea of the forces that we will encounter in the spirit realm; their strength might match ours or even surpass it, so be careful about every action you take. But do not be afraid," His voice resonated across their surroundings, "Paradise has yet to encounter a force beyond our ability to overcome. Any enemy that dares to stand against us will, sooner or later, bow their heads in defeat."

"And should you fall in battle, do not despair. Those who take your lives will be dragged to your graves, their bodies reduced to ashes, their souls bound in eternal torment—forced to stand watch over your resting place for their heresy."

"But if we all return home safely, know that your rewards will not be meagre. You are the pioneers who have paved the way for Paradise's dominion over the Spirit Realm, and I will see to it that your sacrifices are honoured beyond measure."

As he spoke, everyone present's morale rose to its highest peak. They were no longer afraid of any unexpected events that might transpire within the Spirit Realm; instead, they looked forward to them with anticipation.

"Let's go," Orion commanded.

Turning his head to the side, he nodded at Ilse and Zera, then turned and soared toward the red line. As he neared it, he observed the red gate to the Spirit Realm enlarging itself. Without hesitation, he flew in.

Observing the actions of their Supreme Leader, the others followed suit, repeating the same motions and soaring in one by one.

Within minutes, the mountain was desolate, and the blizzard that had been temporarily tamed returned, once again showcasing its dominion over the mountain peak.

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On the other side, Orion and the others emerged one by one.

Before them lay countless snowy mountains floating atop a frozen ocean floor.

Chapter 1272 Unexpected Phenomenon, The Life Of A Spirit Beast...

The shapes of the mountains were bizarre, with some pointing sharply toward the sky while others bent downward.

Orion's wives' clones immediately took their positions, forming a protective circle around the group. Within the circle, Orion, Sylvalis, Ilse, and Zera stood at the forefront, with the others positioned behind them, forming a secondary circle. The weakest members were placed at the centre of the formation.

However, the Four-eared elves were positioned at the forefront with Orion and the others.

"This is the middle layer of the Spirit Realm, Lyndon said, surveying his surroundings. Although he would have preferred entering the Upper Realm, which would make their exploration much safer, he understood that the Middle Realm-home to both benevolent and malevolent spirit beasts-was the best place for Paradise to accomplish its goals.

The other Four-Eared Elves' gods' chosens nodded in agreement.

Regardless, with the group accompanying them, they felt less fear and more excitement about what they might encounter.

They glanced at the divine apostles behind them. After several trials, they realized they only needed to seal their divine crests with divine power to prevent them from devouring spirit beasts. Since the divine crests' activation and deactivation could not be controlled, this was the best precaution they could take.

After all, it would be disastrous if they entered a tribe of spirit beasts and the Divine Apostle Crests suddenly activated, killing them all.

Just as they were about to move forward, the sky, which had been covered in heavy mist, darkened and shook with a thunderous sound from above. The tumultuous mist rolled over like storm clouds.

The entire group tensed.

Sylvalis, who was in Orion's arms, shivered slightly.

Orion frowned. It was easy to see that the change in the atmosphere was a result of their emergence into the Spirit Realm. Sensing Sylvalis' reaction, he gently tightened his grip around her.

"Don't worry, we won't let anything happen to you. I promised Grace I'd bring you back safely, and she wouldn't forgive me if I didn't, Orion whispered into her ear.

Sylvalis glanced up at Orion and nodded, her tension easing.

They had already marked the Spiritual Link Point they used as an entrance and gave everyone an item that would ensure they could return to this place no matter where they were. If they ever encountered a dire situation and had to use another Spiritual Link Point, they could only hope it would lead them back to Earth or some mysterious location from which they could easily escape. However, with the Will of the Divine Mysteries blocking the only entrance to Paradise, returning home would be difficult-and that was the problem they had set out to solve. The best-case scenario was that they could encounter either the Vylkr spawns or the Divine Corps and lure them into Paradise.

"We don't know how long this will last or what kind of forces it will attract, so we should keep moving until we get a better understanding of where we are! Orion said. He pointed in a specific direction and added, 'We spotted several small spirit beast settlements this way. We'll head there to begin our exploration!'"

"And regardless of what happens, do not come into contact with the icy plains!"

He and Ilse had surveyed this area but hadn't revealed themselves as casually as before. Despite this, they had been spotted by a few Spirit Beasts when they ventured deeper. Nonetheless, they were able to avoid conflict and chose the safest path for the exploration to begin.

The crowd nodded in understanding, no one voicing any objections.

Orion sent a mental command to his wives' clones to scout the area ahead. Though they hadn't encountered any issues during their first visit, the Spirit Realm was a bizarre place where entire tribes of Spirit Beasts could be consumed or laws of territories rewritten or overturned in the blink of an eye.

The fastest among them-Ursa, Meave, Whisperwing, Breezeflutter, Willow, Maya, and Merida's clones-shot forward, transforming into streams of light that raced in various directions ahead of them.

At the same time, Orion led the group forward.

The floating mountains over the icy plains began to descend to the ground, and the moment they touched down, a thick layer of ice emerged from the base and covered the mountains.

Witnessing this, the group gulped, realizing why they had been ordered not to touch the ice.

This was also the reason why the location had been considered the safest-Spirit Beasts rarely came here unless they were powerful enough to resist the effects of the ice or fly.

Within a few seconds, Orion received mental messages from the scouts. After processing the information, he swiftly sent out his following command.

The life of a Spirit Beast was cruel. From the moment they were born, their growth depended on their parents, their tribe, and the territory they were born in.

They were cared for from infancy, at the age of 1 to 10. As juveniles, from the age of 10 to 100, they begin to develop unique traits, mostly inherited from their parents or influenced by the surrounding territory. In some cases, they were left to survive on their own, turning into prey that could be hunted and consumed by higher-ranked Spirit Beasts.

As adolescents, from the age of 100 to 500, they became capable of fending for themselves. Upon ascending to the Squire rank, between the ages of 500 and 1,500 spirit years, they become capable of consuming Spirit. Beasts ranked lower than themselves, continuing the brutal cycle.

The worst-case scenario was being consumed before reaching infancy or juvenile stages, either by their parents, their tribe, or others around them who sought to grow stronger and enhance their strength for survival.

This was one of the reasons most Spirit Beasts accepted contracts with races from the Material Realm; it offered a brief escape from this cruel existence. They knew they wouldn't be able to escape this world entirely, but even a slight respite, a new world far removed from their own, was enough to justify the agreements they chose to forge in contracts, even if they refused to admit it.

Why else would Spirit Beasts lend their strength to beings from another realm, facing opponents their contractors struggled to defeat, or battling insurmountable foes with their strength halved? It would be absurd to think they did so purely for the thrill of battle.

This was also why it was difficult to contract with powerful Spirit Beasts. Unless one gained their approval or they took a liking to the contractor, it was impossible to form such a bond.

Spirit Beasts could not dream. Unlike other races that could enter slumber and experience a myriad of beautiful or terrifying encounters in their minds, which would dissipate upon waking, Spirit Beasts could never replicate that experience.

The races say that the Spirit Realm is as vivid and bizarre as some of their dreams; its strange terrain and environments are governed by its own rules and laws, which are rewritten or overturned at specific or absurd times or permanently.

Spirit Beasts do not need to eat because they are immortal. As such, change is stagnant, with the only driving force being the bizarre and unnatural environment. This also means they are forced to continue the cycle endlessly until they are consumed, becoming Just another cog in the machine that. drives the natural order of the Spirit Realm.

The races of the Material Realm claim that the Spirit Realm is a bizarre place without order, with ever-changing rules that make no sense.

But they are wrong. The residents of the Spirit Realm can sense the unbreakable chains that control the realm, and a few of them would readily admit openly that...

The life of a Spirit Beast is cruel!

ly'yra was one of those who could admit it.

As Iy'yra sensed the Spirit Beast closing in, attempting to consume her, she tucked her wings and continued to flee.

Behind her was a towering 12-foot-tall silver rhino with feathered wings that looked like a crow's. Its jaws were lined with sharp rows of teeth that gleamed under the radiant misty sky. Its horn was long and sharp, knocking down surrounding trees as it hastened its chase after the spirit beast ahead of it. That spirit beast was a four-legged, four-winged, white-feathered gryphon with a horn growing from the centre of its head. Her once-pristine white feathers were now burned and in tatters. Part of her wings had been ripped off, making it difficult to control her movements in the air.

The silver rhino opened its mouth and released a ball of fire, striking her once more and sending her crashing into the robust trees.

Iy'yra felt pain rip through her body as she watched her injuries scatter into specks of light, heading toward the rhino, revealing its intent to consume her. Her sharp teeth clenched together as she

swiftly picked herself up, using her claws to propel her body forward. She leapt from tree to tree into the dense, snowy, floating forest.

Chapter 1273 Are Our Ancestral Teachings Pointless?

Suddenly, Iy'yra spotted two figures in the distance. She couldn't get a clear view of them, but it didn't matter. She charged forward, heading in their direction. Whether they were benevolent enough to grant her aid or malevolent enough to hunt her down—it didn't matter. As long as they bought her another moment to live.

As Iy'yra drew closer, she was able to get a better look at the two figures. They were women dressed in two distinct flower-patterned gowns adorned with golden embroidery that matched each other. On their backs were bright, transparent wings that fluttered gently, scattering starlight-like dust into the air with each movement. Although she couldn't make out their features, their aura felt familiar—similar to the races that had emerged from the Material Realm, but with a slight difference. From what she sensed alone, she could tell they were not weak.

The fact that they weren't Spirit Beasts increased her chances of survival. If there wasn't any other option, she could forge a contract with them, allowing them to borrow her strength. At that moment, all she could hope for was that their power was enough to save her.

The two women noticed her. One of them waved her hand, sending a wave of starlight shooting toward her like a falling star.

Iy'yra's heart tightened, thinking she was about to meet her doom. She changed course, trying to avoid the shooting starlight, but to her shock, it altered its trajectory as well, appearing before her in an instant.

Contrary to her expectations, the starlight didn't strike her. Instead, it passed through both her and the silver-winged rhino that was chasing her.

Suddenly, Iy'yra felt as though the world around her was growing larger. It wasn't immediately apparent, but as the branches and leaves of the trees became more prominent and her talons too small to shatter the surrounding trees upon impact, she realized the truth—the world hadn't grown; she had shrunk.

Iy'yra slowed her pace until she came to a sudden halt on a tree branch.

The silver-winged rhino, whom the starlight had also hit, noticed the two mysterious figures in the distance. Though he realized the strange occurrence, he didn't care. He halted briefly but then charged toward Iy'yra again, determined to handle her before turning his attention to the two individuals.

But suddenly, the rhino found itself unable to move.

The two beings in the distance vanished abruptly, only to reappear before them in an instant.

Iy'yra and the rhino were both stunned by their rapid movement. They realized that these beings possessed a skill that allowed them to move instantaneously. With their ability to shrink opponents while also restraining their strength, one thing was clear—they were incredibly powerful.

The two women picked them up, holding them between their fingers.

Despite being so close, Iy'yra found she still couldn't make out their features. The only clear details were the ornate clothes they wore.

"Free me, and do with her as you wish! I promise neither I nor my tribe will trouble you or enter this territory again!" the silver-winged rhino pleaded, its voice echoing through the atmosphere.

Though he sensed the two were from the Material Realm, their strength made him hesitate to make any demands. Instead, he began negotiating for its freedom.

However, Iy'yra couldn't just sit back and let this happen.

"No, don't free him!" Iy'yra shouted. "That silver-winged rhino is untrustworthy. He'll return with his tribe to attack you because you've taken his prey!"

"YOU!" The silver-winged rhino started to speak but bit back his words. He couldn't afford to let his emotions get the better of him when his life was on the line.

Suddenly, the voices of the beings holding them rang out.

"Though this situation is serious, don't they look too cute? I wish I could take them home to play with the children. They're immortal. So we wouldn't have to worry about damage control," Whisperwing said with a light chuckle.

"That's a good idea, but let's think about that after we finish our task. I have already informed our husband about what we've found on our side. We should bring them back to the group; they could help us understand more about the territories here," Breezeflutter responded thoughtfully. "Even with my current strength, I can still feel the suppression of the Spirit Realm. I also feel as though I'm being watched. The faster we finish, the better."

As they spoke, Iy'yra and the silver-winged rhino listened to their conversation. Initially, they were confused, but as they continued to hear their words, their expressions turned to shock.

They never expected the beings to call them Spirit Beast 'cute' or think about handing them to their children. What kind of children did they possess? Not only that, but they also had arrived with a group, which meant there were likely others with similarly formidable abilities nearby.

Iy'yra's expression brightened slightly. She didn't know what their intentions were or what they planned to do with her, but she was sure their arrival could change her fate and that of her tribe. Even if it wasn't for the better, it couldn't be worse than it was now.

Meanwhile, the silver-winged rhino grimaced. He didn't dare speak again, opting to stay quiet and observe. The more he learned about these beings who had entered their territory, the more valuable information he could deliver back to his tribe if he survived.

Suddenly, their vision darkened, and they disappeared from their position, vanishing into thin air.

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Orion stood before a large number of Spirit Beasts: white and red, winged and wingless, feathered gryphons, salamanders, hedgehogs, and foxes of similar colours. There were also other spirit beasts—two-headed bears, unusually tall penguins with sharp beaks and fins, and many more. On the other side were silver-winged rhinos and muscular winged monkeys resembling birds of prey, with beige skin and whip-like tails. Their numbers totalled one hundred and fifty, all captured by Orion's wives' clones. They had been shrunk to pixie sizes to avoid attracting unnecessary attention.

Some were merely bruised, while others bore more severe injuries. At that moment, despite their injuries, the Spirit Beasts were still able to function normally, albeit with slight pain. Though the two sides seemed to be in conflict, their full attention was now focused on Orion and his group.

Since he couldn't read the Spirit Beasts' minds, Orion had to resort to other methods, which involved speaking to them directly.

"We're from the material realm. We've come to the spirit realm to seek spirit beasts willing to form contracts with our warriors. We mean no harm. Instead, we would like to know what's happening, and if it's within our power, we're willing to help," Orion said, his voice resonating gently across the surroundings, softened to the most reassuring tone he could manage.

Orion and the others had expected the Spirit Beasts to step forward one by one to explain what was happening. However, contrary to their expectations, a shocking scene occurred.

"Pick me! Even with my strength halved, I'm powerful enough to defeat any opponent I face!"

"No, pick me! My claws are sharp enough to cut through opponents with ease! You won't be disappointed with my performance!"

"I have a family! You can form a contract with all of us! And if that's not enough, I have an extended family that hasn't formed a contract with anyone from the material world! You could be their first!"

"I have unique traits that set me apart from others of my tribe..."

The Spirit Beasts freely offered themselves contracts to form with them. Witnessing this scene, Orion furrowed his brows. He had learned about the painstaking effort it took for an individual to form a contract with a Spirit Beast, yet here they were, offering themselves as though they were at some marketplace. He pondered if it was due to their group's overwhelming presence.

Despite many of them being divines concealing their auras and strength to appear mortal, the Spirit Beasts might have sensed that they weren't ordinary individuals and had decided to form contracts with them.

Regardless, Orion's opinion of the Spirit Beasts dropped significantly.

Behind him, Lyndon and the four-eared elf warriors couldn't hide the surprise on their faces. Generations of sacred teachings have been passed down on how to treat Spirit Beasts if one encounters them and how to build a relationship in order to form a contract and borrow their strength. But what was the meaning of the scene unfolding before them?

Could it be that the Spirit Beasts had been playing hard to get whenever they had tried to form contracts and were now eagerly offering themselves because they had sensed the Supreme Leader's and the other's strength?

Did this mean that everything their ancestors had taught them was pointless?

If they hadn't accompanied the exploration to the Spirit Realm, they would never have known that Spirit Beasts could be swayed so easily.

Soon, their expression morphed into irritation.

Chapter 1274 Floating Frost Valley, Celestial Spirit Court

"Ahem!" Orion cleared his throat, the sound reverberating across the area, silencing the Spirit Beasts. "While we are interested in forming contracts, we are also keen on learning about the current state of this territory. Once we've settled that, we will move on to discussing contracts," he said.

Suddenly, five individuals stepped forward from the crowd and halted before Orion.

The Spirit Beasts were standing atop a transparent platform they had created with divine power, a gesture meant to show they intended no harm while also subtly displaying their strength.

"I am ly'yra, also known as Scattered Plume, of the White Winged Gryphon Tribe!" "I am Hor'vang, also known as Titan Stampede, of the Silver Winged Rhino Tribe!" "I am Thrys, also known as Thorn Gale, of the Quill Hedgehog Tribe!"

"I am Tundril, also known as Feral Horn, of the Wingless Horned Gryphon Tribe!"

"I am Va'korr, also known as Midnight Prowler, of the Black Feathered Winged Monkey Tribe!"

They swiftly introduced their names, titles, and Spirit Beast tribes one by one.

"I will tell you everything you need to know about the current state of this region. However, I beg of you, please do not listen to those from the Silver Winged Rhino Tribe, the Wingless Horned Gryphon Tribe, and the Black Feathered Winged Monkey Tribe, ly'yra said, her voice filled with pleading as she glanced at Orion before casting a wary look at the Spirit Beast tribes she had just mentioned.

"I agree with Scattered Plume. You shouldn't listen to anything they say, especially the members of the Wingless Horned Gryphon Tribe. They are all deceivers and backstabbers," Thrys chimed in.

"I believe it would be more unreasonable to listen to any of you," Hor'vang retorted sharply. "We are the ones with the highest numbers here, so wouldn't it be reasonable for them to listen to us?"

"I agree," Tundril added. "Listening to you all might create unnecessary problems that should be solved immediately"

"It is fortunate that I also stepped forward. If not, you would have shown your foolishness to these individuals from the Material Realm, degrading the existence of us Spirit Beasts in their eyes," Va'korr chimed in.

Hearing the others' words, ly'yra's gaze burned with rage. Just as she was about to speak, a sharp, stern voice reverberated through the surroundings, causing the already cold air to grow even chillier.

"Be silent!" Ilse commanded, narrowing her eyes at the Spirit Beasts who had stepped forward. "If any of you utter another word, we will leave you to whatever fate you've found yourselves in and search for another, less problematic tribe of Spirit Beasts to obtain the information we desire and form contracts."

Instantly, the Spirit Beasts fell silent, none daring to utter another word.

Witnessing this, Ilse sighed inwardly. In truth, there was no such thing as a less problematic group of Spirit Beasts-they were all ridiculously annoying and challenging to handle in their own ways.

Orion then gestured to ly'yra, signalling for her to speak. He chose to start with her and would move on to the others one by one to hear what they had to say.

After they had all spoken, Orion nodded thoughtfully. This region was called the Floating Frost Valley because the entire area floated atop a clear, icy land that froze everything it touched unless one was powerful enough to resist it.

The valley was inhabited by the White Winged Gryphon Tribe, Red Winged Gryphon Tribe, Wingless Horned Gryphon Tribe, White Furred Horned Fox Tribe, Fire Salamander Tribe, Ice Salamander Tribe, Frost Quill Hedgehog Tribe, Inferno Quill Hedgehog Tribe, White Twin-Headed Bear Tribe, and Long-Neck Penguin Tribe. Despite being called a valley, the lands in the Spirit Realm were incomparable to those in the Material Realm, spanning several hundreds of thousands of kilometres. The valley also housed many solitary Spirit Beasts who were either unaffiliated with any tribe by choice or had been cast out to survive on their own.

However, for the past 600 years, the region has been at war with a growing force known as the Celestial Spirit Court. The Celestial Spirit Court sought to annex their territory, consume the inhabitants to grow stronger, and leave a few alive to replenish their numbers, treating them like livestock waiting to be slaughtered.

Once they were done, the Court would move on to the next region and repeat the process. Unfortunately, despite their best efforts, the war ended after 400 years, with the residents of the region losing.

The Celestial Spirit Court seized their territories and stationed their forces there to implement their plans. Among those forces were the Silver Winged Rhino and Black Feathered Winged Monkey tribes.

However, the defeated tribes refused to accept their fate and spent the next 200 years plotting rebellion. But on the day of their final attack, it was revealed that the Wingless Horned Gryphon tribe had betrayed the alliance, leading to an ambush by the Celestial Spirit Court forces.

The rebellion, consisting of fewer than ten thousand Spirit Beasts from the allied tribes, a number far smaller than it could have been due to them being treated as livestock, was swiftly crushed. The survivors fled, but over the past two weeks, they had been hunted down one by one. Their numbers dwindled every day until only 50 Spirit Beasts from the rebellion and 100 from the Celestial Spirit Court's forces remained to continue the pursuit.

Fortunately, Orion's wives' clones had captured the remaining Spirit Beasts and brought them here for interrogation.

This was why the Spirit Beasts wasted no time offering themselves for contracts after Orion's introduction. They knew their time was running out, and if they didn't secure support, no matter from whom, their tribes would fall into an even worse state, forever under the oppressive rule of the Celestial Spirit Court until they were deemed useless.

The Silver Winged Rhino, Wingless Horned Gryphon, and Black Feathered Winged Monkey Spirit Beasts claimed they were simply following orders from their superiors, fearing that if they did not, their own tribes and families would suffer the same fate. Orion had questioned more of the Spirit Beasts to verify their responses. After confirming that he had gathered all the accurate details, his opinion of them improved, realizing the situation was far more complicated than he initially thought. They weren't acting cowardly without reason.

Orion fell silent as he processed the information.

Meanwhile, Lyndon and the Four-eared Elves sighed inwardly, realizing their earlier judgments were wrong. Even Spirit Beasts had a survival instinct and would grasp at any means of escape when faced with overwhelming odds.

Their ancestral teachings weren't pointless after all!

"I want to have a private conversation with you all about the Celestial Spirit Court," Orion said, addressing the Silver Winged Rhinos, the Wingless Horned Gryphons, and the Black Feathered Winged Monkeys.

He nodded to Ilse and Zera, commanding the Prismeron Divine Apostles to follow while the others remained behind.

The Silver Winged Rhinos, Wingless Horned Gryphons, and Black Feathered Winged Monkeys exhaled inwardly in relief. They assumed that Orion and his group were in awe of the Celestial Spirit Court's strength and wanted to learn more about it, probably trying to gauge whether it was a force worth antagonizing during their time in the Spirit Realm.

It was a wise decision!

They nodded in response, their anxiety fading. Smiles spread across their faces as they cast glances at the other Spirit Beasts as if to say, "Wait for us-we'll be back soon."

The expressions of the allied Spirit Beasts morphed into fear.

Iy'yra's face twisted into a grimace as she glared hatefully at the Silver Winged Rhino

that had been chasing her, seeking to devour her. She ignored his gaze and focused on the mysterious group before her, her mind racing for a way out of their dire situation, which worsened by the moment.

From what she could tell, the group had entered the Spirit Realm through the Spiritual Link Point that had recently appeared nearby. Just as Spirit Beasts' strength was halved when they materialized in the Material Realm, the strength of beings from the Material Realm was also significantly reduced here.

Despite that, one of them had been strong enough to subdue both her and her pursuer with a mere wave of the hand, which was no small feat. And with the strength of the rest of the group still unknown, it would be a mistake not to consider them all as equally powerful.

Iy'yra sighed in defeat. No matter how hard she thought, she couldn't come up with a solution.

Orion, the Prismeron Divine Apostles, Maeve's and Willow's clones, and the forces of the Celestial Spirit Court disappeared into the distance.

"Tell me everything you know about the Celestial Spirit Court in detail," Ilse said, looking at the miniature Spirit Beasts.

ly'yra swiftly nodded and began recounting everything she knew about the Celestial Spirit Court.

Meanwhile, in the distance, Orion had also questioned the other Spirit Beasts, asking them to provide every single detail they knew about the Celestial Spirit Court.

Chapter 1275 Picking A Side

Unfortunately, they were cannon fodder. They knew next to nothing, aside from the regions the Celestial Spirit Court had already annexed, the fortresses responsible for maintaining control over those areas, and the leaders in charge of managing them.

The information he received from Ilse was similarly lacking, bare-bones, and superficial, revealing that the allied forces barely knew anything substantial about the Celestial Spirit Court.

"Thank you for providing me with such valuable information," Orion said. The representatives of the spirit beasts responded with a nod, their bodies further relaxing. Orion gestured to Flintor, signalling him to step forward. Orion soared to the side, distancing himself from the group. He had thought about it and realized they couldn't join the Celestial Spirit Court. Not only were they aware of the Court's true intentions, but the Court also didn't seem like an organization that would welcome their presence in its territory without secretly plotting against them. Attempting to join would only expose them, which contradicted their plan.

Instead, they needed to support the Spirit Beast tribes in defending their territories. The tribes were already prepared to fight with their limited numbers, and with additional support, they would likely be even more willing to resist. This approach would allow the Divine Apostles to devour Spirit Beasts without consequences while obtaining valuable information about the territory they were in. If the situation allowed, they might even create an alliance under the name of Paradise—a safe haven where the residents of Paradise could forge contracts with Spirit Beasts. Of course, the plan would be perfect if they could connect all of the Spiritual Link Points to a single location, but that wasn't possible. Nevertheless, it was still worth the effort, as it would give them a foothold in the Spirit Realm.

Instantly, a one-winged mark appeared in the centre of Flintor's forehead, expanding into a vast, multilayered array of runes of varying sizes. These runes shimmered with a soft, milky glow and crimson hues, focusing on the forces of the Celestial Spirit Court.

"What's going on?" Hor'vang asked, his voice filled with fear. He turned his head to look at Orion. Just as he was about to say more, he fell into a daze.

The other Spirit Beasts around him were similarly in a daze, their attention fixed on the deathly, multilayered array of runes spinning rapidly before them.

Flintor also entered a daze.

Soon, the Spirit Beasts dissipated into fragments, one by one, merging seamlessly into the runes until all 100 were consumed.

Not even a single trace of the Spirit Beasts remained.

Afterwards, the runes began to shrink, transforming back into the one-winged crest on Flintor's forehead. The crest faded from sight.

Flintor snapped out of his daze and fell unconscious to the side, but he was swiftly caught and levitated into the sky.

"We'll know how far he has grown once he awakens," Orion said.

Iris nodded in response. She had consumed only one 560-year-old Spirit Beast, and her strength had undergone a dramatic change. For Flintor, who had devoured 100 unknown Spirit Beasts in less than a minute, she had high hopes for his growth in strength.

'What kind of skills will he unlock?' Iris wondered to herself, looking forward to it.

The other Prismerton Divine Apostles were also watching Flintor expectantly, eager to see his awakening.

In Orion's hands, Sylvalis observed the scene with curiosity and muttered, "So cool!"

Orion chuckled softly, realizing that Sylvalis might have picked up some of Grace's traits while spending time with her. "I'll show you even cooler things while we're in the Spirit Realm," Orion said, gently brushing her golden hair to the side. He was beginning to think about adopting Sylvalis as his daughter. Even though she was a localized Will of the Mysteries of the Twelve Step Stairs, 'it' didn't claim to be her parent. She was a byproduct of its emergence. Though Anara and the others could take care of her and ensure she grew into a proper tree nymph, considering how well she and Grace were getting along, Orion saw a reason to adopt her and make her a genuine part of the household.

Sylvalis looked at Orion, blinked for a few moments, then nodded. "Don't disappoint me," she replied.

Orion responded with a solemn nod. "I won't."

Sylvalis focused on the mysterious lands ahead, a light smile gracing her face.

Beside them, Iris and the rest of the Divine Apostles, who had been listening to the conversation, couldn't help but sigh inwardly. They knew that the Supreme Leader loved his children and spent time with them whenever he got the chance. Given how frequently the women of Orion's household became pregnant, to the point where games were played on who would deliver next and the gender of the child, it was well known in the Paradise Realm that if this continued, within a century, the Realm of the gods would be populated by Orion's descendants.

It was a promising future, but the Divine Apostles couldn't help feeling slightly defeated, knowing that all those children would be born with strength matching those of the divine realm.

Fortunately, one reason they had entered the Spirit Realm was to grow their strength. As long as they succeeded, they could become cornerstones of Paradise Realm's forces in the future, so they weren't entirely in despair.

"Let's head back," Orion said, controlling Flintor's unconscious body, unaware of the thoughts going through the Prismerion Divine Apostles' minds.

....

Iy'yra blinked in surprise as the group arrived. She looked around but couldn't see the Celestial Spirit Court forces—nor could she sense them.

Could they have already been freed? Iy'yra thought, quickly shaking the idea from her mind. If that were the case, she would have sensed their presence, as the group had made it clear they would return.

The other Spirit Beasts also noticed the absence of the Celestial Spirit Court forces. Their expressions were a mix of confusion and fear, but they remained silent.

The young man, Orion, who appeared to be the leader, stood before them, holding a little girl of a different race who resembled some of the mysterious women who had been monitoring them and their environment.

Iy'yra presumed the girl to be one of their daughters - this thought stemmed from the conversation she had overheard with the winged woman. Regardless, the girl was likely an important member of the group.

"We have eliminated the Celestial Spirit Court forces. We wish to extend our support to your resistance against the Celestial Spirit Court and help you reclaim your territory," Orion announced.

Iy'yra's eyes widened, her mind raced, and her expression grew stiff as she processed the information she had just received. Iy'yra shook her head a few times, thinking she had misheard, but as she glanced at the similarly frozen Spirit Beasts beside her, she realized she hadn't. She gulped.

"I don't think I heard you well... Did you say that you have eliminated the Celestial Spirit Court forces... and you want to support our rebellion?" Thrys asked, his voice trembling with emotion as he voiced the question lingering in every Spirit Beast's mind.

Orion responded with a nod. "Yes, that is what I said."

Thrys's words were caught in his throat. He lowered his head, struggling to organize his thoughts.

Besides Orion, Ilse couldn't help but be amused as she observed the Spirit Beasts' reactions. Though she was upset, remembering that she had once been in a similar position, it was amusing to watch their minds seemingly shut down upon realizing something they had never believed possible had actually occurred.

"How?" Iy'yra asked. Beings from the Material Realm couldn't eliminate Spirit Beasts—unless they were Spirit Beasts themselves or divine beings capable of wielding and reshaping the world around them...

Iy'yra paused as realization struck.

'It can't be,' she thought, her eyes lingering on the mysterious group.

Orion remained silent, allowing them to piece things together themselves.

As members of the resistance who had survived even after the Celestial Spirit Court's ambush, the other Spirit Beasts weren't slow—they quickly grasped the significance of Orion's words.

Suddenly, the mysterious group before them was elevated in their minds. Their hearts filled with fear and reverence. Although they were aware that some Spirit Beasts could contend with the divines from the Material Realm, they could not. They could only lower their heads and obey, hoping not to be eliminated.

However, upon learning that these beings intended to support them in their fight against the Celestial Spirit Court, their emotions morphed into joy and excitement.

"Although I am thankful that you have seen our circumstances and are willing to provide support for our cause, the Celestial Spirit Court is more powerful than you imagine. We had planned to seize control of our region and die fighting to protect it, so if there is any chance that you might side with the Celestial Spirit Court should they extend an invitation to your group, then we would rather refuse your support," Iy'yra said, lowering her head to avoid meeting Orion's gaze.

Chapter 1276 The Supreme Leader's Word, Reclaiming The Floating Frost Valley

Yes, there were no free supports. Since this mysterious group had chosen to support them, there must surely be an agenda behind it. Though she was grateful for their assistance, after experiencing the betrayal that led to the near-annihilation of their resistance force, she would instead refuse their aid rather than suffer the same fate again.

"Does she speak for all of you?" Orion asked. It was only through their voices that he could distinguish their genders.

The group all lowered their heads and gently nodded. They shared Iy'yra's sentiments.

"Even if the Celestial Spirit Court approaches us, I have already picked a side—standing with you and the other Spirit Beast tribes in this region. I promise not to go back on my word," Orion said, giving them his assurance.

"Since he has given you his word, he won't go back on it, no matter what happens. So, you no longer need to worry about us pulling back our support at the last second," Ilse added, looking at the Spirit Beasts.

Sensing the sincerity in their words, Iy'yra and the other Spirit Beasts visibly relaxed.

"Alright, we look forward to your support," Iy'yra said.

The other Spirit Beasts nodded in agreement.

"Return them to their normal size so we can leave," Orion instructed.

Maeve waved her hand, releasing a wave of star-like dust that washed over the Spirit Beasts. Instantly, they began returning to their standard size, one by one, regaining the strength they had lost while in their miniature forms. After recovering, the Spirit Beasts spread out. The transparent platform expanded, allowing those unable to fly to remain afloat in the air with the others. "Are we going to split up?" Thrys asked, his tone filled with concern, sensing Orion's intent.

Orion nodded. "Yes, our goal is to take control of the entire Floating Frost Valley at once. Each of us will head toward different tribes and seize them simultaneously. Doing this one by one would alert the Celestial Spirit Court's tribes in the region, and we don't know how they would treat the tribes still under their control," he explained. "The Celestial Spirit Court will hesitate to reclaim the region until they understand how you managed to achieve such a feat. During that time, we'll reorganize the tribes and prepare them to properly defend their home."

Iy'yra, Thrys, and the other Spirit Beasts widened their eyes at Orion's elaborate plan. Sure, it was a simple strategy to consider, which was why they had been concerned about the Celestial Spirit Court reaching out to the group. However, the problem was that they could only think that far because they were already familiar with how the Celestial Spirit Court operated in the region. Orion had only recently learned about the Celestial Spirit Court's existence from their information, yet he

devised such an elaborate plan, which showed that his understanding of such affairs ran deep. They couldn't help but wonder what position Orion held in the Material Realm.

"Yes, you're right. The faster we seize control of Floating Frost Valley, the less time we give the Celestial Spirit Court forces to react, ensuring our victory," Thrys said, nodding in agreement.

He didn't dare consider the possibility that their strength might diminish if they divided—after all, they had been effortlessly captured by just five of them. Before they could even sense it, 100 Knight Ranked Spirit Beasts had been eliminated without creating a disturbance.

Iy'ra swiftly soared through the sky, landing in front of Orion. She lowered her head and said, "If you don't mind, I'd like to take you there on my back."

Orion nodded. Although it would have been more efficient to fly himself, he saw no reason to refuse the invitation to ride a Spirit Beast. As long as they accomplished their task just as efficiently, it didn't matter.

Besides, he had promised Sylvalis he would show her cool things during their time in the Spirit Realm, and what better way to do that than to take her atop a flying Spirit Beast? It would certainly be something she could brag about to Grace when they returned to the Paradise Realm.

Orion climbed onto Iy'ra's back, placing Sylvalis in front of him.

Seeing Iy'ra's success, the other Spirit Beasts flew toward Orion's wives' clones, Ilse and Zera. They took their places on thirty-six winged Spirit Beasts. The remaining two Spirit Beasts headed toward Flintor and Iris, but they were sent to Brane and Zara instead.

The remaining sixteen, like the Quill Hedgehog Tribe, were either unfit for riding or wingless, and they descended to the icy ground below. Frost gathered on their feet and legs, but surprisingly, it immediately dispersed, forming a small spiral of cloudy frost around their feet. This created a strange scene in which it seemed as though they were walking several inches above the frosty land.

Not even their ancestors!

Witnessing this scene, Lyndon and the others felt their admiration for the Supreme Leader rise even higher. Who else could say they had been proudly offered a ride on a Spirit Beast during their first journey into the Spirit Realm? Not even their ancestors!

The group was divided as follows: Three of Orion's wives' clones, along with eight Prismerton Divine Apostles, went to ten tribes. Ilse accompanied one of the groups, while Zera, Brane, and the others, including the Four-Eared Elves and two more of his wives' clones, Gina and Reena, who hadn't yet been assigned to a group, joined Orion and Sylvalis, lead by Celeste's, Maeve's, and Fifi's clones at the forefront.

With this formation, they were confident they could recapture all ten Spirit Beast tribes and reclaim Floating Frost Valley in a single day. And if they encountered any unexpected formidable individual, a Vylkr spawn, or a Divine Corps member, his wives' clones would be able to buy time for the others to escape and return to Paradise. If the situation proved too challenging, they would even self-destruct.

Once the arrangements were made, they swiftly spread out, heading in different directions.

.....

On a vast, snowy, floating island—tens of thousands of kilometres in radius—with streams of floating rivers crossing the island from afar and disappearing into the distance, a vast wooden fortress was built around it.

There were no less than two enormous gates serving as the entry and exit points of the island. Stationed at the gates were Silver-Winged Rhinos and Black-Feathered Winged Monkeys, and thousands were atop the wooden walls. Guarding the perimeter of the fortress were hundreds of these same Spirit Beasts, ensuring every stone was left unturned during their checks.

Four Black-Feathered Winged Monkeys hovered at the centre of the enormous gates, monitoring their surroundings attentively.

"The rebellion was dealt with two weeks ago. The tribes have been handled, and yet they haven't managed to chase down the remaining rebels for two weeks," another one chimed in, his tone filled with dissatisfaction.

"Hehehe... Look at it this way. At least we aren't the ones chasing the rebels. Two weeks, and they still haven't caught them? That's just embarrassing. We would've finished the job in two days,"

another chuckled. Just as the other Black-Feathered Winged Monkey wanted to respond, he paused and narrowed his eyes at a dot approaching in the distance. The other Black-Feathered Winged Monkeys noticed the strangeness and became alert.

The dot began to clear, revealing itself to be an enormous, expanding tsunami.

"SEND THE ALARM! WE ARE UNDER ATTACK!!"

"QUICKLY ALERT THOSE WITHIN THE FORTRESS!!"

They immediately raised the alarm, alerting those inside about the sudden approaching attack. Though they weren't sure if this was a sudden environmental change or an ambush, they understood that it was heading in their direction. As such, they could only identify it as an attack. The only thing they could do now was prevent the tsunami from reaching the fortress or relocate to a safe area until the chaos subsided. The Spirit Beasts above had also noticed the approaching tsunami and sounded the alarms at the same time. Unfortunately, before they could properly react, the floating tsunami swiftly arrived, traversing the vast distance in the blink of an eye.

Your gift is the motivation for my creation. Give me more motivation!

Creation is hard, cheer me up!

Have some idea about my story? Comment it and let me know.

I tagged this book, come and support me with a thumbs up!

Chapter 1277 Reclaiming The Floating Frost Valley(2)

It instantly swept over them, submerging them and the entire floating island in its waters. They tried to soar out of the water but realized that their movements were restricted.

They couldn't move a single part of their bodies.

They also realized they were drowning. Panic set in as they realized that the water could drown them, which meant that it wasn't ordinary. They quickly realized that this wasn't just an environmental change; instead, they were under attack.

Soon, the water began to freeze, imprisoning them.

Outside, the entire floating snowy island was covered by a globe of water that slowly began to solidify, freezing and trapping everything within. Even the streams of water floating through it froze.

In an instant, all that was left was a sculpture resembling an enormous, beautiful snow globe surrounding numerous frozen rivers.

Several figures materialized above the enormous icy floating sculpture.

They were Orion and the others.

ly'yra and the other White Winged Gryphon Spirit Beasts stared wide-eyed at the scene before them. Though they had already judged the strength of the group, seeing one of them deal such a catastrophic attack with a mere flick of her hand provided a visual impact of their prowess. It also reinforced their judgment.

Nevertheless, they had never imagined a territory could be reclaimed in such a way.

The icy globe that had once ensnared the floating island dissolved after they had located all the members of the White Winged Gryphon Tribe, numbering around 100,000, and gathered them together safely.

They also captured the members of the Silver Winged Rhino, Wingless Horned Gryphon, and Black Feathered Winged Monkey Tribes, who numbered about eight thousand each, bringing the total of the Celestial Spirit Court's forces to around 24,000.

Though their numbers appeared small compared to the total population of the White Winged Gryphon Tribe, the Celestial Spirit Court forces were all at the Knight Rank, ranging from 1,500 to 3,000 years old, and had been consistently consuming Spirit Beasts to grow stronger when compared to the White Winged Gryphon Tribe which 96 per cent of their population consisted of adolescents around 500 years old and younger, with 2,000 at the Squire Rank and the remaining 2,000 at the Knight Rank. It was easy to understand how they had managed to subdue the tribe for so many years and why the rebellion had been their only hope for survival.

As ly'yra reunited with the remainder of her tribe, Orion surveyed the snowy island. The island was filled with heavy vegetation and small and tall trees with exceedingly thick trunks about four meters wide. Atop these towering trees, countless wooden houses and structures had once been built, but many of them had been destroyed. Still, it was easy to tell that this place had once been a thriving community before it was attacked.

There were also several broad, snowy fields without trees.

Various mountains dotted the landscape, some so tall they nearly pierced the misty, while others were much shorter. Lakes were scattered throughout the island, where floating streams of rivers converged, creating channels that nurtured the entire island's vegetation. The vibrant, unnatural hue of the vegetation and the natural environment enhanced the beauty of the surroundings.

Half an hour later, ly'yra returned with nine figures following behind her.

They bowed respectfully towards Orion and greeted him.

"I am Ta'rien. It's a pleasure to meet you, benevolent figures from the Material Realm."

"I am Sha'dora..."

"I am Ka'shavi..."

"I am Ry'naris..."

Naturally, Spirit Beasts only gave their titles, also known as nicknames, to beings from the Material Realm as a security measure. Unlike beings from the Material Realm who could appear in countless regions across the Spirit Realm by travelling through Spiritual Link Points, Spirit Beasts were confined to one region for their entire lifetimes unless they were powerful enough to traverse the Spirit Realm.

They faced the risk of being consumed by more powerful Spirit Beasts or trespassing into the territory of another Spirit Beast tribe, and this was only within the confines of the Middle Layer of the Spirit Realm. Therefore, to avoid the risk of making enemies, whether through their contractors or other Spirit Beasts, they used their titles, which could be changed at any time.

They only revealed their real names after reaching a certain level of trust.

This rule did not apply to those born within a tribe.

However, upon learning that the group before them had reached the Divine Realm, were the reason they had recovered their island, and had chosen to support them against the Celestial Spirit Court, they saw no reason to hide their real names as they introduced themselves one by one and expressed their gratitude.

Orion nodded, receiving them all with a gentle smile. He said, "You can address me as Orion." It was hard to tell them apart since they were all covered in fur, with the only distinguishing feature being several scars accumulated on their bodies.

Regardless, he learned about their identities. They were all Spirit Beasts at the Knight Rank who had been kept alive to care for the remaining members of their tribe. All of the important tribe members had been killed. Their strength wasn't exceptionally high but was consistent with Spirit Beasts, who had solely gained strength by living to such

an age.

Most of them had been spared to help the White Winged Gryphon Tribe continue to grow, primarily serving as breeders.

After gathering all the necessary information about the current state of the tribe, even Orion had to admit that the life of a Spirit Beast was cruel.

"Where are the Celestial Spirit Court Forces?" ly'yra asked as she looked around. Before she left, she had seen them reduced to a miniature size and bundled up at the centre of the group. However, half an hour later, she could no longer see them or

sense their presence.

The other White Winged Gryphon Spirit Beasts also glanced around suspiciously. They were prepared to confront their enemies who had turned their tribe into what it is today and enact their revenge.

However, there was no trace of them.

"You don't need to worry about them any longer; my warriors have taken care of them," Orion responded with a smile.

Suddenly, a thought crossed ly'yra's mind, and she snapped her attention to the group. Among the thirty-eight individuals who had followed them to save their tribe, only one man was unconscious—one of those who had accompanied Orion to interrogate the Celestial Spirit Court forces.

But now, eight more individuals were unconscious, and they all appeared to be from the same race.

Instantly, ly'yra began piecing it all together.

Her entire being shuddered. Twenty-four thousand Knight-ranked Spirit Beasts were eliminated in half an hour! Even as a Spirit Beast who had fought and consumed Spirit Beasts, she understood the magnitude of this feat.

Is this how formidable the Divines are?

While the others were confused by Orion's words, ly'yra had already grasped their meaning.

"Forgive me for asking, but I don't understand what you mean," Ry'naris asked curiously.

"Ahem! I think what he's saying is that they've all been eliminated," ly'yra said, sighing silently as she watched their expressions turn to shock upon processing the information.

Before they could ask another question, ly'yra swiftly interrupted, "Why don't you all return to the tribe and help the others restore the place? We have permanently reclaimed our land this time, and

it's time to put everything back in order," she said. The White Winged Gryphon, who was about to speak, closed his mouth and nodded in understanding. They chose not to ask too many questions. If their benefactors had assured them that they had eliminated their worst enemies, then there was no need to pry into how the process was carried out. What mattered was the result. After saying their goodbyes to Orion and the others, they turned around and took off into the sky, soaring toward the direction of the dense forest.

"Have you received any information about the other tribes?" Iy'yra asked, changing the subject.

"The Red Winged Gryphon Tribe, White Furred Horned Fox Tribe, Fire Salamander Tribe, Ice Salamander Tribe, Frost Quill Hedgehog Tribe, and Inferno Quill Hedgehog Tribe have been reclaimed. The Wingless Horned Gryphon Tribe has been subdued. I believe it's only a matter of time before the rest are also reclaimed," Orion responded. Iy'yra nodded in understanding. "Why don't I take them to a place where they can rest comfortably?" she said, looking at the unconscious figures in the air.

Orion paused for a moment. They had already reclaimed the territory and planned on defending it, so there was no need to worry about a surprise enemy attack. Although he was uncertain about when they would awaken, since each of them had consumed 3,000 Knight-ranked Spirit Beasts, which was a 3,000 per cent increase compared to Flintor, it was still unknown when they would actually wake up.

"Alright, she will go with you," Orion responded with a nod, gesturing toward Gina, signalling her to accompany Iy'yra.

With her gift, the protection of the Divine Apostles was guaranteed.

Chapter 1278 Reclaiming The Floating Frost Valley(3)

Also, he didn't like the idea of his junior sister, even if she was just a clone, fighting on the front lines of a battle.

Of course, Gina's clone was reluctant as she sensed Orion's intent, but since Gina had already commanded her to listen to his every order, she had no choice but to obey.

"Follow me," Iy'yra said respectfully to the young woman. She turned around and leapt into the sky, soaring toward a specific direction in the thick, snowy vegetation.

Gina took control of the nine Divine Apostles with divine power and swiftly followed her.

.....

Floating Frost Valley, Glacial Highlands,

In a vast land where blizzards occurred at various intervals, enormous mountains lined with massive caves could be found deep within. However, this blizzard was strange—it circled around a multitude of Silver-Winged Rhinos, Wingless Horned Gryphons, and Black Feathered Winged Monkeys, numbering around 26,000. The invisible winds of the blizzard coiled around their bodies, restraining them in place. With each gust, more Spirit Beasts emerged, chained in the same way. They were unable to move and could only watch in horror as their numbers continued to increase until they totalled 30,000. They were captured by an enemy they couldn't see.

The members of the White Twin-Headed Bear Tribe, who had also been captured by the blizzard but were free to move, could only observe the scene, with their bodies trembling and chills creeping up their furs.

After a few minutes, the blizzard halted. The once snowy territory became calm. The winds coalesced, and a woman emerged from thin air. Her hair was white, frosted like the blizzard that had just vanished, and her eyes were crystal blue, radiating an unnatural coldness capable of freezing anyone who dared to stare too long. She was dressed in a long-sleeved, loose-shouldered, floral-patterned dress that stopped just above her ankles. Despite its modesty, the dress couldn't hide her curvaceous figure, accentuating her large, plump buttocks and firm breasts. It was none other than Derry.

Derry's gift allowed her to possess anything tangible, acquire its characteristics, and bring it under her dominion. Now that she was a goddess, her gift extended to possessing both tangible and intangible things—living or non-living, singular or multiple. She could even acquire their characteristics without taking full possession, recreating and extending her influence to others with the same traits. Her gift allowed her to grasp the unique features of Zogar's gift and more. Even becoming a Spirit Beast herself wasn't beyond her capabilities.

In short, as long as something existed, and if Derry was powerful enough, she could bring it under her dominion or gain its characteristics. Considering this ability also extended to various artefacts and even divine beings, such power was frightening, even for those mastering the laws of the universe. Since the clone was made with Celeste's help, 'it' was indistinguishable from her. Still, it possessed the self-awareness that 'it' was a clone.

"That's all of them. Since the White Twin-Headed Bear Tribe is safe, inform my husband that we have successfully reclaimed the territory," Derry's clone said, looking at Orion's bond servants before pushing her hair behind her ears. Though they could send a message to Orion across a planet while in the Paradise Realm, within the Spirit Realm, not only was their strength halved, but something was interfering with their communication despite the short distance. Thus, due to the unique technique they practised, they had to rely on Orion's bond servants to deliver the message.

However, upon hearing her words, the White Twin-Headed Bears who had accompanied them to reclaim their land gulped. Husband? Even without being told, their years of life experience made them quick to connect the dots and realize that the person the woman was referring to was Orion. Realizing how the women addressed each other as sisters, several more conclusions formed in their minds, but they didn't dare dwell on them. As long as their tribes were freed and their territory reclaimed, they had no reason to add unnecessary pressure. Still, they kept the information in the back of their minds, in case it became relevant later.

"I have delivered the message," one of the bond servants, a man, stepped forward and said.

Derry's clone nodded. She turned to the White Twin-Headed Bears and said, "You can leave and take care of your tribe. We will handle the rest." Without waiting for their response, she gestured for the eight Prismerton Divine Apostles who had accompanied them, signalling them to come forward before she vanished into thin air once more. Suddenly, a heavy blizzard emerged out of nowhere, surrounding the captured Celestial Spirit Court forces.

The Prismerton Divine Apostles flew into the blizzard, one by one.

Meanwhile, the White Twin-Headed Bears swiftly nodded at the thin air and hurried to check on the condition of their tribe. The remaining Spirit Beasts that had served as the women's steeds could only remain and observe the unfolding scene, their bodies trembling by the second.

.....

Several minutes later, Orion received information regarding the success of the other regions.

After ensuring that Gina and the Prismerton Divine Apostles were settled in a comfortable home, Iy'ya returned to their side. Orion then informed her of the latest developments.

"What are your plans?" Iy'ya asked, looking at Orion curiously.

Orion had already been titled as their de facto leader, so regardless of the plans she had in mind, they wouldn't matter if he disapproved. Now that the other tribes had been reclaimed and the Celestial Spirit Court forces eliminated, he likely had a good idea of their capabilities. She wondered how he planned to secure the entire Floating Frost Valley from the inevitable assault of the Celestial Spirit Court, which would surely come in far greater numbers than before.

Of course, Orion could easily sense her intentions.

"What is it that you have in mind?" Orion asked.

Seeing that Orion wanted to hear her thoughts first, Iy'yra responded, "Though we have already resolved to protect our territory, it is impossible to secure its entirety with our limited numbers. As such, we planned on visiting the secluded Spirit Beasts to see if they could help."

"We encountered several of them 200 years ago, and with their support, we were able to stage a rebellion, which would have given us temporary relief from the Celestial Spirit Court. But we were betrayed, leading to our current state. They went into hiding once more after seeing our downfall."

"Though I know it would be easy for you to protect the entire region with your capabilities, those secluded Spirit Beasts should also participate. For the Celestial Spirit Court to send 200,000+ Knight-Ranked Spirit Beasts to crush a rebellion and suppress an entire region to prevent such an event from happening again shows that those numbers are only a fraction of their forces."

"And they are still focused on annexing other regions, signifying they can send even more if necessary. The secluded Spirit Beasts should serve at the forefront to test the capabilities of the Celestial Spirit Court. That way, it is much safer and would divert the Court's attention, leading them to think the secluded Spirit Beasts are the reason they lost control of this region."

13:21

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Iy'yra laid out her plan in detail, from analyzing the Celestial Spirit Court to using the secluded Spirit Beasts to draw attention away from Orion's group and gauge the Court's hidden capabilities.

It was a well-thought-out strategy.

Despite having Orion's word, Iy'yra didn't want him and the Celestial Spirit Court to meet directly. She had encountered beings from the Material Realm before who had given their word, only to change it on a whim after encountering stronger Spirit Beasts or difficult situations. She would instead not put their decision to the test and instead, wait until her tribe could stand on its own once more. If it did happen, they would have no choice but to flee to another region far from here, beyond the grasp of the Celestial Spirit Court forces.

"It's a good plan," Orion said. He had his suspicions about the Celestial Spirit Court, as it differed from what he had learned about the Spirit Realm. Spirit Beasts with similar traits would typically band together to form tribes, ruling over their chosen region and passing it down to their descendants. A powerful, secluded Spirit Beast might claim its own territory, sometimes allowing other tribes to reside there and offering extra security in exchange for payments, saving them time from having to hunt. Some migrated from one territory to another, either alone or in groups. There were many different ways of life in the Spirit Realm, far too many to count on ten fingers. Yet Orion had never heard of a force like the Celestial Spirit Court, which continued conquering region after region despite its vast forces.

Weren't they afraid of encountering formidable Spirit Beasts, or even ancient Spirit Beasts capable of battling Divine beings and potentially being eradicated by them? Were they indeed so confident that they could keep annexing regions without facing serious resistance?

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Chapter 1279 Yuronth, The Ice Fortress!

Did they have an end goal?

Orion didn't have the answers to these questions. With so much still unknown about the Spirit Realm, he focused on making the Celestial Spirit Court reveal its hand while ensuring their own safety.

Orion chose to overestimate his opponent. It was better that way than thinking that they were some remote part of the Spirit Realm where they could tread unchallenged and be caught off guard by an

unexpected event that could force them to leave the Spirit Realm and restart their plans. He also intended to take control of the Celestial Spirit Court and restructure it within Paradise forces, which would give him influence in regions beyond Floating Frost Valley.

Orion's plans were too grand for even Iy'yra to fully grasp.

"Do you know where these secluded Spirit Beasts are hidden?" Orion asked. "Yes... Yes, I do. I know of a few locations, none of which I dared to approach out of fear of being consumed and silent," Iy'yra responded swiftly and nodded her head. "Alright. I agree with your plan. Let's go pay them a visit. If they plan on remaining within the Floating Frost Valley, then they should also be willing to protect it. If they don't, we'll eliminate them to send a message. I'm certain that a few of them will choose to offer their support," Orion replied.

He wasn't sure if the Divine Apostle Crest could still absorb Spirit Beasts while they were unconscious, but it was best to put it to the test. Looking ahead, Orion couldn't help but anticipate how much the Divine Apostles would grow.

The White Winged Gryphon couldn't be left unprotected, so Orion brought Zera, Fifi, and the last conscious remaining Divine Apostle with him. Although Orion intended to have a civilized conversation, there was still a chance they might encounter conflict. So, he brought him along to ensure the deaths of these Spirit Beasts would not be in vain.

Iy'yra and three more White Winged Gryphons carried them toward their destination. In an hour and twenty minutes, they landed in a dense forest, floating above a vast icy plain. At the centre of the towering trees was a large clearing with a massive floating rock and an enormous cave built into it. The rock, about 150 meters in diameter, hovered above the icy ground. Apart from resembling a rocky fortress, it didn't seem out of place among the countless bizarre landscapes they had passed along the way.

Iy'yra and the others landed on the branches of a nearby tree.

"That's the place," Iy'yra said, gesturing toward the enormous floating rock. "Shall I announce your arrival so they'll come out to speak with you?" she asked.

"Go ahead, I'll leave it to you," Orion replied with a nod. He soared into the air, holding Sylvalis close.

Noticing his movement, the others followed, rising into the sky.

Without hesitation, Iy'yra flew toward the enormous rock.

"I am Iy'yra of the White Winged Gryphon Tribe, and I have come with my fellow tribe members and the group that helped us reclaim our land from the Celestial Spirit Court forces. Come out, Yuronth," Iy'yra shouted, her voice echoing through the environment.

Instantly, the entire rock trembled violently.

Iy'yra's eyes narrowed. She despised these secluded Spirit Beasts who refused to defend their territory against invading forces, and she found it more fitting for them to serve as pawns to extract information from the Celestial Spirit Court.

13:47

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Soon, an icy mist began to emerge from the surroundings, spreading and shrouding the entire area. As the mist rose higher, Fifi frowned and waved her hand. Instantly, the icy mist that enveloped the area swiftly vanished.

"We are not here for trouble. We've come to discuss your contribution to protecting Floating Frost Valley and how to repel the Celestial Spirit Court forces from invading our territory," Iy'yra shouted again.

Fortunately, this time, a response came.

"If you truly came here to speak peacefully, you wouldn't have brought such a frightening group capable of effortlessly repelling the Celestial Spirit Court forces," a loud voice growled from the cave. Moments later, a figure stepped out. It resembled a hippopotamus with two heads—the left side more enormous than the right, unlike the White Twin-headed Bears, where both heads were equal. Its jaws held rows of sharp crystal-white teeth, and its skin was covered in ice armour plating. It stood an imposing 40 meters tall, surrounded by a cloudy mist that attempted to shroud its entire figure.

His eyes focused on Iy'yra and the White Winged Gryphons behind her before shifting toward Orion and the others above, observing from a distance.

"I am Yuronth, also known as the Ice Fortress, a 2,600-year-old Knight-ranked Spirit Beast," Yuronth said, his two heads moving in unison, causing his voice to reverberate in the air. Since Iy'yra had already announced his name, he saw no reason to hide it and introduced himself honestly. "You seem like beings from the Material Realm. May I know the identities of those I'm speaking with?"

"I am Orion, and this is the rest of my group," Orion replied, gesturing toward the others.

Yuronth responded with a nod. "Since you are capable of handling the Celestial Spirit Court on your own, I don't see why you need to seek me out. Compared to you all, my strength is insufficient and would merely be a statistic in the face of the Celestial Spirit Court forces," he said.

"Regardless of how weak you may be, everyone residing within Floating Frost Valley must participate in its defence. As long as you want to continue living here, it's necessary," Orion responded firmly.

Silence fell over the area.

"Thank you for hearing me out. Since that's the case, I will take my leave," Yuronth said, breaking the silence. He bowed his head in gratitude and stepped into the air, his massive body effortlessly levitating. Just as he attempted to soar away, he froze in place. After struggling briefly, he realized he was unable to move.

"Where do you think you're going? I never said you could leave," Orion asked, his divine power suppressing the Spirit Beast.

"Isn't it enough that I'm leaving peacefully?" Yuronth replied, frustration in his voice.

"No. You could potentially deliver information about Floating Frost Valley's current situation to the Celestial Spirit Court. That's a risk I won't take," Orion said, shaking his head. "Anyone who refuses to defend Floating Frost Valley will die." He gestured to the Prismarion Divine Apostle, signalling him to step forward.

The Prismerion Divine Apostle nodded and soared towards the frozen Yuronth, halting in front of him.

Witnessing this, Yuronth attempted to break free from the invisible restraints holding him, but his efforts were futile. His eyes widened as the man before him stretched out his hand. Countless runes materialized and morphed before him. Yuronth's struggle ceased, and he instantly fell into a daze. His massive body was then sucked into the ever-changing, spinning runes until nothing remained of him. As the runes slowed and retracted, the Prismerion Divine Apostle collapsed, unconscious. Fortunately, Orion swiftly caught him and hovered him in the air before pulling him back to their position.

Iy'yra and the other White Winged Gryphon were frozen, shocked and astounded. The events had unfolded too quickly for them to react. Although they were aware that this group could effortlessly eliminate Spirit Beasts, witnessing the exact details of how it was done left her dazed.

Yuronth hadn't been merely eliminated—he was consumed.

'Who are they?' Iy'yra wondered, her gaze fixed on the unconscious figure before drifting to Orion and the others, a mix of fear and curiosity in her eyes. She found it hard to believe that a group consisting of so many divine beings, with many others capable of consuming a Spirit Beast, wasn't well-known in the Material Realm. Their identities must be far greater than what they had initially assumed.

Suddenly, a thought flashed in Iy'yra's mind, her eyes widening in surprise.

"Let's continue," Orion said, snapping them out of their daze.

Iy'yra and the other White Winged Gryphons nodded, quickly soaring toward them and positioning themselves so that the group could be seated on their backs.

"Is this the strongest secluded Spirit Beast in the Floating Frost Valley?" Orion asked. From the information Orion had gathered from Ilse, a juvenile Spirit Beast was equivalent to a 1-star warrior, while an adolescent Spirit Beast was equivalent to a 2-star warrior. A Squire-ranked Spirit Beast was equivalent to a 3-star warrior, and a Knight-ranked Spirit Beast was equivalent to a 4-star warrior. However, depending on the type of Spirit Beast, its traits, and its environment, a Squire-ranked Spirit Beast could contend with a 4-star warrior. The ranking system for Spirit Beasts was bestowed upon them by a god who had descended into the Material World, much like Ilse, Aerialia, and the others. This god studied Spirit Beasts and discovered the thresholds at which they evolved

into more powerful beings, marking those specific points. Over time, the system became popular among the divines and was used to differentiate the strength of Spirit Beasts.

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Chapter 1280 The Race With The Strongest Potential, The Calamity

Even the Spirit Beast took note of it and began to use it among themselves, as it could showcase their strength without revealing their actual age when they didn't want to. The god was one of the many gods who ascended to true godhood and vanished after the emergence of the Divine Mysteries. Thus, his name has been forgotten in the annals of history, and only his immense contribution remains.

Spirit Beasts also utilised a unique energy called Spiritual Energy. This energy could only be found in the Spirit Realm and harnessed by Spirit Beasts. Regardless of how powerful an energy was, its ranking was based on who could wield it, and when compared to a capable figure of the same level wielding another energy, only then could a proper ranking be determined. However, when either side's strength was halved during an encounter, whether in the Spirit Realm or the Material Realm, it was impossible to get an accurate result. So, Spiritual Energy wasn't part of the official energy rankings.

Orion suspected that, in an unofficial ranking, it would likely be in the top four, right below Primordial, Vylkr, and Divine Energy.

The nature of the spirit beasts depended on the layer of the spirit realm in which they were born. Spirit Beasts born in the Lower Layer were malevolent due to their vicious nature. The atmosphere was harsh and unforgiving, and even the territories gained sentience, inflicting harm or devouring Spirit Beasts mindlessly. It was said that life in the Lower Layer was much crueller than in the Middle and Upper Layers. Considering how tough it was to survive in the Middle Layer, it was already unnerving to think about how treacherous survival in the Lower Layer must be. Spirit Beasts born in the Middle Layer could be either benevolent or malevolent. Of course, the nature of both parents influenced which one their offspring would inherit, but in most cases, it was still left to

chance. Sometimes, they possessed a dual nature and could hide behind either, given the situation. Spirit Beasts in the Upper Layer were solely benevolent. Despite their nature, there was still fierce competition for survival among them. However, it was a relatively more peaceful layer, where even the Four-eared Elves could send their children unsupervised once they came of age.

In terms of potential and strength as a race below the Omnithriallians, Spirit Beasts were undoubtedly number one.

Orion couldn't help but wonder if this was why Naka had begun working on the Divine Crest to consume Spirit Beasts—perhaps as an alternative after his experiment with Vylkr energy had resulted in failure.

Nonetheless, Orion didn't want to waste time going from one location to another if all the Spirit Beasts were at this level. He would instead return to the White Winged Gryphon floating island and focus on ascending through demigodhood, sending his bonded servants to deal with the Secluded Spirit Beasts. While they awaited the Celestial Spirit Court's retaliation.

"No, Ice Fortress is a strong Spirit Beast in the Floating Frost Valley, but he isn't the strongest. The strongest is an Astrociat-ranked Spirit Beast. No one knows where they reside now or if they are still in the Floating Frost Valley. The last time they were spotted was near the Inferno Quill Hedgehog land, the Ember Caverns," Iy'yra responded.

"From what I've gathered, the Celestial Spirit Court forces attempted to eliminate them, seeing them as a threat to their control over the valley, but they failed. The Astrociat-ranked Spirit Beast escaped their siege, choosing not to battle, and hasn't been seen since. They didn't intervene in the annexation of the territory, so the Celestial Spirit Court gave up searching for them, assuming they used the opportunity to flee and focused their resources on the tribes instead," Iy'yra explained.

Astrociat-ranked Spirit Beasts were aged between 3,000 and 6,000 years. At this level, Spirit Beasts began to undergo transformations every thousand years, eventually stepping into the realm of the divine and capable of standing face-to-face against Divine Apostles and Demigods.

Orion was sure that the early transformations, occurring within the first few thousand years, were comparable to 5-star and 6-star warriors. He was confident, having stepped into demigodhood after forging his own 6 Vylkr container.

Even with his strength halved, Orion was confident that he could defeat an Astrociat-ranked Spirit Beast with the help of Vylkr energy without exhausting himself.

"How powerful is this Astrociat-ranked Spirit Beast?" Orion asked, his voice curious.

Iy'yra shook her head in response. "I don't know. It's difficult to obtain information about Spirit Beasts of such a rank unless one was born in the same era as them. If they don't want to be found, they won't be. Even the Celestial Spirit Court won't waste their resources searching for them, as they would suffer much greater losses if they were to enter battle with such a Spirit Beast."

"Okay, take us to where they were last seen," Orion replied.

Iy'yra nodded but didn't move, causing Orion to raise an eyebrow. After a brief hesitation, she asked, "Is that man a Divine Apostle?" Her eyes drifted towards the unconscious man floating in the air behind them.

Upon hearing her words, Orion's eyes slightly widened.

Even Zera and Fifi showed a strong reaction.

"You know about Divine Apostles?" Orion asked, his tone filled with suspicion. Knowing about divine apostles was one thing, as they were common among divine beings. Considering that divine beings frequently visited the Spirit Realm, it wasn't surprising that they knew about Divine Apostles. But it was something else entirely to connect the dots after witnessing an individual consume a Spirit Beast.

Iy'yra nodded. Sensing the delicacy of the topic, she chose her words carefully. "Thousands of years ago, a calamity descended upon the Floating Frost Valley and other nearby regions. A few individuals from the Material Realm possessed a unique ability to consume Spirit Beasts, utilising their essence to empower themselves. They had the power to easily battle Knight-ranked Spirit Beasts and above, showing no mercy to surrounding regions."

"Noticing their unstoppable momentum and unique ability, several higher-ranked Spirit Beasts chose to flee, abandoning their territories rather than face them in battle. They left after several centuries, but the damage was already done. Only a tenth of the Spirit Beasts in the region and others remained."

"To avoid such a terrifying calamity if it transpired again, many Spirit Beasts and tribes chose to migrate far away. Because of this, the strength of the Floating Frost Valley and the surrounding regions is weak."

"Some had speculated that it was because of this that the Celestial Spirit Court rose, seeing it as an opportunity to begin annexing the regions one by one. If such an event hadn't transpired, perhaps they wouldn't have dared to take such brazen actions."

Orion calmly processed her words. He and Ilse had chosen this region after surveying the other Spiritual Link Points because the Spirit Beasts here were weaker compared to other regions. The first one they surveyed, for example, had a six-legged moose that withstood several of Ilse's attacks before being defeated.

This region seemed like a better place to begin their exploration. However, he hadn't expected such an unexpected event to have taken place in this region of the Spirit Realm.

"Are you certain about this?" Orion asked, seeking confirmation.

"Yes, I'm sure," Iy'yra nodded repeatedly. "You can ask anyone, and they'll tell you the same thing." She glanced at the other White Winged Gryphons, desperately seeking their support.

"They're not just rumours. This is the truth of what happened!"

"It's been the talk of the valley for generations!"

They quickly spoke up, one by one, lending their voices to support Iy'yra's words.

Orion frowned deeply. The more they grew stronger and solved problems, the more new ones would emerge, each one on the same level or slightly bigger than the last. The weight of needing to grow stronger and overcome these obstacles increased once more. However, Orion didn't feel overwhelmed. He had the entirety of Paradise to stand with him and help solve them.

"Do you remember the name they called themselves?" Zera asked.

Sensing the intense gaze of the woman who exuded a formidable aura, Iy'yra couldn't help but feel her skin crawl.

Nonetheless, she shook her head in response. "No, I don't know what they called themselves. All those who knew their name may be either dead or have migrated far away," Iy'yra answered.

Zera nodded and remained silent.

"I wasn't certain if a member of your group was one of those Divine Apostles, and that's why I spoke up. If such information is released to others, not only would they begin to doubt your intentions, but they might also suspect that you are related to them," Iy'yra said.

"However, from the time you pledged to stand with us against the Celestial Spirit Court without knowing their true capabilities, I am confident that you are not connected to them. But it's best you don't reveal this information to others."

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