

Village Head 1281

Chapter 1281 Ember Caverns, Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast

"I promise we will do our best to keep this information a secret. Even if it is revealed in the end, we will do our best to convince the others in the Floating Frost Valley that you are not related to the calamity we experienced thousands of years ago."

The other White Winged Gryphons swiftly nodded in agreement with ly'yra's words.

"Okay," Orion nodded.

Iy'yra sighed in relief inwardly. Although she had been honest, she knew that it meant nothing for Orion and his group. So what if they chose to reveal this information themselves? That the group currently helping them reclaim their territory possessed a similar unique ability to the individuals who were said to be the cause of their misfortune in the first place?

Wouldn't that be like intentionally making Orion and his group their enemies, pushing them to unite with the Celestial Spirit Court since they now had a common foe?

Even without the Celestial Spirit Court's aid, Orion's group could reenact the same destruction as the calamity that descended on them thousands of years ago, and they wouldn't be able to stop it. Wouldn't it be foolish to make enemies of such an overwhelming force while they were in a dire situation?

Besides, the group hadn't done anything to be branded as enemies, so it was useless to think too far ahead.

Iy'yra and the rest of the White Winged Gryphons swiftly soared in a particular direction.

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They arrived at their destination swiftly.

An immense active volcano stood in a part of the Floating Frost Valley. Streams of lava spilt from the peak down to the base, forming a pool of magma around it. Surrounding the volcano were countless vents of varying sizes, shooting out hot water vapours at irregular intervals.

Due to the heat of the volcanic land, the frozen plains surrounding it had melted into vapour and mist, shrouding the region in a thick fog.

The group dove into one of the larger vents. Although their bodies could withstand the hot vapours, they used their Divine power just in case they encountered anything unexpected.

Soon, they emerged from the other side of the vent.

Before them lay an immense underground molten magma river with countless cavern networks.

"The Spiritual Energy here is dense. It doesn't align with my nature, so I could be harmed if we go any deeper," Iy'yra said.

As a White Winged Gryphon, her nature was aligned with wind, water and ice. Staying in such a dense, scorching environment for too long would put her at a disadvantage and possibly cause her injury.

Orion nodded in understanding. If they were in the Material Realm, they could scan the entire underground cavern network with their divine senses, but here in the Spirit Realm, their senses were limited. He suspected it had something to do with the density of the Spiritual Energy in each environment.

This was the most potent place he had ever experienced.

"What is this place?" Orion asked, frowning.

"Tens of thousands of years ago, this place wasn't called the Floating Frost Valley. It used to be known as Flaming Mountain Valley. Only after a phenomenon occurred, where the land was frozen and the environment. suspended above the ground, never touching the frozen earth, was it renamed the Floating Frost. Valley."

"Several parts of the region weren't frozen and have been accumulating Spiritual Energy for a long time. Even Spirit Beasts with fire attributes can be harmed here if they don't possess enough strength to handle it," Iy'yra responded. "Sometime in the future, we suspect it will revert back to Flaming Mountain Valley, or something new and unexpected may happen. If that's the case, we'll have to migrate to a new home or force ourselves to adapt."

"Transformations like this are natural phenomena in the Spirit Realm, so it's not something we are worried about. What we are concerned about is whether the environment will ever undergo another transformation. That would mean the Spiritual Energy in the environment would keep accumulating until it becomes too fierce for us to reside in," Iy'yra added.

"In that case, we would be forced to move, especially for the sake of the newborn offspring. Such a place would become a habitat for powerful Spirit Beasts, as no one would dare journey into it. This is how we navigate through the Spirit Realm, knowing where to enter and where to avoid."

Orion nodded, realizing that the phenomenon that transformed the territory wasn't necessarily a bad thing. He also understood why this was the last place the Aristocrat Spirit Beast had been seen. This information intrigued him, as it meant that locating the residence of weak or powerful Spirit Beasts wasn't as tricky as he initially thought.

"If that's the case, let's call them out from here. If they are present, they will surely come out after sensing our presence," Orion said.

Iy'yra nodded in understanding. She took a deep breath and shouted, "I am Iy'yra of the White Winged Gryphon Tribe! I have come here with the group that eliminated the Celestial Spirit Court forces and pushed back their influence within the Floating Frost Valley to speak with you, the Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast! Reveal yourself!" Her voice echoed across the pool of molten magma and resonated within the caverns.

There was no response after several minutes.

Iy'yra announced their presence once more, but again, they received no response.

"I think the Aristocrat Spirit Beast must have already fled the Floating Frost Valley and hasn't returned since then," Iy'yra said.

It made sense.

The region was previously conquered by the Celestial Spirit Court, so it would be too restrictive for a Spirit Beast such rank to remain here and risk conflict.

"Then let's use another method," Orion responded.

He gestured toward Fifi to step forward.

Fifi moved from her position and soared toward the streams of scorching

molten magma.

Iy'yra and the other White Winged Gryphons observed her actions closely, wondering what she intended to do.

Fifi halted above the streams of molten magma, her feet almost dipping into it. With a thought, a crystallized snowflake formed on the tip of her right index finger, and she shot it into the stream of molten magma.

Instantly, the molten magma froze, transforming into an icy blue sculpture. The frost continued to spread, reaching deep into the underground cavern network surrounding them. It didn't stop there; the ice crawled up the molten earthen walls, freezing everything in its path.

In moments, the entire underground was encased in ice.

"They'll be forced to come out now," Orion said.

Suddenly, the entire underground network began to shake violently.

"There," Orion pointed toward one of the caverns where the sound was coming from.

Fifi soared in that direction.

Iy'yra nodded and swiftly followed behind.

The others followed close by.

It only took them a moment to grasp what they were trying to do.

As they ventured deeper into the cavern, the sounds grew louder. Soon, they arrived on the other side of the cavern. Before them was a vast, frozen plain that shook violently, with chunks of frozen magma rising to the surface and cracks spider-webbing across the icy ground.

The cavern walls were lined with immense cave openings, and behind them lay the passage they had just emerged from.

"There's something down here," Orion said, narrowing his eyes at the centre of

the cracked, icy plain.

"I can sense it too; it's something dwelling within. It's probably the Aristocrat- ranked Spirit Beast," Fifi responded, her arms folded as she hovered above the

trembling frozen magma.

This explained why the Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast had been so difficult to locate. It had been hiding deep underground beneath the pool of molten magma. However, Fifi hadn't frozen the area too powerfully-if she had, it would have been impossible for the Spirit Beast to break free.

"An Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast..." Iy'yra gulped, fear overtaking her for a moment. But just as quickly as it came, the fear faded when she remembered

she wasn't alone.

Yes, she was here with a group of divine beings. What was there to fear from an Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast? Although she knew that Spirit Beasts at this rank would eventually step into the realm of the Divines at their latter stages, she still held hope that Orion and the others could suppress it.

If they couldn't, they would all die here because such a powerful beast indeed

wouldn't allow them to leave easily after disturbing its home and directly

confronting it.

The other White Winged Gryphons were also slightly shaken and could only

hope that Orion and the others would emerge victorious in the confrontation against the Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast.

The cracks grew larger, and the chunks of ice exploding to the surface became even bigger. Then, in an instant, a massive explosion erupted from the cracked area, revealing a massive hole in the icy plain.

Pools of magma surged from the hole, spilling onto the frozen plain and melting it away.

A heavy scorching fog rose from the magma, scattering into the surroundings.

Chapter 1282 Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast (2)

However, it didn't obscure their vision.

They saw the silhouette of an enormous Spirit Beast with a long, sinuous neck emerging from the massive hole.

Its scales were molten crimson and black, like embers buried under ash. It had a long snout and an elongated, V-shaped jaw filled with sharp rows of teeth. Thorn-like protrusions crowned its neck.

Then, another neck emerged from the massive hole.

And another.

Until there were seven heads, each as distinct and fearsome as the last.

It was a hydra-like Spirit Beast!

The first head burned with raw crimson fire. The second was covered in purple mist. The third crackled with thick streaks of white lightning. The fourth was surrounded by an invisible gust of heavy wind.

The fifth appeared ordinary, but it was clear its ability was hidden. The sixth was covered in shards of crystal. Lastly, the seventh head blazed with fierce green fire.

The beast's massive, muscular lower body was segmented and armoured, ending in powerful, clawed feet. Its long, spiked tail lashed behind it like a whip. "ROAARRR!" All seven heads let out an ear-splitting cry, creating a shockwave that split the surrounding icy plain and shook the entire underground cavern.

Iy'yra and the others felt their bodies grow stiff, and an overwhelming sense of dread surged through them.

Orion shielded them with his divine power.

"Snap out of it," he said, looking at them.

The hydra's roar was no ordinary sound; it appeared to be a psychic attack meant to shatter morale, weaken focus, and disrupt the surrounding area. He might have been affected even if he hadn't been stronger.

Iy'yra and the White Winged Gryphons felt the overwhelming fear drain from their bodies as the effects of the roar wore off.

They gulped, their bodies cold with lingering shock. It was hard to believe they had been unable to withstand a simple roar from a Spirit Beast. Had they encountered it alone, they wouldn't have even had the chance to flee before being swiftly killed.

Is this the strength of an Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast? It's too powerful!

"Woah!" Sylvalis exclaimed in surprise, her mouth wide open.

Seeing her reaction, Orion asked, "Do you want it?"

Sylvalis quickly nodded. "I want to ride it," she replied.

"Okay, since you want it, I'll do my best to get it for you," Orion said with a smile. He was happy to see how much Sylvalis was opening up to him.

Meanwhile, ly'yra and the other White Winged Gryphons' expressions couldn't help but twitch upon hearing their conversation. Sure enough, even an Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast wasn't enough to startle such a formidable

group.

To live this long only to be chosen as a steed? At that moment, they couldn't help but feel pity for the Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast before them.

Fifi soared into the air, hovering between the group and the Spirit Beast.

Sensing that its psychic attack was ineffective, the Spirit Beast focused all fourteen eyes on them. "Why do you disturb this great one?" it asked. All seven heads spoke at once, their voices creating a rhythm that almost sent ly'yra and the other White Winged Gryphons into a daze.

"We have come here to invite you to join the residents of the Floating Frost Valley in defending this region from the Celestial Spirit Court forces," Orion said, his voice resonating with the same force as the hydra but calmer.

The hydra focused its eyes on him, remaining silent for a moment before responding, "If you came here to borrow my strength to fight the Celestial Spirit Court, you're wasting your time. I don't plan on entering into conflict with them."

It paused, then continued, "Since you were able to eliminate the Celestial Spirit Court forces within the Floating Frost Valley, you obviously don't need my support. With your strength, it should be an easy task."

"True. But we have an issue-we can't directly participate in the battle in the meantime," Orion responded.

He gently patted ly'yra's side, signaling her to explain.

Orion wasn't worried about the Spirit Beast learning their plans. If it refused, he wouldn't hesitate to eliminate it. Nonetheless, he found that Spirit Beasts were easy to talk to.

Living so long must have taught them when to peacefully engage in conversation and when to prepare for conflict.

Iy'yra nodded and swiftly explained the situation to the hydra.

When she finished, she fell silent.

A heavy silence enveloped the area.

"So, all I need to do is lead the attack against the Celestial Spirit Court forces while you protect from behind in secret, ensuring we win the battle without drawing too much attention from the Celestial Spirit Court?" the hydra asked, looking at Orion.

"Yes. If you intervene, the Celestial Spirit Court will assume you were responsible for wiping out their forces and taking control of Floating Frost Valley. They would react appropriately, allowing us to slowly chip away at their forces, piece by piece while reclaiming other regions from their control," Orion responded.

"Before they realize what's happening, we'll have already gathered enough information on them and will be prepared to deliver the final blow."

"Are you certain you are capable of accomplishing such a feat?" the hydra asked.

Instead of answering, Orion smiled and asked, "What do you think?"

A few of the hydra's heads glanced at the frozen magma, now melting from the overflowing scorching lava but beginning to refreeze by the minute. They then shifted their gaze to Fifi, who radiated an overwhelming aura while hovering in the air and scrutinized the rest of the group.

Fifi narrowed her eyes at the hydra heads, sensing their gaze.

The hydra heads quickly withdrew their gaze.

"Your plan is reasonable. Unfortunately, the Celestial Spirit Court isn't as simple as you think. I investigated them myself when they first emerged into the Floating Frost Valley and destroyed a few of their settlements. In retaliation, they sent several formidable Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts against me," the hydra said, each head completing its sentences one by one, sometimes speaking

in unison.

"I only managed to escape by making a few sacrifices. Because of this, I had no choice but to go into hiding. The only reason they didn't chase after me is that taking the life of an Aristocrat-ranked beast is not an easy feat. They'd rather reserve their energy to deal with threats in other regions. Of course, they won't overlook my existence so easily and have already sent forces to gauge my

intentions from my response."

"Fortunately, I wasn't foolish enough to fight back and went deeper into hiding. So if I were to emerge, not only would the Celestial Spirit Court's Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts come after me, but they might go as far as eliminating every tribe in this region and replacing them with Spirit Beasts from other regions," the hydra asked, "Knowing this, do you still want to go ahead with your

plan?"

Orion furrowed his brows. Although he had anticipated the Celestial Spirit Court would have Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts, he hadn't expected them to be capable of sending several against one.

Didn't that mean the Celestial Spirit Court had an abundance of Aristocrat- ranked Spirit Beasts?
And was there another higher-ranked entity capable of controlling and commanding them?

However, even with such numbers, it would be impossible for them to defeat his group. They would need to be much stronger.

For ly'yra and the other White Winged Gryphons, learning that the Celestial Spirit Court had forced this formidable Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast into hiding made them realize that their rebellion would have ended in defeat, even if they had managed to defeat the Celestial Spirit Court's Knight-ranked Spirit

Beasts.

"Regardless of how powerful the Celestial Spirit Court is, as long as we are here,

whatever attempt they make to reclaim the Floating Frost Valley will end in

futility," Orion responded, his tone solemn.

Upon hearing the confidence in Orion's words, ly'yra and the other White

Winged Gryphons exhaled in relief.

That's right!

So what if the Celestial Spirit Court had Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts or even

a higher-ranked Spirit Beast? As long as Orion and his group supported them, they would be crushed before their overwhelming might.

Nonetheless, they still couldn't help but harbour some doubt in their hearts. After all, this was a force they had fought against for several centuries. "What an audacious statement! Very well, I will believe your words if you can prove to me that you are all as powerful as she is, or is she the only one possessing such frightening strength?" the hydra said.

"She isn't the only one," Orion responded, "But since you are interested in seeing my strength, I don't mind offering you a demonstration."

"I will do it," Zera interjected, her words attracting the Spirit Beast's attention.

She was about to soar from her mount when Orion swiftly stopped her.

"There's no need," Orion said.

Zera nodded and remained seated in her position.

Orion stretched out his hand, and a spark of bluish lightning emerged from it.

Chapter 1283 Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast (3), Lightning Clones

Though he had just stepped into the 7th-order demigod, his strength was much more powerful than those in the same realm. Even if his strength was halved, he doubted that the Hydra, who seemed to have also just stepped into the realm of the divine, could defeat him. Nonetheless, he was curious about his strength.

The spark of bluish lightning continued to gather in the air until it fully formed the figure of a man—himself. A clone made from fierce bluish sparks of lightning.

Then, Orion deactivated his gift and withdrew his hand. Iy'yra and the other White Winged Gryphons widened their eyes in astonishment at the sight before them. They had never expected that the leader of their group could control such fierce lightning to such a minuscule level.

Truly worthy of being a divine being!

The being made of lightning looked at its arms and body before focusing on Orion. With a nod, it vanished with a streak of lightning.

Crackle!! Crackle!!

The lightning clone reappeared before the Hydra.

"Your control over the element is impressive, just like hers. But you shouldn't underestimate me or fail to take this battle seriously," the Hydra said, narrowing its eyes at Orion. It knew that inhabitants of the Material Realm had their strength halved when entering the Spirit Realm, just as Spirit Beasts experienced when entering the Material Realm. It was a bit dissatisfied, feeling that Orion was looking down on it by sending a clone made of lightning, which implied disrespect.

How could such an individual claim to lead an entire territory against a formidable force like the Celestial Spirit Court?

If he encountered the Aristocrat-Ranked Spirit Beasts that it had faced, wouldn't his defeat be swift and exceedingly painful?

"I don't underestimate you. That's one of the strongest abilities I can use at the moment," Orion replied, shaking his head. The lightning clone contained traces of divinity, allowing it to act independently and possess strength equal to his halved power. The only limitation was that it couldn't use any other skills or techniques. To do that, he would need to create a genuine clone, but depending on the resources used, such a clone could only utilize twenty to eighty per cent of his current strength. Unless he possessed gifts like Greta, his mother, and some of his wives, who could create clones with their full power or had mastered the required laws, it was nearly impossible for him to achieve the same.

The artefacts he carried were ready to be used at any moment, so his combat capability wasn't weak. One reason for sending the lightning clone was to test his own power purely through his gift. So, in truth, he was holding back a little.

The Hydra nodded. Realizing Orion was taking the fight lightly, it chose not to say more. They had intruded into its home and disturbed its peace—it wanted revenge. But it had to hold back after sensing the imposing strength of the woman hovering in front of the group. Now that the group's proclaimed leader has stepped up, it will use the opportunity to express its dissatisfaction.

The lightning clone generated a spear of lightning and hurled it toward the Hydra. The spear traversed the distance in the blink of an eye, its tip aimed directly at one of the Hydra's heads.

SWISH! SWISH!

The Hydra reacted swiftly, twisting its long, sinuous neck to the side, dodging the attack. If it were any other elemental attack, dodging might have been enough to avoid danger.

Unfortunately for the Hydra, Orion's lightning construct was a living entity. So was its spear.

The lightning-forged spear turned midair, adjusting its trajectory, and immediately struck one of the Hydra's seven necks.

BOOOOMMM!! CRACCKK!!

The sixth neck, covered with shards of crystal, exploded into bits, leaving behind a charred, mangled stump that fell limp to the side.

"AHHHHH!!" All seven heads of the Hydra roared in agony.

The soundwaves rippled outward, shattering the frozen plains around them and causing the entire underground to tremble violently.

"YOU! I WILL GET YOU FOR THIS!" the Hydra roared in fury, its voice laced with both pain and fear.

Instantly, all six remaining heads opened their jaws. Crimson flames gathered in the first, purple mist in the second, white lightning in the third, a powerful gust of wind in the fourth, an immense inky-black ball of darkness in the fifth, and green fire in the sixth.

Witnessing the scale of the attack, Fifi quickly formed a barrier around the entire group.

Then, the Hydra launched its combined attack at the lightning clone.

SWOOSH!! BANG!!

BOOM!!

The attack struck the lightning clone simultaneously, cutting off any chance of escape. However, the clone hadn't planned to escape. Instead, it created a lightning barrier, preparing to take the onslaught head-on.

The underground began to shatter and collapse under the terrifying shockwaves generated by the attack. The frozen magma below melted, and the boiling magma intensified, generating an astonishing, scorching heat that filled the air.

A shadowy blanket began wrapping around the lightning clone. So terrifying!

Iy'yra and the other White Winged Gryphons knew that if it weren't for the protective barrier, they would have been obliterated just by being in the range of such a devastating attack.

One must know that the stronger the accumulation of spiritual energy in the environment, the less likely it is to be destroyed by the collision of two formidable beings. This was one of the reasons stronger Spirit Beasts resided in such areas—to avoid the destruction of their homes merely by using their abilities.

Yet, despite the overwhelming force of the attack, the lightning clone's barrier continued to hold its ground.

Meanwhile, Syvalis observed the scene with wide, curious eyes filled with excitement. She couldn't wait to show Grace such a formidable Spirit Beast.

The group soon noticed that the Hydra's destroyed head was regenerating rapidly, returning to its original state as though it hadn't been damaged at all. Like the others, it opened its jaws, releasing a concentrated burst of crystal shards toward the lightning clone's barrier.

In an instant, the barrier shattered.

BANG!!!

The shadowy blanket wrapped around the lightning clone like a cage as the concentrated bombardment launched it backwards, pierced through the underground cavern system, and shot upwards, creating a massive hole.

Then, the Hydra slowly ceased its attack.

The cloud of dust in the air began to clear, revealing the bright, misty sky as mysterious light poured into the underground cavern. In the distance, the upper half of the volcano was decimated, as though it had been cleaved through, reducing the size of what was once an active volcano.

Orion narrowed his eyes at the Hydra's abilities. The attacks it had just unleashed were equivalent to that of a mid-to-low 7th Order Demigod, which was comparable to his current full capabilities. So, he wasn't surprised that the lightning barrier had collapsed. Instead, he was impressed by the Hydra's power, which demonstrated that it genuinely possessed some skill.

However, as the wielder of Vylkr energy, his abilities couldn't be measured in the same way as those who utilized divine energy. Even if his strength was halved, a Spirit Beast on the same level as a mid-7th Order Demigod wasn't strong enough to defeat him.

As the sound of boiling magma filled the surroundings, a crackling sound of lightning echoed through the air.

Crackle! Crackle!

"How?" the Hydra exclaimed in shock, staring in confusion at the lightning clone, which had regained the same intensity as before.

All seven heads snapped toward the group. It had been keeping a close eye on them from the start, in case they made any sudden movements, and knew they hadn't interfered in the battle. Still, it had no idea how the lightning clone had survived its attack.

"Your attack nearly destroyed it. Fortunately, it managed to regenerate its damaged parts," Orion explained calmly.

The Hydra listened to Orion's words but made no response.

Instantly, the Hydra's necks spread apart and began to split. Each neck grew a lower body of its own, possessing similar attributes to the original, and soared into the air as if it were an independent entity. One by one, the newly formed bodies surrounded the lightning clone.

"I want to see how you'll escape now," all seven Hydra's split bodies spoke in unison, demonstrating that even though they had divided, they were still connected as part of the same being. All six heads

opened their mouths, preparing to unleash another attack. But before they could, a shocking sight unfolded.

The lightning clone stretched its hand forward. Streaks of lightning shot out, forming another lightning clone. Both clones stretched their hands outward, and two more lightning clones appeared. This continued until each of the Hydra's seven bodies was faced by an individual lightning clone.

'It can split itself,' the Hydra thought, its eyes widening in shock and disbelief. Your gift is the motivation for my creation. Give me more motivation!

Chapter 1284 5,999 Year Old Secluded Spirit Beast!

Although the Hydra's ability to split itself came from its unique Spirit Beast traits, it still required a considerable portion of its energy, as each body retained the same power as the original. Yet, the Hydra couldn't fathom how absurd the energy consumption must be for Orion to maintain all six lightning clones at once, especially considering they appeared just as fierce as the original.

This wasn't something just any ordinary individual could pull off!

"I surrender."

All the Hydra heads said in unison. Instantly, they began merging back together until they returned to their original form—a seven-headed Hydra.

Witnessing the Hydra admit defeat, the lightning clones nodded simultaneously. All seven clones collapsed together into a single lightning clone.

Crackle!! Crackle!!

The lightning clone then vanished from its position, returning to Orion and melding into his being.

The Hydra moved back to its original position.

"I am Zymera, also known as the Scorching Bloom, a 5,999-year-old Aristocrat-ranked secluded Spirit Beast. I will gladly offer my strength to help defend the Floating Frost Valley against the Celestial Spirit Court," Zymera said, her tone respectful.

Although Orion had merely asked her to provide her strength, Zymera understood that he would not leave without her accepting. There was no reason for them to expend their energy freezing the entire underground magma cavern, nor for Orion to accept her challenge to prove his strength when he had such a formidable figure by his side who could have quickly intervened. From this, she drew two conclusions: first, if she refused, they would forcefully capture her and make her fight against the Celestial Spirit Court. Second, she would be eliminated to prevent any information about the Floating Frost Valley's plot from leaking.

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From this, she drew two conclusions: first, if she refused, they would forcefully capture her and make her fight against the Celestial Spirit Court. Second, she would be eliminated to prevent any information about the Floating Frost Valley's plot from leaking.

So, she chose to accept and obey his commands. She wasn't reckless. If she had wanted to die, she would have faced the Celestial Spirit Court head-on instead of going into hiding, even after they sent forces to ambush her.

As long as it was just protecting the Floating Frost Valley, she could endure it. Zymera was also sure that Orion wouldn't let her die against the Celestial Spirit Court, as they wanted to remain hidden.

Upon witnessing Zymera's respectful demeanour, the White Winged Gryphons inwardly sighed in awe once more.

A 5,999-year-old Spirit Beast!

She was just a year away from reaching the threshold of the Aristocrat rank and stepping into the Baron rank. No wonder the Celestial Spirit Court had sent several Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts to ambush her; one clearly wouldn't have been enough. Yet she had still managed to escape and go into hiding. The strength she had just displayed was terrifying. Although the White Winged Gryphons had no personal relations with Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts, having lived so long, they had encountered a few on their adventures and knew how powerful they were. They also had records of their strength within the Floating Frost Valley before the Calamity descended, giving them a good understanding of their power.

Instantly, they realized Zymera had most likely devoured countless Spirit Beasts, allowing her power to grow far beyond the normal limits.

Given that Orion had effortlessly forced such a figure to admit defeat using only a lightning clone, the White Winged Gryphons were not too shocked by the outcome, though they were in awe of his unfathomable strength.

Orion nodded. "I have a question for you, and I want you to answer truthfully," he said.

Zymera responded with a solemn nod. How could she dare lie to such a figure? Although it was impossible for Orion to read her thoughts, as a Spirit Beast, she was uncertain if he possessed the ability to detect lies. He may possess the ability to do so as a divine being, but they were naturally ineffective on her. Nonetheless, there were countless techniques out there that might be capable of such a feat, and she would rather not test her luck.

"Are you the strongest Spirit Beast currently in the Floating Frost Valley?" Orion asked, looking at her curiously.

Though Iy'yra had mentioned that Zymera was the strongest Spirit Beast currently within the Floating Frost Valley, there was no way to verify such a claim without asking Zymera herself. After all, beings within a particular realm of influence could recognize each other. Just as it was impossible for a being below the divine realm to recognize Orion's strength, it should be impossible for a Knight-ranked Spirit Beast like Iy'yra to encounter an Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast unless the latter allowed it.

"Yes, but there's another individual as strong as I am," Zymera responded.

"His name is J'garin, also known as the Frozen Scourge. He's an Ethereal Ice Winged Panther and is a 5,999-year-old secluded Spirit Beast, soon to turn 6,000 in a few days. He resides at the centre of the Floating Frost Valley, also known as the Streams of the Frozen Valley."

"He didn't participate during the Celestial Spirit Court's attack and has remained hidden since, so even they are unaware of his existence. If I had to guess, he's waiting to reach 6,000 years and gain more formidable power before emerging," Zymera explained, providing Orion with all the details she could think of about J'garin.

Orion nodded in understanding. From Zymera's words, there were no other powerful Spirit Beasts besides the two of them.

Hearing that another 5,999-year-old Spirit Beast was about to step into his 6,000th year made the White Winged Gryphons swallow nervously. They had previously believed there was only one Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast within their territory, but they were wrong—there were two.

Suddenly, their emotions morphed into anger. With such a powerful Spirit Beast present, why hadn't he revealed himself and helped defend the territory against the Celestial Spirit Court? They couldn't blame Zymera for hiding as she had done her best, only to be chased into seclusion by the Celestial Spirit Court's forces. But J'garin had not participated in the conflict from the start. Had J'garin acted, they could have fled the region, escaping the Celestial Spirit Court's grasp.

Iy'yra and the White Winged Gryphons would not have dared harbour such thoughts before, but now, with Orion's support, they hoped J'garin would be pressured, like Zymera, before being recruited. That would quench the anger in their hearts.

"Let's go," Orion said.

Fifi returned to her mount.

Zymera nodded in response. Suddenly, her body began to shrink. Her necks scattered into countless specks of light, and her lower body transformed, becoming more slender. Soon, it was clear that she was taking humanoid form. Her skin turned emerald, with iridescent scales shimmering across her arms, legs, and down her back. Her eyes, with slit pupils, reflected the seven distinct colours of the Hydra—crimson, purple, white, Azure, black, green, and blue. She had elegant high cheekbones, a slightly pointed chin, and lips tinted a deep crimson. Her hair was also emerald and moved subtly, imitating the Hydra's former necks. She wore a light, flowing robe that clung to her body but moved with the grace of water. On her garb, red flames swirled on one sleeve, green flames on the other, white lightning crackled at the hem, purple clouds adorned her back, with azure lines, and green vines crept along the edges, appearing almost lifelike.

The White Winged Gryphons couldn't help but gulp for the umpteenth time, having felt the intense pressure moments ago. Although they were protected by the barrier, it was impossible to ignore the way the spiritual energy surrounding Zymera had stagnated and rippled around her.

"If I were to go out in my previous form, I would certainly attract attention. It wouldn't be wise for me to shrink my form, either, considering who we are going to meet. So, this should be more appropriate," Zymera said, looking at Orion.

"No problem. Since you're ready, let's go," Orion responded.

Zymera nodded, turned to the side, and soared upward. Due to their battle, a massive portion of the Ember Cavern had been destroyed, leaving a path that led directly to the surface. It was uncertain when the environment would heal and reform, but considering the density of spiritual energy in the area, it would likely take some time.

As they exited the Ember Cavern, Fifi released the magma from its frosty restraints. Instantly, the Ember Cavern was once again filled with scorching waves of heat that freely surged into the sky from the underground.

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The group arrived at their destination.

Surrounding them was a massive frozen plain filled with countless floating hills ranging in elevation from 1,000 feet (300 meters) to 5,000 feet (1,524 meters). On the frozen plains, large bodies of water flowed between the hills but never beneath them.

Chapter 1285 J'garin, The Ethereal Ice Winged Panther!

Zymera halted above a stream of water.

Orion and the others halted behind her. Before they arrived, Zymera informed them that she wanted to speak with J'garin to update him on the situation and the purpose of their visit. It was evident that she didn't want another conflict to arise, which would undoubtedly end in his defeat, so she decided to take the lead.

However, if she failed to convince him, they would step in and handle things their way.

Zymera stretched her index finger forward. A small ball of fierce crimson fire appeared at its tip and shot toward the stream like an arrow, piercing into the frozen plain and sinking deep within it.

"J'garin, come out!" Zymera called, her voice calm but loud enough to resonate across the surroundings. Ripples appeared on the streams of water and penetrated deep into the frozen plain.

The frozen plain trembled.

Soon, a crimson hue radiated from the bottom of the stream, where the crimson ball of fire had sunk. The surrounding water parted, creating a 90-meter diameter circle before halting.

Then, a terrifying aura filled the area, stifling the atmosphere.

Zymera clicked her tongue in annoyance but quickly dispersed the pressure. She didn't want Orion and the others to intervene. She knew J'garin was taking his time, observing the situation since she hadn't come alone, before deciding whether to emerge. However, based on the momentum she used to approach him, she was confident he would reveal himself.

"You'd better show yourself, or don't blame me for letting those behind me act," she muttered. She had already sent him a warning; now, it was up to him to decide what to do.

Suddenly, an enormous ethereal figure emerged from the frozen plain, halting in the air and staring down at them.

This was J'garin, an Ethereal Ice Winged Panther, a 5,999-year-old secluded Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast!

He was a colossal 80-meter(263ft)tall panther with semi-transparent fur that glistened like starlight on frost. Silver frost mist trailed around his paws. Two upward-curving crystalline horns crowned his head, and his wings, composed of four crystalline feathered wings, stirred the winds as they fluttered.

J'garin looked at the group, sensing the power of the figures seated on the White Winged Gryphons as if they were mounts. Then, his focus shifted to Zymera.

"Scorching Bloom, what is the meaning of this?" J'garin asked, his tone threatening.

"I've brought along some visitors who want to see you and won't take no for an answer, so stop the dramatic display and let's talk properly," Zymera responded.

J'garin nodded, and instantly, his form began to shrink until he was about 7.5 meters tall, nearly matching Zymera's current height.

Seeing that J'garin had refused to shift from his Spirit Beast form out of caution, Zymera sighed inwardly but said nothing. Though Spirit Beasts could freely shift into other forms after reaching a certain level, those forms severely restricted their abilities. The reason she had shifted was to show she didn't plan to resist their demands any longer.

However, for others, transforming into a non-combat form could be akin to serving themselves on a platter. It was reasonable for J'garin to remain in his Spirit Beast form upon noticing the formidable individuals she had brought with her. Even she wouldn't have done otherwise until witnessing their terrifying strength and realizing there was no way to escape.

"What is it that you want to speak about? It better be worth the time you've wasted bringing me out here," J'garin said harshly, his pale cyan eyes narrowing at Zymera. "Otherwise, I won't hesitate to sever the friendship we've built over several millennia." Though his gaze wasn't on the group behind her, he remained alert, carefully observing their every move.

Upon hearing his threat, Zymera snorted, "Don't worry. After this, you'll thank me and even offer me some of your treasures. I came because..." Her expression and tone grew solemn as she explained the reason for her presence.

When she finished, she became silent.

J'garin's expression tightened as he contemplated. "If that's the case, I see no reason not to participate in defending the Floating Frost Valley against the Celestial Spirit Court forces. However, I'm currently at a crucial point in my life and need to stay hidden for two more days to safely advance to my 6,000th year of age," he responded.

Zymera nodded in understanding, not surprised that J'garin would choose to delay until he reached his 6,000th year. If he were to follow them now and they were ambushed by the Celestial Spirit Court forces, who might have already learned of their comrades' elimination and rushed to the Floating Frost Valley, he could be at risk.

The Celestial Spirit Court might send several Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts, and in such a scenario, J'garin could be seriously injured or even consumed. Most of all, there was doubt about whether Orion would genuinely step in to save them if they were besieged or whether they would be used as pawns. Rather than making a reckless move, it was best for J'garin to wait until he reached the Baron rank, which would grant him a significant increase in both power and security. That way, he could protect himself without relying on others.

With countless Spirit Beasts being born and consumed daily, it would be a shame for someone who had lived this long to miss the chance to experience their 6,000th year when they were just one step away.

"Let's go and explain the situation to them," Zymera said with a solemn nod. Unfortunately, she wasn't the one with the final say. It was up to Orion and the others to decide.

J'garin nodded. If they refused this sensitive request, it would indicate their intentions weren't as pure as they appeared. In that case, he had already made up his mind to flee the Floating Frost Valley as quickly as possible. From the way Zymera had calmly explained the situation, he suspected she had been subdued by them. Even though his strength was increasing and he was becoming more powerful than her, he had no desire to fight them. They might be too stunned by his sudden retreat to react, and he intended to use that moment to escape.

As for his friendship with Zymera, he could make it up to her later if she survived. Their long-standing friendship had weathered many of life's ups and downs, and sacrificing one another to save their own lives wasn't a reason to end it. Escaping might also mean leaving some of his treasures behind, which Zymera could take and use to placate her anger. In the worst-case scenario, they would become more wary of each other and avoid residing in the same territory again.

Zymera took him to the group. She took the lead in explaining the situation to Orion.

"Reaching such an age is a special occasion for any Spirit Beast, so you don't need to explain further. As long as you make it to the White Winged Gryphons' home territory before the next two days end, I will allow it," Orion responded, his gaze focusing on J'garin.

"However, to ensure everything goes as planned, my wife will stay with you until you're ready to come," he gestured to Fifi.

Upon hearing Orion's words, the Spirit Beasts who had been accompanying the group were stunned.

The formidable woman was the leader's wife!

Suddenly, they recalled that, besides Fifi, there were other women dressed similarly to her but with different designs. Each was as formidable as the other, and they addressed each other as sisters. If they had any doubts before, now they were confident—these women were the leader's wives.

How incredible! It was already remarkable to have a relationship with one of these women, as they seemed like individuals who wouldn't be tied down by mortal affairs. But to have a relationship with all of them... how astounding must a man be to accomplish such a feat?

Zymera, who had only met Fifi, had assumed she was one of Orion's subordinates, so she was surprised to learn that Fifi was actually his wife. She couldn't help but glance at another woman, who stared back at her with a nonchalant expression and a scar on the edges of her eye patch. 'Could she be his wife too?' she thought.

Both women intimidated her with their piercing glances as though warning her not to make any sudden moves. This was why she had taken the initiative to explain the situation to J'garin first before he did anything foolish. Nevertheless, she shook the thought out of her mind. It wasn't her business. Instead, she grasped the implication of Orion's words.

However, their evaluation of Orion skyrocketed yet again!

J'garin, oblivious to all of this, also grasped the implication of Orion's words: if he changed his mind after reaching his 6,000th year of age, the woman would be there to deal with him appropriately. Though he didn't know if they had the strength to compete with a 6,000-year-old Baron-ranked Spirit Beast, he decided to place the matter aside for now and deal with it when the time came.

Chapter 1286 J'garin, The Ethereal Ice Winged Panther!(2), The Black Feathered Winged Monkey Tribe

"I understand," J'garin responded.

"I have a question for you, and I want an honest answer," Orion asked. "Are you two the most powerful Spirit Beasts currently in the Floating Frost Valley?"

"Yes. There is no other Spirit Beast apart from us currently in the Floating Frost Valley," J'garin answered with a firm nod. He was sure of his answer—if a more powerful Spirit Beast had entered the Floating Frost Valley, he would have known.

"Okay. We'll be taking our leave," Orion nodded. "Let's return," he said, looking at the others.

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Once they returned to the White Winged Gryphon's home territory, Orion spoke with Ilse and the others about their next course of action. Afterwards, Iy'yra led him to one of their most comfortable homes. For Spirit Beasts, any habitat that provided safety or helped them steadily enhance their strength was considered a comfortable home. For instance, Zymera resided in the Ember Cavern, and J'garin lived beneath the Streams of the Frozen Plain. It was the same for the White Winged Gryphons, whose homes resembled large nests perched on the tops or branches of trees, sometimes even on large rocks. Few houses had roofs, and it was clear that most were used by visitors who preferred to stay indoors for their safety.

"It's still quite big," Orion muttered, looking around the huge room, noting the vast distance from the ground to the ceiling. Due to the size of the White Winged Gryphons, every aspect of the house, from the doors to the furnishings, was exceedingly large.

He was seated on an enormous cushion, while Sylvalis sat in another corner of the room, observing him. She had explained that she wanted to stay with him because she felt uneasy being left alone with the others, sensing that she was being watched. Orion believed her, as he and the others had felt the same way ever since they arrived in the Spirit Realm. Though he also noticed the sensation while surveying the area with Ilse, it was more subtle.

"Time to get back to business," Orion said, reflecting on his progress through the seven orders of the demigod realm. With his strength halved, he knew he would quickly reach his limit if cornered by a Baron-ranked Spirit Beasts or by the entity currently observing them in secret. He could likely escape using his wives' strength, but he preferred to rely on his own power. Rather than waiting to encounter the Vylkr spawns and have them explain how they managed to grasp and utilize the laws of the universe, he needed to figure out a path for himself in the meantime. As long as he didn't push too far, even if it didn't work, Paradise's resources would allow him to start over with minimal consequences.

Although he wasn't Naka, if Naka could do it, then it was proof that it was possible. He should be able to achieve something as well.

There were many ways for one to ascend to divinity, but the top three were: firstly, earning recognition for the Divine Mysteries. This granted a trial that, upon completion, allowed the individual to ascend to divinity. Each ascension through the seven orders of the demigod realm involved completing trials from the Divine Mysteries until they became fully divine beings. The second way was to grasp a law-adjacent ability and refine it into a Divine Core. To form a Divine Core, one would also need divine essence to merge with it, as a mortal body wasn't strong enough to withstand the process of containing it. Once this process is complete, they could slowly begin to sense the divine energy melding with their beings as they continue refining their law-adjacent ability, transforming it into divine authority, and growing stronger. However, for Orion and the others, who were already divine beings, this wasn't a problem. It would be a piece of cake for him

to do so with his remaining star talent. The real issue lay in the fact that any attempt to use the laws in conjunction with Vylkr energy would cause chaos. It would be like trying to light a candle with a torch instead of a matchstick. If he could solve this problem, he would be able to utilize the laws effortlessly and show his wives how to do the same. Unless he wanted to be stuck only using his gift without touching upon the other laws of the universe, he had to figure out a way to resolve this.

Afterwards, the law-adjacent ability would transform into Divine authority, similar to the laws of the universe. From there, they would be able to ascend through the seven orders of the demigod realm by continuously refining their Divine Core. The third way to ascend was through the Divine Apostle crest. Other methods were either unorthodox, usually used by Anomalies or others who desired to forge ahead by themselves, such as killing a divine being and forging a path to divinity through their essence, or based purely on luck, which could involve the intervention of divine beings, divine artefacts, or one's own personal growth. Due to this, the success of this method wasn't entirely sure. This was one of the reasons why Brane, Zara, and the others wanted to join them on their exploration: to encounter such fortune and ascend to divinity.

Orion closed his eyes and activated his gift. Blue arcs of lightning coursed through his body, streaking from one spot to another. He sensed every detail within himself—the Vylkr energy being suppressed by the Primordial, Celestial, Nature, and Magikal energies. His six Vylkr containers, located in his mind and heart, and his artefacts were all within his awareness. Soon, Orion began to sense another strange aura within him.

It was the ember of White Flame, now burning vigorously inside.

After brief contemplation, Orion set aside the thought and continued pondering how to solve their predicament.

...

The next day,

Far away from the Floating Frost Valley, deep within a dense rainforest covered by layered canopies and shrouded in an abnormal fog, members of the Black Feathered Winged Monkey tribe gathered together, landing on top of the enormous tree branches one by one.

Each was about 15 to 20 meters tall, with imposing statures that could cause weaker beings to tremble in fear.

"What's going on? Why were we all called here like this? There's no trouble brewing, is there?"

"No trouble yet. But something's not right. I heard the leader commanded the guards to keep a close watch on the territory for intruders!"

"The leader's aura was tense... Maybe he received news from the Celestial Spirit Court. Or worse, the Floating Frost Valley might have rebelled again!"

"The Floating Frost Valley has been under the Celestial Spirit Court's control for years now. No matter how many times they rebel, they will always fail."

"Maybe it's not about the Floating Frost Valley at all. Maybe the Celestial Spirit Court is preparing for a new expansion. Could be we're being drafted into something bigger..."

"Drafted? Bah! More like sacrificed. The Celestial Spirit Court doesn't care if we live or die so long as they get their hands on whatever region they can."

Thousands of them whispered to one another, their gazes fixed on the Black Feathered Winged Monkey, who was about 40 meters tall—twice the size of the others. They waited for him to speak. Though the tribe had grown accustomed to quick mobilization, they hadn't felt this kind of unease in years, even when the Floating Frost Valley rebelled.

Suddenly, an enormous pressure descended, stifling the atmosphere and silencing the murmurs.

Silence enveloped the entire area.

"I can no longer contact our forces within the Floating Frost Valley. After thorough investigation, we are certain they have all been eliminated," the leader of the Black Feathered Winged Monkey Tribe announced, his voice resonating across the vast assembly.

Gasps and murmurs emerged from the crowds.

As he continued to speak, the assembly became silent once more. "As you all know, the tribes residing within the Floating Frost Valley are incapable of accomplishing such a feat unless they have help from an Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast. We suspect that the Scorching Bloom has made her move and seized control of the region."

"For her to act so boldly means she had help, so we have already alerted the Celestial Spirit Court. They have informed us that reinforcements will be sent to accompany us in our battle against them."

Upon hearing his words, the Black Feathered Winged Monkeys present felt fear upon learning that an Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast had intervened and slain members of their tribe, but it was quickly replaced with excitement.

"Everyone should be prepared to leave for battle at a moment's notice. You may all leave!"

They took off into the sky one by one, leaving.

None dared to linger behind after the orders they had just received.

...

After the assembly dispersed, only the Black Feathered Winged Monkey leader and another tribe member remained.

"What are the reports from the Celestial Spirit Court's Commander?" the leader of the Black Feathered Winged Monkey asked, his voice tinged with anticipation.

Chapter 1287 Reclaiming The Six Regions

For every region annexed by the Celestial Spirit Court, a commander was stationed to control the surrounding regions and monitor them for the Court. Though it would be better for them to place a commander in each region to ensure complete dominance and prevent a rebellion in the Floating Frost Valley from ever erupting, considering the countless regions within the Spirit Realm and the Court's desire to continually expand their forces, it wasn't efficient.

Most of all, their region and the surrounding regions had suffered a great calamity thousands of years ago, before the emergence of the Celestial Spirit Court, which left them with only their strongest being at the Knight rank. So, there was no need for them to waste resources suppressing such weak regions. Unfortunately, who would have known that the Floating Frost Valley residents would continuously be able to rebel and fight against the Celestial Spirit Court forces over and over again? Although it was commendable, considering the frequency of these rebellions, the Celestial Spirit Court would undoubtedly choose to wipe them out and replace them with more submissive residents to send a message.

Even with an Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast by their side, their defeat was inevitable. Sometimes, submission was better than foolishly fighting back with no hope of emerging victorious.

"The Commander informed us that he has received information that the Court will send several Aristocrat-ranked and a Baron-ranked Spirit Beast to handle the matter swiftly and ensure that another rebellion doesn't rise again," the Black Feathered Winged Monkey responded.

The leader of the Black Feathered Winged Monkey tribe's lips curved into a smile. "Good. With their help, we will surely crush the Floating Frost Valley and make them regret ever stirring up a rebellion. There's a chance the Celestial Spirit Court will choose to eliminate them all this time and replace them with other tribes," he added.

"Have you received any information regarding the scout?" he asked, his tone curious.

"No, the Commander didn't relay any information about them to me. He simply said that we should prepare for an all-out war," the Black Feathered Winged Monkey responded, shaking his head.

Chapter 1288 The Celestial Spirit Court Reinforcements

Then, she gathered a vibrant light blue streaks of lightning in the palm of her hand and hurled it toward the earth. The enormous, thick streak of light blue lightning descended from the sky, striking the rocky plain and scorching it black.

Across the region, beastly howls and roars echoed, only to be silenced the moment they began.

With a thought, the colossal crystalline construct vanished into thin air.

As silence enveloped the region, Elysia's clone nodded, satisfied that she and the rest of her Prismeron sisters had done a good job, not falling short of the performance of her Pixie race sisters and the others.

After surveying the area, Elysia's clone vanished from her position.

On this day, six territories annexed by the Celestial Spirit Court were reclaimed in a single day.

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Five days later, The brightness radiating from the mist-covered sky cast an ethereal glow upon the water stream, its surface shimmering like liquid silver. That same light reflected off the massive force of Spirit Beasts, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, standing at the river's edge. At the forefront of these forces were Spirit Beasts made up of large crows with extra bony wings, enormous worms made of stone, and Drakes with icy scales the shape of a lily flower, their massive forms looming over the river banks. These Spirit Beasts were the Boneweing Cros race, Titanic Burrower race, and Lily Frost Drake race.

Behind this terrifying force were six figures, even more imposing and emitting auras.

The first was a towering lion with an ever-burning mane of fire. He was from the Infernal Mane King Lion race. His name was Sol'Rak, also known as the Golden Mane Tyrant, a 5,898-year-old Aristocrat Spirit Beast.

Second was a massive serpent coiled on a floating cloud. She was from the Cloud Wind Wyrm race and was called Vael'thyr, also known as the Thundercoil Empress, a 5,996-year-old Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast.

Third was a colossal spider with jaws filled with sharp rows of teeth. Her name was Xirnath, also known as the Venomous Executioner. She was a 5,900-year-old Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast from the Venomous Dreadfang Widow race.

Fourth, standing taller than the other Spirit Beasts, was an ape with onyx fur that gleamed under the brightness of the sky. His name was Vahn, also known as Unyielding Fist. He was a 5,896-year-old Spirit Beast and from the Onyx War-King Ape race.

Fifth was an enormous golden eagle wreathed in ever-burning flames around its body. He was from the Golden Firewing Eagle race and was called Vekstra, also known as the Golden Skylord, a 5,924-year-old Spirit Beast.

Sixth was a large koi fish, its size almost rivalling that of the ape. It hovered in the air with a small stream of water floating underneath its belly. She was from the Night Leviathan Koi race, and she was known as Mirthal, also called the Tidal Crusher, a 6,200-year-old Baron-ranked Spirit Beast.

These were the Celestial Spirit Court reinforcements sent to aid in subduing the Floating Frost Valley rebellion.

Suddenly, a Bonewing Crow landed before them and bowed.

"Where are the others? Did you receive any information on why that lazy dog hasn't come to welcome us yet?" Sol'Rak asked, his tone tinged with curiosity and impatience. After failing to establish communication through their communication stones with the Commander of the Celestial Spirit Court forces in the area and waiting here for several hours, he was beginning to feel irritated.

"They... are dead," the Bonewing Crow responded, his voice trembling.

Sol'Rak's eyes widened in surprise.

The surroundings fell silent.

The Bonewing Crow continued, "The Commander of the Celestial Spirit Court forces stationed to monitor the six regions, and the tribes who had willingly submitted to aid the Court's expansion are dead. All six regions that were previously annexed by the Celestial Spirit Court have now been reclaimed."

"We were captured after sneaking into the regions to scout. I was the only one to make it back because the leader of the rebellion, known as Scorching Bloom, said that they were on their way here to wage war against us and sent me to deliver the message."

"HAHAHA!! So that lazy dog is dead. If he had given up his pride and called for reinforcements earlier, then perhaps he would have survived," Sol'Rak roared with laughter, breaking apart the eerie silence. After calming down, he spoke again, "What a shame! Who would have thought he would be killed in such a backwater region of the Spirit Realm? To think that even an insignificant Aristocrat Spirit Beast could create such chaos. Now, not only do we have to reclaim these regions, but we also have to put in the effort to eliminate these pests."

"It can't be helped. Inform everyone to prepare for battle. We are going to eliminate every single one of them. I will handle the Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beast myself. Does anyone have any issue with me facing her alone?" Sol'Rak asked, turning to look at his comrades behind him.

Just as they were about to respond, Mirthal said, "They are already here," her eyes fixed on the distance, on the other side of the water stream.

On the other side of the riverbank, an enormous force of Spirit Beasts from the Quill Hedgehog Tribe, White Winged Gryphon Tribe, Red Winged 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, Long-Neck Penguin Tribe from the Floating Frost Valley, and various others from the Spirit Beasts of Verdant Sigh Expanse, Cragspire Highlands, Rocky Rift Peaks, Azure Fog Plateau, and Mistshroud Highland emerged—numbering in the hundreds of thousands. Their numbers surpassed the forces of the Celestial Spirit Court, yet their strength paled in comparison.

A deafening roar resonated from behind the combined forces of all six regions. An enormous seven-headed Spirit Beast, more than a hundred meters in length, soared into the sky, instantly arriving at the forefront of the battlefield.

'A Baron-ranked Aristocrat Spirit Beast,' Zymera thought. 11:03

Witnessing this scene, Sol'Rak and the five Spirit Beasts beside him narrowed their eyes and stepped forward. Instantly, they arrived before the seven-headed Spirit Beast. The immense pressure from the seven formidable Spirit Beasts caused ripples to emerge on the riverbank, which soon transformed into turbulent waves moving up and down.

"I am Scorching Bloom. Are you the leaders of the Celestial Spirit Court's reinforcements?" Zymera asked, looking at the six Spirit Beasts, each exuding an aura no less formidable than hers and one that was even more potent—comparable to that of J'garin.

'A Baron-ranked Aristocrat Spirit Beast,' Zymera thought. She couldn't help but sigh inwardly, grateful that J'garin was now a 6,000-year-old Baron-ranked Spirit Beast, or else she would have had to face all these formidable figures alone.

"Yes, we are. I am Mirthal, a Baron-ranked Aristocrat Spirit Beast, a subordinate of the Celestial Spirit Court," Mirthal said. "These are my subordinates."

She then asked, "Are you the one who killed Commander Xinn and reclaimed the six regions controlled by the Celestial Spirit Court?"

"The Celestial Spirit Court didn't own those regions—they forcefully claimed them, just like all the other regions which I presume you are all from," Zymera retorted, her seven heads flaring at each of them.

The six Spirit Beasts didn't respond, or rather, they saw no reason to. In their eyes, she was already as good as dead.

"Are you certain you want this war? As long as you surrender, we can discuss your servitude to the Celestial Spirit Court. But regardless, every Spirit Beast that dared to revolt must die," Mirthal responded, paying no heed to Zymera's words.

"Unfortunately, I'm not here to surrender. I also offer you a choice: return with your forces and deliver a message to the Celestial Spirit Court to leave this territory alone. If you still choose to forcefully annex it, we will have no choice but to eliminate you all," Zymera responded, narrowing her eyes at them.

"We don't plan on returning without fulfilling our task. What a pity! I don't know where you've found this courage for victory, but I hope you don't regret it when you're defeated," Mirthal replied.

Suddenly, the area around Zymera froze as terrifying pressure descended upon her. Her eyes widened in surprise. She was unable to move or utter a word. However, in an instant, a terrifying roar echoed from the direction of the forces of the six regions, followed by an equally terrifying pressure that dispelled the one suppressing Zymera.

"A Baron-ranked Spirit Beast," Mirthal muttered, then refocused on Zymera. "I see. This is where your confidence comes from. In that case, I will ensure to crush both of you together."

"Reveal yourself so we can battle and decide the winner rather than engage in this meaningless war!" Mirthal's voice resonated across the entire battlefield.

Hearing her words, Zymera inwardly sighed in relief. Though they were prepared to fight the Celestial Spirit Court, their forces, despite being more numerous, were weaker and would suffer significant losses.

Chapter 1289 The Celestial Spirit Court Reinforcements (2)

A direct confrontation would be tragic, so it was fortunate that the other side proposed this duel. It would be difficult for her to do the same.

A colossal Ethereal Ice-Winged Panther, about 90 meters tall, with four crystalline feathered wings, swiftly emerged from the distance and arrived before them. Peering down at the six Spirit Beasts standing before Zymera, J'garin introduced himself.

"I am Frozen Scourge. Since you are unwilling to surrender, follow me; let's decide the winner of this battle swiftly," he said, his gaze locked on Mirthal.

Instantly, he turned around and soared towards the distance, like a streak of light vanishing into the distance. A battle between Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts was enough to cause destruction to spread for several thousand miles. A battle between two Baron-ranked Spirit Beasts could cause destruction ten times greater, reaching tens of thousands of miles, depending on their age. Because of this, they needed to move far away from their current location to a remote area until a winner emerged. Of course, no region within the Spirit Realm was uninhabited by Spirit Beasts, as they did not die of old age unless killed or consumed by another.

Only areas affected by unique factors could be considered, 'remote.' So, moving to a battle site simply meant choosing a place where weaker Spirit Beasts resided to avoid harming their own forces and drawing the ire of a powerful Spirit Beast.

"I'll leave you all to handle her," Mirthal said, glancing at the others before her. Without waiting for their response, she soared toward the direction where J'garin had disappeared, her speed not falling behind but instead accelerating beyond his.

Witnessing this, the other five Spirit Beasts, who had been taken aback by the emergence of a Baron-ranked Spirit Beast within the forces of the six regions, regained their confidence, believing they could still emerge victorious.

"Let's also head to a better battlefield," Sol'Rak said.

They all nodded. Instantly, they transformed into streaks of light, disappearing into the distance. They halted above another region—a vast expanse resembling a lake.

Suddenly, all five Spirit Beasts surrounded Zymera.

"I already told you—she's my prey. I'll handle her alone," Sol'Rak growled angrily, observing his companions' movements.

"We never agreed to that," Xirnath, the Venomous Executioner, responded, her thousand purple eyes narrowing as she glanced at the flaming-maned lion. "Even if we had, we no longer have the luxury

of standing idly by and watching you both battle. It would be foolish to assume she has no other hidden cards left."

"The fact that she managed to gain the aid of a Baron-ranked Spirit Beast against the Celestial Spirit Court already proves that we shouldn't underestimate her. It's best to eliminate her as swiftly as possible."

"I agree. Who knows if she has other reinforcements waiting in hiding? Perhaps another Aristocrat-ranked or even a Baron-ranked Spirit Beast is lurking, waiting for the right moment to strike. Stalling would be foolish," Vahn, the Unyielding Fist, added, glancing at Sol'Rak. "Besides, don't think we don't understand why you're so eager to fight her alone. We all know she was the one who destroyed several of the Celestial Spirit Court's bases years ago when the Court first attempted to annex the Floating Frost Valley."

"You, Spike Tornado, and a few other Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts were sent to eliminate her, but you all underestimated her abilities, allowing her to escape and go into hiding. Because of this, the Court was displeased with your failure. To rectify your mistakes, you all competed for the Commander position over this region. But in the end, Spike Tornado won. Isn't that why you've always shown your displeasure toward him?"

"However, he, too, underestimated her capabilities and chose to act alone, leading to his death. So, she is not an opponent that you can face alone."

Vahn focused on Zymera and said, "For five of us to join forces just to kill you, you should feel privileged and take pride in that."

Sol'Rak's lips curved into a threatening sneer, but he didn't utter a word, finding their reasoning sound. As long as they successfully eliminated her, it didn't matter how it was done. The result remained the same.

Sparks of light and resonating echoes emerged in the distance, signifying that J'garin and Mirthal had already commenced their battle.

"Fine. But I will be the one to deliver the final blow," Sol'Rak responded.

Xirnath, Vahn, and the other two Spirit Beasts nodded.

"I have no problem with that," Vael'thyr, the Thundercoil Empress, replied.

"Me neither," Vekstra, the Golden Skylord, added.

"I never knew I was so popular, even after all these years," Zymera said, laughing as she observed their conversation and how they focused intently on her. "But don't worry, there's enough of me for everyone to have a piece and be satisfied." Immediately, Zymera's body split into five parts. Each head focused on one of the Spirit Beasts, while a central body with two necks remained in the middle, acting as support for the other five.

"What an insult!" Sol'Rak growled, enraged by Zymera's approach to their battle. The flames in his mane surged, and crimson fire engulfed his entire body, turning him into a blazing, flame-clad figure. He opened his mouth and unleashed a deafening roar, sending a tidal wave of crimson fire surging toward the hydra, whose neck was covered in green flames. In response, Zymera opened her mouth and unleashed her own tidal wave of green flames. Her fire didn't lose out in intensity against the Golden Mane Tyrant's attack; on the contrary, it seemed to overpower it.

On the other side, Vael'Thyr wrapped herself in the clouds she had been resting upon, fully unveiling her immense form as she vanished from sight and darted toward Zymera, who unleashed a thick purple mist. Though Zymera couldn't see her, she could still sense her location from the chaotic wind currents Vael'Thyr left behind. In other words, she wasn't completely invisible. Using this, Zymera countered by releasing tidal waves of purple poisonous mist whenever she pinpointed Vael'Thyr's presence. At the same time, she dodged countless streaks of invisible lightning bolts that only revealed themselves after striking the water, splitting it apart and causing it to sizzle and boil. Meanwhile, the crystal-coated Zymera engaged Vahn in a contest of raw strength. She was unable to match him blow for blow and instead weaved between his attacks, releasing waves of concentrated crystal shards that melded into the Onyx War-King Ape's skin, slowing his movements and holding him in place.

The lightning-coated Zymera fought against the Xirnath; her speed was unmatched as she dodged each poisonous woven thread and mist, taking every opportunity to unleash countless white lightning bolts. Some were evaded, but others struck their target, injuring her opponent.

The gold, ever-burning Golden Eagle clashed against a Zymera who was wreathed in sharp, turbulent winds. She deflected and dodged each attack, her speed rivalling even her lightning form.

Meanwhile, at a great distance from the battlefield, on the floating territorial home of the White Winged Gryphon Tribe, Orion, Ilse, Zera, and the others observed the unfolding battle. Sylvalis sat on Iy'yra's back, hovering in the air beside them.

Several White Winged Gryphons hovered behind.

They had chosen to remain on the island rather than enter the battlefield and risk exposing themselves. Though it was unlikely that the enemy possessed the means to detect them if they chose to conceal their presence, the most foolproof strategy was to underestimate their own abilities while overestimating the capabilities of the Celestial Spirit Court, ensuring they left no room for unexpected occurrences.

Nonetheless, since they had promised to protect the forces of the six regions, Derry had been dispatched to aid them. Due to her unique gift to merge with anything, it would be nearly impossible for anyone to sense or locate her unless she chose to reveal herself.

Orion observed as J'garin held his own against the giant Koi Fish despite being outmatched in raw strength. He compensated with his unique ability to phase through attacks, leaving behind icy sculpted forms that, when struck, exploded into a flurry of snowflakes that induced a drowsy, sleep-like state. As a result, the giant Koi Fish had no choice but to engage in direct combat, relying on her overwhelming spiritual energy to shield herself from J'garin's evasive assaults.

However, the most impressive was Zymera. Orion had already ascertained that she was a powerful Spirit Beast, even among others of the same rank. If any other 7th-order Demigod had faced her in the Spirit Realm, they would have surely been defeated. Nonetheless, witnessing her hold her ground against five Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts, each no less formidable than the other was remarkable. Some might attribute it to her race, which granted her unique abilities.

Chapter 1290 Slaughtering The Celestial Spirit Court Reinforcements

However, reaching this level of strength required far more than just innate talent. For a Spirit Beast to live this long was proof of their formidability, marking them as individuals who should not be trifled with—especially since she was only a step away from becoming a Baron-ranked Spirit Beast.

Orion couldn't help but marvel at how powerful the space within the Spirit Realm was. If this battle were taking place in the Material World, a 7th Order Demigod would already possess the power to tear apart the fabric of space, capable of shattering a continental plate. If such destruction continued over time, it could even fracture a small world with a radius of 7,000 miles (11,265 kilometres). A 6th Order Demigod could obliterate it entirely. Because of this, divine beings had to restrain themselves when fighting to avoid catastrophic environmental damage. That's why they had to create a Mirror Realm to contain the slightest ripple of their power and prevent it from spilling into the real world.

However, that wasn't the case in the Spirit Realm.

No matter how intense the battle grew, their surroundings trembled, yet the space remained firm and stable. Orion had tested it himself and found the same result. This realization alone was enough for him to understand that the being responsible for creating the Spirit Realm was unfathomably powerful.

However, it also left him perplexed—why would such a being choose to vanish, especially with the sudden influx of races and divine beings freely entering and exiting the Spirit Realm as they pleased?

No one could enter Paradise without his authority, or the Twelve Step Stairs, nor with General Reynold and Oberon guarding it.

The mystery surrounding these events only deepened Orion's curiosity, making him even more determined to uncover the truth.

After two hours, the battle reached its climax.

"It seems that they need our help in the end," Orion muttered, watching as J'garin and Zymera were slowly being pushed back. Zymera had managed to kill the Venomous Razor-Sharp-toothed Spider, but only by sacrificing one of her other selves and merging back into her original body. This act drained her strength in the process.

They had already predicted this outcome after assessing the Celestial Spirit Court's reinforcements. The fact that Zymera and J'garin had lasted this long was already commendable. Since they had done their best, there was no other choice but to step in.

"Are they ready?" Orion asked, turning to his mother, who stood beside him.

"Yes. All the Prismerion Divine Apostles have been placed in a sealed, comfortable confinement that guarantees their safety and allows them to be easily transported until they awaken," Celeste's clone responded with a smile. Even though it was just a clone, the fact that she could accompany Orion on one of his adventures was enough to thrill her and the original Celeste for months. The clone would instantly transmit its experiences to the original body, allowing Celeste to relive everything as though she had been there herself. This was the power of Celeste's gift—her ability to mould anything within her imagination and, with her divinity, grant it life. Like a creator, she was connected to her creations and could even transfer authority over them to another.

"Okay. Hand them over to Ursa. She's the fastest among us. Once Anara and the others are ready, we'll move swiftly," Orion responded.

"Is that safe?" Celeste asked curiously.

Ilse, Zera, and the others, who had been listening in, also looked on with curiosity.

"I don't know. We'll have to wait and see," Orion replied.

During the elimination of the Celestial Spirit Court forces, they had taken a few unconscious Prismerton Divine Apostles with them to test whether their crests would still react while they were asleep. Surprisingly, they did.

To avoid any unpredictable situations, they swiftly eliminated the most formidable Spirit Beasts before rounding up the weaker ones and feeding them to their crests. The only downside was that it left them uncertain about how long it would take for the Apostles to awaken. If they were desperate, they could return to Paradise and test whether they could hasten the process using the law of time.

The Celestial Spirit Court reinforcements were also fair game.

Once they dispatched the Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts, they could swiftly round up the Knight-ranked Spirit Beasts and allow the Prismerton Divine Apostles to consume them.

...

In the area where J'garin and Mirthal were engaged in direct combat, each collision caused the rocky plain beneath them to overturn and scorch, with some parts sinking deeply into the earth.

Suddenly, J'garin distanced himself from his opponent. Two of his wings and a limb had been torn away, and the only reason he had survived up until now was due to his unique abilities. If he engaged the Night Leviathan Koi Fish in direct combat for another round, he would likely sustain even more injuries, severely limiting his combat abilities and putting him at a significant disadvantage.

"As I thought, your abilities are only suited for running. If you had chosen to flee, I wouldn't have been able to catch up to you. But the fact that you're still here... What are your ties to the Floating Frost Valley? If your demands are reasonable, I can negotiate with the Celestial Spirit Court and have you become my subordinate," Mirthal said, gazing at J'garin. "Although I'm certain you would be a delicacy to consume, you are much more valuable alive with your abilities." Though she had sustained some injuries, they were minimal compared to her opponent's.

Just as she was about to continue speaking, she suddenly froze, unable to move.

J'garin swiftly noticed the strange occurrence and looked at Mirthal with a heavy frown. "What's going on? Is someone else here?" He spread his supernatural senses, but he didn't detect anyone within hundreds of miles except for a few fleeing Spirit Beasts.

However, he knew that what he was witnessing was real.

'Has he finally acted?' J'garin thought, turning toward the direction of the White Winged Gryphons' territorial home, where Orion and his group were stationed. Before the war began, they had informed him that they would step in to rescue them if the situation became dire and they were unable to defeat their opponents. Despite Zymera's warnings and the oppressive aura they exuded, he had never witnessed their strength firsthand, making him curious about their capabilities. This was also one of the reasons he had continuously fled and widened the distance between himself and his opponent after realizing he couldn't defeat her directly.

However, seeing the enemy who had once oppressed him suddenly frozen in midair, J'garin didn't know how to feel—he had no idea what had just transpired.

Suddenly, a voice emerged from the wind around him, causing the atmosphere to tremble.

"What are you standing around for? Kill her and consume her! If you hesitate, I will eliminate her myself!" The tone was commanding and resonated in his ears, causing his eyes to widen in surprise.

Without hesitation, J'garin launched several large spikes from his wings with enough force to pierce through Mirthal's skin. Then, covering his entire body in a hardened icy layer, he charged forward, his jaws widened before clamping down on her neck. On the other side, Mirthal failed to register what had just occurred until she heard the voice resonating in the air. Her body trembled in fear, and she wanted to plead for her life. However, she couldn't speak.

Before she could comprehend what was happening, the panther had already sunk its teeth into her. In an instant, her body became encased in a layer of icy frost, making her cold and dizzy. As she felt her consciousness slipping away, she realized, too late, that she was dying.

Her body disintegrated into countless specks of light and was absorbed into J'garin.

J'garin stared blankly at the empty space before him. After becoming a Baron-ranked Spirit Beast, he learned firsthand how powerful they were and how much one needed to sacrifice in order to kill a Baron-ranked Spirit Beast like Mirthal. And yet, she had been defeated just like that! It was far less spectacular than he had expected.

Fear crept into his heart, and his skin crawled as he realized that he, too, could be killed just as quickly.

"Thank you for your help," J'garin said, his voice filled with gratitude. He swiftly regained his composure and bowed toward the empty space before him.

"Don't mention it. Regroup with Zymera. The battle will be ending soon," the voice commanded before vanishing into thin air.

J'garin wanted to ask about the remaining Knight-ranked beasts, but upon recalling how effortlessly the Baron-ranked Spirit Beast had been killed, he hesitated. Instead, he nodded and swiftly turned around, flying into the distance.

Meanwhile, in another area, Zymera watched as countless specks of light vanished into her being. One moment, she had been locked in battle against four formidable Aristocrat-ranked Spirit Beasts; the next, they had all frozen in place, and a familiar voice had instructed her to eliminate them swiftly.