

Village Head 971

Chapter 971 Gina's Star Potential

Meanwhile, Orion relaxed, responding proactively to their movements as he attended to each of them one by one, ensuring the tension in the air dissipated and leaving them all with satisfying smiles as they drifted off to sleep.

Fiona and Vivian soon descended the stairs, ready to join them on the bed.

The night turned out even more pleasant than he had anticipated.

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The days flew by as the Awakening Ceremony was put on hold to focus on reconstructing the Village Chief's Compound. Former Village Chief Brane entrusted Orion with the leadership of reconstructing the Village Chief's Compound as the Village Chief, and the entire structure underwent a complete redesign and expansion.

He was mindful not to overwhelm Former Village Chief Brane and Chieftess Zara with unfamiliar designs, so he maintained the traditional hut-like structure but expanded the compound fivefold.

He incorporated modern features such as floors, an advanced ventilation system designed by the Prismerions for optimal climate control, luxurious bedrooms and bathing areas, and a private garden stocked with plants and fruits from both the farm and garden, tended by tree nymphs and visited by Pixies.

This development also facilitated the Pixies' integration into Paradise, allowing them to socialize more freely with other races and the villagers.

During these days, Orion kept a vigilant watch over the sleeping goddess, occasionally leaving Aerialia to monitor her to ensure she remained inactive by choice. However, after confirming she wasn't feigning sleep, Orion wondered if his attack had somehow done something wrong to her resurrection.

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After three days, the inner strength evaluation to confirm one's potential to become a warrior marked the near culmination of the awakening ceremony.

"Next," bellowed a man who looked familiar to Orion, having tested his evaluation the previous year. He held a globe-like black crystal with both palms as he stood before the twenty-five individuals participating in this year's ceremony, lined up in anticipation.

Flanking them stood some of the village's most well-known warriors from the Rightward and Leftward Strongholds and the Key Leaders on the other. Each observed intently, eager to identify the emerging powerful warrior of the year.

A young man stepped forward and placed his hand on the crystal. It emitted an intense, dazzling, milky-white light that lasted a few seconds before fading into faint wisps of light flickering around. Finally, the light settled in the centre, forming four bright, miniature crystal stars.

"Four stars!" announced the man holding the crystal, a broad smile spreading. Having already identified four three-star potentials out of the initial ten individuals, all possessing one to two-star potential, he was especially thrilled by the emergence of another four-star inner strength potential, mainly since they had only seen one alongside a six-star potential last year.

Despite his excitement, he composed himself and gestured for the young man to step aside. "Next!" he called out loudly, prompting the next participant to come forward.

Gina placed her hand on the crystal, her heart racing as she watched it shine brightly before dimming and settling to reveal four bright miniature crystal stars.

"Four stars!!" the man bellowed enthusiastically, laughter bubbling up after his announcement.

Incredible! Two four-star potentials!!

At this moment, even if none of the remaining candidates awaken with more than two-star potential, it wouldn't matter because these two were already more than enough.

Orion, his wives, Former Village Chief Brane, and the others all beamed with smiles upon hearing the announcement. Despite the development of the Vylkr Fusion Armlet, which promised to enhance Vylkr warriors' potential, natural talent and growth remained invaluable.

It meant they could still surpass their potential and stand out, like Stronghold Leader Zogar, who could achieve more with his higher potential than others with lesser abilities.

"Congratulations. It seems we are truly destined to soar through the sky and dominate any Runaway Cities we encounter in the future, even for generations to come," Former Village Chief Brane said, happily tapping Orion on the side of his shoulder with his arm around him.

"Your parents have blessed this village, producing two exceptional seeds like you and your younger sister. Do you happen to know who your father is so we can locate him and encourage him to produce more?" Former Village Chieftess Zara asked, her curiosity piqued as she awaited Orion's response.

Orion shook his head with a wry smile. As he was about to reply, Celeste interjected, "Unfortunately, Orion's father had passed away due to an irreversible injury inflicted by a three-star Vylkr vine," she sighed.

Orion was curious about this information, wondering about the man who had fathered a reincarnator like him. He had learned that he and Gina shared the same father, who had died protecting the village from a three-star Vylkr vine. Meanwhile, Reena's father worked on the farm and passed away in a farm accident.

Former Village Chief Zara's eyes widened in realization. In the past, it was common for warriors to sacrifice themselves in defence against the Vylkr vines, which had often forced them to resort to desperate measures for survival.

She immediately regretted her question and nodded understanding before redirecting her attention to the rest of the evaluation results.

"Next!"

"Three stars!"

"One Star!"

"Three-star!!"

After the evaluation, two individuals awakened with four-star potentials, while eleven individuals attained three-star potentials. The rest ranged from one-star to two-star potentials.

The emergence of multiple warriors with higher potentials than before heightened the atmosphere with joy. Coupled with the advent of the Vylkr Fusion Armlet, which promised to push warriors beyond their limits, the Key Leaders were filled with even greater satisfaction.

Two hours later, everyone had dispersed, leaving only Orion and Reena, who were preparing to meet with the former Village Chief and Chieftess to discuss further developments regarding the new warriors. Gina accompanied them as their escort.

Unexpectedly, Gina leapt up and wrapped her limbs around Orion, sealing his lips passionately. Orion reciprocated eagerly.

Sensing something behind her, Gina raised her hand, stopping Reena's hand, which was about to hit her behind.

"Can't you at least respect my position as the Village Chieftess and stop clinging to the Village Chief?" Reena said, frowning.

Chapter 972 The Gift Awakens

She sensed that since she lost her virginity, she was beginning to disregard her titled position outside of their home.

They weren't Lyra and Ursa, whose mother-and-daughter relationship would make one doubt who gave birth to whom.

"I was just excited. It's natural since I am now a warrior with a Four-star potential," Gina responded, rolling her eyes. "Although it's still not as incredible as my brother, who has six-star potential." She leaned in and gave Orion a quick peck on the lips.

Reena immediately became annoyed and shifted her attention to Orion. "I've told you to stop indulging her. And if you continue, I will ensure I don't repeat myself," she warned, preparing to walk away if they continued.

Fortunately, Orion noticed this and brought Gina down, not wanting to push Reena's buttons.

"I still respect you, elder sister. But we are currently in the village, so no one will find it strange how we express our love for each other or think we are disrespecting you—" Gina began, but just before she could gain further momentum, Orion swiftly sealed her lips.

Unfortunately, Reena had already heard enough to understand Gina's words. "Even within the village, siblings rarely fall in love with each other," she hissed through clenched teeth.

"Ahem! Gina, you should return to the others and continue your awakening ceremony. Reena and I are currently at work, and it's best if no one annoys anyone," Orion swiftly interjected before Gina could respond.

Gina clicked her tongue and turned away, muttering under her breath, "Hmph! I will become the Stronghold Leader one day, and then we'll see who holds the higher position."

As Gina left, Orion was about to speak, but Reena swiftly raised her hand. "I don't want to hear it. You made her this way, so figure it out yourself and make her return to normal. If you don't, I'd rather stay home than step out as the Village Chieftess, and you'll have to find a new Chieftess. I'm sure Lyra and Derry, despite her current task, would be interested in the position," she snapped.

Orion quickly shook his head. "I promise to find a way to bring her back to normal," he replied, his expression serious.

Orion could tell Reena meant every word and the last thing he wanted was to choose between Lyra and Vivian for the Chieftess position. Moreover, he didn't want to do anything that would make Reena feel bad about his actions.

"I'll wait and see how it turns out," Reena responded, rolling her eyes as she led the way forward.

Orion quickly arrived beside her as they left to handle the village's affairs.

...

Sixteen days after the resurrection of the goddess Ilse, Gina finally awakened her gift.

The entire household watched in awe as she stood with arms wide outstretched under a steady stream of water conjured above her by Fifi. Surprisingly, she remained untouched. It seemed like an invisible barrier protected her from the water, causing it to flow around her.

Fifi deactivated her gift, causing the heavy stream of water to halt and dissipate into thin air.

Gina immediately collapsed, but fortunately, Orion swiftly appeared and caught her before she hit the ground.

"Haaa... haaa... I did it. I finally awakened my gift," Gina said excitedly, breathing heavily.

"Can you show it to me again?" Orion asked with a nod.

Gina nodded and swiftly activated her gift again, enveloping herself and Orion.

Orion touched the invisible shield, which appeared to be some kind of force field. He generated a small lightning bolt against it, observing as it bounced back to him. Nodding, he turned his attention back to Gina. "You can deactivate your gift now."

Gina swiftly deactivated her gift as she felt fatigue quickly overwhelming her. "I wanted it to be like yours, or Fifi's, or even Stronghold Leader Zogar's," Gina said, furrowing her brows in thought as a hint of sadness crossed her face.

"Have you forgotten what I told you? Every gift is special, and even if there are similarities, how it's used will be vastly distinct from others. The only way to determine superiority is by becoming stronger. Who knows, with your talent, you might even surpass Stronghold Leader Zogar with that shield of yours. Just explore ways to harness it until then," Fifi said, appearing before Gina and gently flicking her finger against Gina's head.

"Fifi is right. Plus, now I don't have to worry about your safety anymore. Who knows, in the future, you might even serve as our next guardian, protecting the Floating Island from any unfortunate adversary," Orion responded with a smile, his voice filled with relief and confidence in Gina's gift.

"Hmm! Fine, I'll figure out what to do with this gift of mine," Gina responded, her eyes fluttering closed as if she were about to fall asleep.

"You're exhausted from activating your gift. Let's get you inside so you can rest," Orion added, guiding Gina back into the manor.

....

It took a month before Orion and the key leaders received information that the blacksmiths, runesmiths, and enchanters had thoroughly learned the intricacies of the Vylkr Fusion Armlet and how to forge its components under the tutelage of Seraphina and the other leaders of the Healers Association.

After two weeks of continuous trial and error, they finally created the Vylkr Fusion Armlet without outside help.

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One and a half months since the resurrection of goddess Ilse.

Orion and the other key figures arrived at the far end of the floating island, where the high-rise buildings dedicated to researching the Vylkr Fusion Armlet and Gearweaver stood.

A woman immediately approached them, greeting them as though she had been expecting their arrival. Her voice was filled with anticipation as she said, "This way, I'll guide you to the procedure room." She led the way, with Orion and the key leaders following closely behind.

They passed through several rooms and workshops until they reached a particular door.

The woman briskly rapped her knuckles against the door.

"Come in," a familiar voice echoed from within.

She opened it and gestured for them to enter before swiftly closing it behind them.

When they entered, Seraphina and a few leaders of the Healer's Association greeted them.

Chapter 973 Awaiting the Outcome

Orion and the Key leaders reciprocated their greetings respectfully. They looked around and noticed they were in a small, enclosed room resembling a waiting area, with one door at the other end.

They immediately understood that Seraphina and the others had been waiting for them before taking them to the main room where the procedure would occur.

"Follow us this way, please," Seraphina said, stepping towards the door at the other end, opening it, and leading the way forward.

They followed her through the door and arrived in another room. However, this room was much more expansive and empty than the former, with a few chairs filled with fruits and drinks. It was divided by a heavy sheet of glass, which they sensed was magically reinforced.

On the other side of the magically reinforced glass were ten unique beds, each enclosed by its sheet of reinforced glass. Each bed held a warrior, attended by two to three individuals.

"For clarification, this procedure is designed to merge the Vylkr Fusion Armlet with warriors who have reached their full potential, enabling them to break through it. We don't have complete information to ascertain whether they will encounter any other obstructions later."

"However, based on our observations of the gods' chosens, whose Vylkr energy compatibility is less than that of the warriors, we can only assume that their growth will be unrestrained and unfathomable. Those are all the necessary details for the procedure," Seraphina explained. "The procedure will start in two minutes once the preparations are done. Also, those on the other side of the glass can neither hear nor see us, so if you have any questions, please feel free to ask."

The Key Leaders all nodded in understanding. None of them had any questions since Orion had already explained everything thoroughly. They were more curious about the results and the changes made to the Gearweavers, as even Orion had no information about that.

Some took their seats alongside the leaders of the Healers Association, while others walked closer to the glass to observe the procedure. The room was spacious enough for them to have a clear view of the other side regardless of where they sat or stood.

Orion had heavily influenced the design of the building, so while the leaders were impressed—this was their first time inside since its construction—he was not.

After two minutes, the room was cleared, and all the warriors were strapped to the unique beds, their right or left arms secured on sturdy platforms connected to the beds and enclosed within reinforced glass.

Around their wrists were refined versions of the Vylkr Fusion Armlet, which showed minor improvements over those worn by Stronghold Leader Zogar and Fifi yet bore similar designs.

As the procedure began, they watched as the warriors' expressions twisted in pain. Some screamed in agony, while others remained silent, their teeth gritted.

Despite the intensity of the pain, the experienced warriors with incredible endurance and strength pressed on. Through sheer determination, they endured as the Vylkr Fusion Armlet realigned the networks within their bodies, bonding with the Devourer's heart.

They also knew their leaders were watching from the other side of the room, making it imperative not to display any signs of weakness.

Meanwhile, Orion and the others behind the glass continued to observe the procedure with unwavering gazes, hoping the warriors would persevere.

After thirty minutes, the procedure was completed.

Several healers entered the room to tend to the warriors and check for complications. Ten minutes later, a man approached the reinforced glass and shook his head, indicating no issues.

"The procedure has been successful without any complications," Seraphina announced, nodding to the Key Leaders. "Stronghold Leader Seth, please be here tomorrow so we can merge you with the Vylkr Fusion Armlet," she added.

"I'll be here tomorrow," Stronghold Leader Seth affirmed with a nod, a smile forming on his lips.

"Alright, let's head over to the other area so I can show you our development concerning the Gearweaver," Seraphina said, stepping out of the room and taking the lead.

Orion and the others followed closely behind her.

"The Gearweavers are weapons crafted from Vylkr alloys designed to harness and augment the Vylkr energy of the gods' chosens, enhancing their overall combat prowess," Seraphina explained passionately.

"Similar to the Vylkr Fusion Armlet, we've enhanced them to be even more formidable. Our approach includes integrating a Devourer's heart with a living one-star Vylkr vine as the core component. The Devourer heart acts as the primary source of Vylkr energy, storing and distributing it throughout the Gearweaver."

"Meanwhile, the one-star Vylkr vine serves as a devouring mechanism, consuming other Vylkr vines and converting the absorbed Vylkr energy to strengthen both the Gearweaver and its wielder through synergies with Vylkr alloys and the Devourer's heart. Over time, these Vylkr vines can evolve independently, potentially reaching higher stars or developing into unique variants."

"And just as the wielder can channel their own Vylkr energy into the Gearweavers at will, this symbiotic relationship enhances both their capabilities as they grow stronger together."

As the Key Leaders absorbed Seraphina's explanation, they halted in their tracks, eyes wide with shock.

"You merged a Devourer's heart with a one-star Vylkr vine?" Reena asked incredulously, her gaze fixed on Seraphina as if seeing her in a new light. The revelation was so unexpected that it transformed her perception of Seraphina from someone familiar to a mysterious figure.

A Gearweaver capable of devouring Vylkr energy from Vylkr vines, combined with the Devourer's heart, and enhancing itself alongside the wielder?

Even though Reena wasn't a warrior herself, she had gleaned enough from Fifi about the intricacies of the Vylkr Fusion Armlet to foresee potential calamity in such a combination.

She wasn't alone; all the other Key Leaders shared her concerns.

Seraphina and the leaders of the Healers Association also stopped in their tracks.

"Yes, we did," Seraphina replied, turning to face her. She then emphasized the project's success to the other leaders of the Healers Association beside her.

"But isn't that just asking for trouble?" Reena asked, her brow furrowing in a deep frown.

"The Village Chieftess is right. As much as I want to surpass my limits and grow stronger, there should be boundaries when dealing with Vylkr vines, and merging a devourer heart with one should be one of them," Stronghold Leader Seth said, his gaze solemn as he looked directly at Seraphina.

Chapter 974 The Enchanced Gearweaver

His past encounter with Vylkr spawns had left a lasting impression, and although he didn't fully understand their origins, he couldn't shake the feeling that their current actions might be heading down a dangerous path.

Seraphina furrowed her brows at his words, sweeping her eyes across the other Key Leaders. She saw the serious expressions on their faces, including Orion's, and couldn't help but sigh inwardly.

"I anticipated this reaction, which is why I kept it under wraps until now," Seraphina admitted. "If you're concerned about the enchanced Gearweavers posing a threat to Paradise or its warriors, rest assured that as long as they adhere to our established maintenance protocols, there's no reason to worry. This weapon is tailor-made for them, so it's perfectly safe," she assured, shaking her head in response.

"I agree with Madam Seraphina's words. You can trust in our capabilities," said Valeria, one of the Healers Association Leaders.

"Certainly, we wouldn't unveil such a powerful weapon without ensuring every precaution has been taken to protect Paradise and its wielders. You must hear the full details to understand our confidence in this matter," Thoren added.

The Leaders of the Healers Association echoed one another, backing Seraphina's assurances while earnestly appealing to the Key leaders.

Stronghold Leader Seth's eyes narrowed in irritation. As he was about to voice his concerns, Orion swiftly interjected, "Please continue with all the details about the enhanced Gearweavers so we can decide whether to proceed with this project."

Despite his reservations about merging devourer hearts with Vylkr vines, Orion chose to hear their rationale for the enhanced Gearweavers.

Nevertheless, he couldn't shake the self-reproach for not intervening earlier to curb Seraphina's fascination with experimenting on Vylkr vines, mainly since she hadn't found a way to dilute it.

Seraphina glanced at Orion briefly before nodding. "Alright, listen carefully. Every Vylkr alloy, piece of equipment, and material used in creating both the Vylkr Fusion Armlet and the newly enhanced Gearweavers has been carefully forged, enchanted, and inscribed by the finest blacksmiths, runesmiths, and enchanters in Paradise."

"Through the bond forged by the Vylkr Fusion Armlet and the enhanced Gearweavers, we have calibrated the Devourer's hearts to establish a symbiotic relationship. This merges the enhanced Gearweavers with the wielder's essence and energy signature, enabling effortless utilization of their Vylkr energy. Each Gearweaver responds exclusively to its wielder or remains dormant."

"Should a Gearweaver attempt to harm its wielder, we have implemented several fail-safes. These include draining the Vylkr vine's energy reserves back into the Devourer's heart, weakening it and neutralizing its threat. This allows the wielder to assess its behaviour or bring it to us for examination."

"Also, in cases where the Gearweaver encounters issues beyond assessment, we've implemented an energy feedback loop with the Devourer's heart. This loop redirects the Vylkr energy, prompting it to retract and quell its aggressive tendencies."

"In extreme cases, the symbiotic bond is severed, effectively cutting off the Vylkr vine's connection to the wielder. This triggers a self-destructive enhancement that destroys and disintegrates the Vylkr vine while it's weakened, destroying the Devourer's heart as its anchor is removed. We've integrated runic sensors that work in tandem to address this issue automatically, so the warrior doesn't need to intervene."

"Also, we've included a mental command connection and a hidden switch on the Gearweaver to manually activate any of these fail-safes.

"I understand you still have reservations about these fail-safes, so we're adding more protection layers before distribution. These measures ensure safety and enhance the warriors' ability to wield their new weapons effectively. They also grant other benefits; however, you'll need to see them in action to grasp them fully."

Seraphina doubted they would understand if she said anything more, so she shared the primary information they needed to calm their worries. Any further explanation would require a demonstration, allowing them to see and sense the capabilities of the newly enhanced Gearweaver for themselves.

Orion and the Key Leaders pondered Seraphina's words with deep frowns on their faces.

They understood from her assurances that thorough considerations had been made; otherwise, she wouldn't be so confident. However, when handling anything related to the Vylkr vines, they knew better than to disregard its unpredictability.

"Alright, you and your group have worked hard to ensure no issues with the newly enhanced Gearweavers. Let's continue; I'm curious about witnessing its might in action," Orion responded.

He knew Seraphina well enough to trust her word. Paradise was her home, so what good would it do her to allow such a weapon to roam freely without taking proper measures to guarantee their safety?

Hearing Orion's words, the Key Leaders held back their concerns. Although they wanted to refute and immediately shut down the production of Gearweavers, they knew their arguments would be irrelevant without the Village Chief's support. They could only remain silent for now.

Despite their concerns and wariness, they were also curious about what this new Gearweaver looked like and its capabilities, especially since it vastly differed from the one they knew about.

Seraphina smiled and nodded. "Follow me," she said, turning the way they knew about.

Seraphina smiled and nodded. "Follow me," she said, turning and leading the way forward while they followed behind her.

They soon arrived at a particular door, which Seraphina swiftly opened and led them through. The room was brighter than the procedure room. They stood on a platform surrounded by magically reinforced glass, but outside was a vast room resembling the rocky expanse below Paradise.

"We've chosen two individuals to demonstrate the capabilities of the newly enhanced Gearweavers fully," Seraphina said, pointing to the two figures standing below on the sandy, rocky expanse.

Below on the rocky expanse stood Seig and Leif, each clad in their respective attire, wielding an imposing oversized sword crafted from glistening sleek Vylkr alloy with jagged edges, segmented design and intricate mechanical parts etched along the surface that gave it a menacing appearance.

The sturdy handle was designed for a two-handed grip, while the robust hilt appeared ergonomic, accommodating both single-handed and two-handed use and additional mechanical components. Elaborate guard mechanisms adorned the weapon, enhancing grip protection and aesthetic appeal.

The weapon gleamed with an inky black metallic hue, exuding an eerie aura that underscored its formidable presence.

Chapter 975 Enhanced Gearweavers In Action

"Are they capable of utilizing the enhanced Gearweavers?" Stronghold Leader Zogar asked, his voice tinged with doubt.

"No, they can't. But that's precisely why they were chosen. What better way to demonstrate the effectiveness of the enhanced Gearweavers than to display them in the hands of individuals who are barely fit to handle them?" Seraphina responded.

Stronghold Leader Zogar nodded, grasping the underlying meaning behind her words.

Orion and the others also nodded in understanding.

Seraphina touched the glass and spoke, "You may begin. If you complete this task successfully, we'll consider making an enhanced Gearweaver that fits your Devourer's Bracelets." Her voice resonated across the vast space below, reaching Seig and Leif's ears.

Seig and Leif halted their actions and turned their attention toward her, indicating they could see her. They both nodded in understanding and refocused on each other.

"Are you ready, boy?" Seig asked with a determined grin. "I won't be going easy on you."

Leif nodded. "I'm ready. But you should be careful; I've grown stronger since the last time we fought," he responded, his hands tightening around the enhanced Gearweaver, feeling its heaviness even though the weapon's tip was still supported by the ground.

'How much does this thing weigh?' Leif thought inwardly. He was a god's chosen, possessing immense strength and a growth path quicker than other races' hierarchy of power. However, he still found it difficult to lift the enhanced Gearweaver properly.

"All right, since that's the case, I'll give you the chance to strike first. Remember, we're all in the same boat, so if you look bad, that makes me look bad too. If you don't give it your all, forget about asking me to spar with you again," Seig said firmly. He lifted the enhanced Gearweaver effortlessly with one hand and placed the blade's dull side on his shoulder.

Leif's expression became serious as he swiftly muttered, "Boost." The Devourer's Bracelet immediately surged to life, its engine grinding as it transferred Vylkr energy from the vail to his Devourer's heart.

A faint heartbeat resonated from the Devourer Bracelet, gradually quickening into a drum-like rhythm. Fierce, flickering strands of Vylkr energy burst out of the Devourer's Bracelet, spreading down his hand and enveloping the enhanced Gearweaver.

The enhanced Gearweaver was absorbing his Vylkr energy.

The moment the Vylkr energy descended upon the enhanced Gearweaver, it hummed and vibrated fiercely. The mechanical parts around the weapon retracted slightly, with ripples spreading down the blade.

Then, as if on cue, a fierce wave of Vylkr erupted from the enhanced Gearweaver, with several vein-like structures pulsing around the blade and mechanical parts. The energy shot up towards Leif's hands, covering his entire body with countless strands of raw Vylkr energy.

The raw Vylkr energy flowing within Leif's body surged, pushing his physical limits and increasing the potential Vylkr energy he could utilize.

An eerie aura spread across the area surrounding Leif, especially around the enhanced Gearweaver.

Leif proceeded to lift the enhanced Gearweaver with more ease and swung it towards Seig. An arc of inky black Vylkr energy emerged from the weapon and hurtled towards Seig.

Seig narrowed his eyes at the incoming attack and activated his Devourer's Bracelet. Gears within it surged to life, and countless strands of Vylkr energy erupted from it, swiftly flowing towards his enhanced Gearweaver.

As the weapon hummed and underwent a transformation, the raw Vylkr energy shot back upwards, covering every part of his body. Feeling the power surge through him, Seig grinned tensely as his muscles tensed, feeling the violent, raw Vylkr energy flooding his every tissue.

He swung the enhanced Gearweaver towards Leif, creating a similar arc of Vylkr energy that painted the air like a canvas as it headed towards his opponent.

Bang!

The arcs of Vylkr energy collided, struggling briefly against each other before disappearing into thin air.

Sensing a sudden connection with the enhanced Gearweaver as it assimilated his Vylkr energy and his Devourer's heart synchronizing with it, Leif grinned also. He immediately rushed towards Seig, closing the distance with a single step and brandishing his enhanced Gearweaver as if attempting to cleave him in half.

Instead of countering, Seig stepped back, widening the distance between them before Leif's blade could reach him.

BOOM!

The enhanced Gearweaver struck the ground, shattering it and creating several meters of vast craters. Dust billowed into the air, momentarily obscuring Leif until he burst out of the cloud, swiftly advancing towards Seig.

Seig frowned as he examined the enhanced Gearweaver in his grasp. The tip at the centre down to the middle half appeared to split open, revealing the tendrils of Vylkr vines within.

The handle was covered with vine-like structures pulsing with raw Vylkr energy. Intricate runes adorned the metal parts, glowing brightly as the gears and hums grew louder, creating a chilling spectacle for onlookers.

Is this how the Vylkr warriors always feel?

Such power!!

He was already at his limit from the sheer amount of raw Vylkr energy flooding his body, and he could tell that Leif was feeling the same way.

Leif directed his enhanced Gearweaver toward Seig, prompting Seig to raise a brow. Just as he prepared to take advantage of Leif's growing familiarity with the enhanced Gearweaver and strike, the split tip area underwent another transformation, further widening.

A thick cluster of Vylkr vines surged toward Seig.

Seig's eyes widened. Instead of deflecting, he sidestepped, narrowly evading the attack, and quickly put some distance between himself and Leif.

This time, several sweat drops formed on his forehead, and a worried expression clouded his face as he inspected the enhanced Gearweaver.

Facing an opponent wielding a Gearweaver capable of generating its own Vylkr energy, depending on the amount it had absorbed beforehand, enhancing the wielder's abilities, as Leif and Seig were

experiencing firsthand, as it could prove disastrous for opponents unable to withstand the Vylkr energy, was one challenge, another was the ability to generate Vylkr vines mid-battle, no matter how weak was a frightening prospect.

Just imagining the Vylkr warriors in Paradise awaiting the completion of such weapons was enough to make Seig gulp.

Chapter 976 The Name that Strikes Fear

He even contemplated asking Mrs Seraphina to create a Gearweaver sword for him, just in case, unsure if a bow and arrow would possess the same capabilities. However, he quickly dismissed this thought, understanding that he couldn't wield it.

As the raw Vylkr energy surrounding Leif surged higher, enhancing his prowess, the Vylkr vines on the handle stretched further, crawling up his hands and reaching his forearms. Seig's frown deepened, and just as he was about to warn him, the runes on the enhanced Gearweaver began to glow brightly. The hum of the weapon and the faint sound of gears emerged from within, halting the Vylkr vines' ascent.

They soon retracted into the blade, and the entire weapon returned to its normal state, dispersing the excess raw Vylkr energy it had accumulated. However, the veins around the Gearweaver continued to glow fiercely until gradually subsiding into dormancy.

The Vylkr energy around Leif's Devourer bracelet dissipated, retracting back into his body.

Bang!

The enhanced Gearweaver slipped from Leif's grasp, clattering to the ground. His steps faltered, but a firm hand steadied him before he could fall.

"He's exhausted from triggering one of the enhanced Gearweaver's fail-safes. A healer will attend to him shortly, and he'll be fine," Seraphina's voice echoed through the room.

Seig breathed a sigh of relief, letting the enhanced Gearweaver sword fall from his grip to the floor. Witnessing its formidable power, which would undoubtedly amplify the fearlessness of the Vylkr

warriors, coupled with the recent unsettling events that had ironically bolstered the confidence of Paradise's residents in their protective barrier, Seig couldn't help but feel immense pity for anyone foolish enough to challenge Paradise.

They would regret it for the rest of their lives, assuming their souls managed to survive.

Within the enclosed room of magically reinforced glass

"Despite not forming a proper bond with the enhanced Gearweaver sword and attempting to push it to its limits with an unfit Devourer's bracelet, the fail-safe still kicked in, incapacitating the Vylkr vine and saving his life. So, what's your assessment?" Seraphina asked, turning to face the Key leaders behind her.

"It's reassuring. The demonstration has alleviated my concerns about the enhanced Gearweavers, so you have our go-ahead to continue with production. Just keep us informed if any significant issues arise that you can't handle so we can address potential threats immediately," Orion responded, nodding.

Having witnessed the demonstration, he felt reassured that Seraphina and the others had done their best and that there were no immediate troubling developments from the enhanced Gearweavers.

Nevertheless, he remained mindful of their potential impact.

Seraphina nodded in acknowledgement at Orion's words before sweeping her eyes over the other Key leaders.

"Fine. I've seen your work, and I have faith in it," Stronghold Leader Zogar remarked, glancing at the Vylkr Fusion Armlet on his right wrist. "However, I still believe that Vylkr vines shouldn't be treated as mere materials for experiments. If a disastrous situation arises from the enhanced Gearweaver, I will ensure they are properly destroyed."

Seraphina nodded in understanding. "Just like the Vylkr Fusion Armlet, which bonds with warriors and grows stronger alongside them, the enhanced Gearweavers are also intertwined with Vylkr energy. If such a situation arises, you'll need to grow stronger because destroying them won't be easy," she explained with a reassuring smile.

Stronghold Leader Zogar nodded silently, confident in his strength and growth. He took Seraphina's words as a reaffirmation rather than a concern.

Stronghold Leader Seth sighed heavily, nodding with the other Key leaders who followed suit individually.

"Since it's significantly more powerful and different from the Gearweaver it was originally built upon, do you have a name for it?" Reena asked with curiosity.

"No, unfortunately, we haven't been able to come up with a better name," Seraphina responded, shaking her head.

"In that case, how about we call it the Gear Devourer, based on its foundation with the devourer heart and Vylkr vines?" Orion suggested.

Seraphina contemplated the name deeply, her expression brightening soon after. "I think that will work. It also instils fear into our enemies just by hearing it," she remarked, pleased with the menacing name.

"I like the name as well. Coming from the Village Chief, it'll reassure warriors about its significance and make them feel less stressed utilizing it," Stronghold Leader Seth said, nodding in agreement.

"I agree. Gear Devourer definitely sounds more intimidating than Gearweaver," Caretaker Ivor.

"Indeed," High King Kael chimed in.

The Key leaders shared their thoughts one by one, unanimously approving the name for the weapon that promised to catalyze a profound change among the warriors of Paradise.

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The Sleeping Fox Runaway City

The Royal Den

"Has Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise from Runaway City sent us any messages yet?" asked a man with deep violet skin complemented by pigmented violet sharp curved horns and broad folded wings, dressed in a simple brown robe with intricate golden accents.

His name was Garron El'thas. He is also known as the Master of Natural Resources of Sleeping Fox Runaway City and oversees its upper body and neck.

"No, they haven't. It's clear they've chosen to surrender their positions and Runaway City without resistance against Paradise. So, it means we're on our own," responded the woman with stylish tied auburn hair, fox-like ears, and four flowing tails flowing behind her. She was dressed in a colourful robe featuring various brilliant tail-like patterns, her expression stern.

Her name was Amelia Greenbough. She is the Chief Diplomat and Envoy of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City. She resides in the Royal Den, the Head of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, alongside Former Emperor Lakul.

"It's understandable, considering the events that occurred a half-month ago. Just like ours, the inhabitants of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City are clamouring to their leaders to return to familiar grounds to avoid experiencing the horrifying event of the sun and the firmament descending upon the earth," responded a man with avian-like features, dark feathers, dressed in black scholarly robes adorned with faint green embellishments, shaking his head in response.

His name was Syrik, the Master of Espionage and Intelligence of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, who controlled the section known as the 'Ears.'

Chapter 977 The Messenger Arrives

The event was vividly imprinted into his soul. In fact, it was the same for the others. The astonishing heat had nearly seared through the bodies of the inhabitants of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, almost stinging their very souls, making it impossible to forget the haunting event.

It also helped them confirm that Paradise was responsible for the immense sky-splitting battle and turbulence within the Vylkr Veil Phenomenon.

Hearing their responses, Garron sighed, "Have 'they' arrived at the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City to speak with them?".

"No, I don't think so. If 'they' had arrived, Lord Griffin, the Chief Diplomat and Envoy of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City, would have contacted me. But there's always a chance that there's something we don't know going on," Amelia responded, her voice filled with uncertainty.

She turned her attention towards Lakul, who sat on a throne-like chair at the other end of the rectangular table. "Emperor, wh—" she began, but before she could complete her sentence, Lakul raised his hand, halting her mid-sentence.

"I've told you countless times not to address me as Emperor. It would be bad if Paradise had sent spies to our meetings, and they overheard you utter such words," Lakul responded, sighing.

Just as she was about to respond, the large doors of the meeting room were suddenly pushed open, and a guard rushed in. He swiftly arrived beside them and bowed respectfully, his body slightly trembling. "Your Highness, an envoy from Paradise has arrived and wishes to speak with you."

Upon hearing the guard's words, Emperor Lakul immediately exited his seat. The other leaders similarly stood, their bodies tense.

"Take me to him," Emperor Lakul responded solemnly.

He had been patiently waiting for news from Paradise, and the arrival of an envoy to their Runaway City filled him with a mix of expectation and anxiety.

A chill crawled down his spine as he remembered the event that had taken place a month and a half ago.

The guard nodded, stood up, turned around, and began to lead the way.

Lakul followed him, accompanied by the other Sleeping Fox Runaway City leaders.

When they arrived, they saw a muscular, lean man with thick green hair, bare-chested, and dressed in only a pair of green shorts.

Although he didn't carry any weapon, Lakul and the others could sense the brimming power within him, similar to the other strange humans they had encountered that day. As such, they didn't dare underestimate him, knowing he might be able to kill them all, even without a weapon.

The man swept his gaze over them, and a sense of oppression immediately enveloped the group.

"Welcome to the Sleeping Fox Runaway City. How about we go inside and have this discussion?" Lakul greeted, bowing slightly and respectfully.

The leaders also bowed respectfully.

The man shook his head in response. "I didn't come here to stay long. I simply came to deliver a message from the Village Chief," he said. "In two days, four representatives of Paradise will arrive here and serve your leaders. Welcome and teach them everything about handling the Sleeping Fox Runaway City affairs. That's all."

Upon hearing the man's words, a whirlwind of emotions surged within Lakul, his hands clenching into fists. He had always known this day would come and had prepared himself for it, yet now that it had arrived, he couldn't help but feel at a loss. His expression significantly aged.

The other leaders couldn't help but clench their fists, their struggle to conceal their displeasure evident in their strained expressions. They knew they had to maintain their composure, but it was difficult in the face of such an announcement.

"Thank you for coming to inform us of their arrival. We'll do our best to ensure they are properly welcomed into the Sleeping Fox Runaway City and taught everything they need to know about governing it," Lakul responded, smiling thinly.

"I'm sorry for asking, but I don't know who the Village Chief is. Is he the supreme ruler of Paradise, and will he be accompanying them as well?" he swiftly asked.

He suspected the man he had spoken to was the Village Chief. However, in case he was mistaken, this was an opportunity to confirm his identity.

"Yes, the Village Chief is the supreme ruler of Paradise," the man responded, his expression gradually becoming more respectful. "However, I am not aware of whether he will accompany

them. You should be prepared to meet your future leaders. If the Village Chief chooses to accompany them, it could be a blessing or worse, depending on how well you perform."

"Okay. Thank you for this important information," Lakul responded, nodding wryly.

The man nodded and then suddenly leapt into the sky. Before their surprised eyes, he transformed into a thirty-eight-meter flying beast and swiftly soared into the sky.

Lakul and the other leaders gulped at the sight, realizing that the man they had just spoken to was one of those individuals they had encountered previously who could transform into a mythical flying beast. They finally understood why he didn't need a weapon.

The guard standing beside them was drenched in sweat, his entire form trembling until he froze in fear, gripped by terror.

"Your Highness!" a sudden voice erupted, jolting them out of their thoughts.

Lakul turned to see his wife and children rushing towards him. He swiftly adopted a calmer and more composed demeanour.

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Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City

Another warrior was dispatched to the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City to deliver news of their impending leadership arrival, mirroring the Sleeping Fox Runaway City events. Once her task was complete, she transformed into her shape-shifting beast form and soared into the sky.

Eleanora and the other Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City leaders were left in awe as they watched the enormous beast soaring out of their line of sight. It affirmed their thoughts again that Paradise is not an entity they can confront.

"Everyone should prepare for their arrival. Sylvana, I'll be counting on you to arrange the best reception you've ever put together," Eleanora said, turning her gaze to the brown-haired woman with curls.

Chapter 978 Blueprints Of Tomorrow

Upon hearing Eleanora's command, Mistress Sylvana snapped out of her reverie and quickly nodded. "I'll make sure it's unforgettable," she determinedly replied.

Eleanora nodded in approval and then addressed Commander Sy'ra. "If he accompanies them during their arrival, apologize to him. I'll ensure you have the opportunity to explain your value and retain your position," she said firmly, her expression serious.

Although they would gradually lose their positions one by one, Eleanora believed Sy'ra would likely be the first, especially after her confrontation with the masked human. As for Lieutenant Azarok, who lost his arm, Eleanora feared the Ogre race would face discrimination in the future.

She needed to mitigate this issue to prevent disharmony in the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City.

After all, she had painstakingly built the city up to this point and was determined to ensure its stability, doubting if the new leaders would be competent enough to maintain it.

Commander Sy'ra sighed heavily, her breath brushing against her sharp fangs as it escaped her lips. "I'll do my best and try to atone for my actions. Hopefully, even if I fail, Paradise won't judge an entire race based on the actions of just two individuals," she responded with a nod.

When she awoke four days after the masked figure's attack, Sy'ra was stunned by everything that had transpired. Reluctant to accept their diminished position, she had initially been prepared to fight to the death rather than yield to an unknown adversary.

However, Eleanora's explanation helped her realize that surrendering was not just for her sake but for the survival of her entire race. Thus, she suppressed her impulsive nature and strategized to maintain her position and win favour with Paradise.

Also, the lightning attack from the masked figure left scars on her upper chest and stomach. Although healers could have removed them, Sy'ra retained them as badges of honour.

She believed these scars would serve as a reminder of her resilience and strength in future battles, acting as a psychological deterrent against adversaries. Moreover, given her race's remarkable regeneration ability, bearing these scars was a source of pride for her.

Hearing Commander Sy'ra still address her as Queen, Eleanora sighed deeply, shaking her head in resignation. She chose not to pursue the matter further and redirected her attention to Lord Griffin.

"I want you to deliver a message to the Sleeping Fox Runaway City," Eleanora began, her voice firm. "Tell them we have surrendered to Paradise and will not resist their rule. Perhaps in the future, we can work together to ensure our freedom if an opportunity arises. But for now, such thoughts are futile." Her gaze fixed on the tall man with short, dark hair.

"Rest assured, Queen Eleanora. I will deliver your message immediately," Lord Griffin responded, nodding solemnly.

None of them questioned Eleanora's decision, knowing it was the wisest course of action.

"You may proceed with your task. I'll return to the Queen's palace to rest," Eleanora said, walking away toward the palace.

After enduring a month and a half since the catastrophic event of the collapsing sky, she couldn't resist the urge to take a break and rest beside her sister.

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Paradise

Second Border City

After discussing the Gear Devourer and other equipment for the warriors with Seraphina and the other leaders of the Healers Association, he checked on goddess Ilse before dropping off Reena and the others at their respective work locations. Swiftly after that, he arrived at Patriarch Rylan's mansion.

As he landed, a figure immediately rushed out of the door.

It was none other than Patriarch Rylan!

"Village Chief, it's an honour that you've finally made time to come visit me," Patriarch Rylan said with a smile, slightly bowing respectfully.

"I'm sorry for coming so late to speak with you. I had much to deal with before I could come," Orion nodded.

Isadora diligently attended to the matters Orion had assigned her while the gods' chosens of the four-eared elves were striving to make amends for their past mistakes.

Meanwhile, the rest of the four-eared elven race were putting their utmost effort into expanding Orion's cities, with the four border cities soon reaching completion and continuing to grow. Orion couldn't ignore their contributions, especially since Patriarch Rylan had been clear about his stance when he sought their assistance.

Although Orion harboured dissatisfaction with many aspects of his past actions, one thing he could agree on was Patriarch Rylan's straightforward nature.

"You don't need to say such a thing, Chief. I've been in a similar position, so I understand your situation. The fact that you decided to come visit in person is enough for me," Patriarch Rylan responded, shaking his head with a smile.

"Let's go inside and discuss so you can be on your way quickly," he added, gesturing for Orion to follow him.

Orion nodded solemnly and quietly followed alongside him.

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Ten minutes later

Orion explained everything that had transpired during his discussions regarding the Four-eared Lone Rabbit Runaway City and the Divine artefact, alongside the Journeying Jaguar Runaway City and the Wandering Wolf Borough Runaway City, with the rulers of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City and the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City to Patriarch Rylan.

"I see. Although Leif and the others had informed me about the matter, it is still reassuring to hear your thoughts. Thank you, Village Chief, for deciding to look deeply into this matter," Patriarch Rylan responded, standing up and bowing respectfully towards Orion.

Orion waved his hand dismissively, "I'm doing this for Paradise's sake as well. As we expand into the world, we must be cautious of potential enemies we may encounter. Once the Journeying Jaguar Runaway City and the Wandering Wolf Borough Runaway City learn that we possess the Divine Artifact and have the four-eared elves under our protection, along with our intention to seize the Four-eared Lone Rabbit Runaway City in the future, conflicts may arise. It's best to prepare in advance," he explained calmly.

Patriarch Rylan sat, nodding at Orion's words. However, as he listened to the last sentence, he froze in shock, dumbfounded, staring at Orion.

Chapter 979 Blueprints Of Tomorrow (2)

"You want to take back the Four-eared Lone Rabbit Runaway City from the Journeying Jaguar Runaway City and the Wandering Wolf Borough Runaway City?" Patriarch Rylan's voice trembled.

Orion nodded. "Although we know we might encounter some difficulties, I believe the long-term benefits far outweigh the risks of not recovering it," he responded.

Orion didn't trust the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City to simply give in without a fight to regain their Runaway City at any given opportunity. Although he had already planned to suppress whatever intentions they might have by sending a warrior to accompany each of Paradise's representatives, he understood that they needed to do more to gain complete control of both Runaway Cities and the hearts of their inhabitants.

If they managed to recapture the Four-eared Lone Rabbit Runaway City and it hadn't yet been destroyed, they would fill it with loyal inhabitants of Paradise, using it as a stronghold on land and a base of operations to control the surrounding Runaway Cities and territories, keeping Paradise further in obscurity. Its retrieval would also show the Four-eared elves that Paradise recognizes their presence, further cementing their loyalty.

It was a win-win for everyone, so he saw no reason to reject such endeavours.

Upon hearing Orion's words, Patriarch Rylan's eyes grew wet. He immediately fell to his knees and prostrated, his forehead firmly planted on the ground before Orion. "Thank you... You have no idea

how much this means to me and the other Four-eared elves," he said, his voice trembling with emotion.

"The Four-eared elves have been doing their best within Paradise for the past few months, and as the Village Chief, it is my duty to show them that their efforts are recognized and that they will be fully integrated into Paradise," Orion said, nodding.

Patriarch Rylan nodded, weeping even louder.

Orion knew this was Patriarch Rylan's way of showing gratitude, so he didn't attempt to raise him. Instead of seeing him as weak, Orion's opinion of him began to change. He started to understand why Former Village Chief Brane always took a direct approach to confronting matters with him rather than resorting to violence.

"It's okay, you can get up. I will be taking my leave soon," Orion said. He didn't want the scene to continue any longer.

Patriarch Rylan wiped his tears and slowly stood up from the floor. "Thank you for your kindness, Village Chief. Please, allow me to escort you out," he said, his voice now firm.

Orion turned and walked toward the door, with Patriarch Rylan leading. As Orion prepared to leave the compound, he noticed Patriarch Rylan hesitating as though he wanted to say something but was suppressing himself.

"What is it?" Orion asked, raising his eyebrows.

"Ahem! It's about my daughter, Isadora. I don't know if the Village Chief has noticed that she is in love with you," Patriarch Rylan responded.

Orion's brows raised in surprise at Patriarch Rylan's direct words. Nonetheless, he hadn't realized that Isadora harboured feelings for him. While he had noticed her gentle and flustered manner around him, he had assumed she was simply trying to gain favour for the Four-eared elves. It hadn't occurred to him that her feelings were genuine.

'So he truly hadn't noticed yet,' Patriarch Rylan thought, observing Orion's expression. An idea formed in his mind, seeing this as an opportunity to assist his daughter. Knowing about Orion's large family, he chided himself for not pursuing it sooner.

"Unfortunately, I wasn't aware of Isadora's feelings for me. But why is Patriarch Rylan bringing this up?" Orion asked, his gaze fixed on Patriarch Rylan. If Isadora had hidden her feelings, there must be a reason. Besides, he found comfort in his wives and had no interest in pursuing romantic entanglements.

Hearing Orion's words, sweat dotted Patriarch Rylan's forehead, but he quickly composed himself and responded, "Given the current circumstances, if you permit it, having Isadora as your wife would not only add another capable ally but also solidify the Four-eared elves' trust and loyalty in Paradise, knowing their Princess is now married to the Village Chief."

Orion pondered for a moment after hearing this before his expression cleared. "I understand your point, Patriarch Rylan, but I don't think it's going to unfold as you hope," he replied.

Patriarch Rylan furrowed his brows in confusion, unsure of Orion's meaning.

Seeing his confusion, Orion sighed and decided to explain the requirements Isadora would need to meet before becoming his wife.

It wasn't that he opposed taking another wife; with his current large family, anyone joining them had to undergo thorough vetting by his wives, who had the final say. He had personally given them this authority, realizing he couldn't be selfish about his desires when he already had such a wonderful family. Fortunately, Elysia and Maya had suggested the option of having mistresses.

Orion believed in sharing his affections equally among his wives, but he understood he couldn't be omnipresent like a god. Therefore, clear rules needed to be established to ensure everything ran smoothly and didn't descend into chaos.

Thus, the hierarchy of the Mistresses was established: they would rank below the main wives. They couldn't freely enter the family manor unless it was of utmost importance or by direct invitation, and their opinions would carry less weight in Orion's household affairs until they were entirely accepted into the main family.

The reason behind this decision was simple: while they trusted each other implicitly and knew of their mutual love for him, they couldn't extend that trust to other women whose intentions and character were unknown. This system allowed them to filter out potential threats and safeguard the family.

However, this didn't mean Orion's Mistresses wouldn't receive his love equally. He would still strive to treat them with care, albeit acknowledging their secondary status to the main wives. They needed to demonstrate their loyalty to the family and genuine love for Orion to gain additional benefits.

Aerialia also suggested teaching him an oath-based divine technique for his Mistresses.

Chapter 980 Hierarchy Of The House

This bond would deepen their commitment to him, increase their desire for him, and prevent cheating, among other benefits for both parties. However, he vehemently disagreed with such a proposal.

While he trusted himself and his abilities, he understood the treacherous nature of the world outside. His capability to win a woman's heart would be stretched to its limits unless he attempted to bind it with such a technique. But, genuine love couldn't be forced; he sought happiness, comfort, and peace in knowing his family stayed with him willingly.

He knew that Aerialia hadn't always been the strongest god during her time, with other gods possessing far greater capabilities. Knowing there could be entities capable of manipulating her divine techniques, especially with Paradise soon entering the world, he felt the need for a more primal approach.

Initially, he requested a subtle divine technique—a soul and mental protection technique—to alert him of betrayal.

However, upon hearing about Aerialia's vast repertoire of techniques and arts, his wives discovered another oath-based technique called the "Eternal Heart Covenant." This oath, sworn in the name of the Divine Mysteries, vowed their fidelity to him. It promised divine retribution in the form of illness or disaster should they ever betray him, offering mutual benefits beyond the previous technique.

To his surprise, they found greater comfort in knowing that a hefty price awaited them if they took such actions. Orion agreed to allow them to learn the technique, aligning with his belief that they should do so out of their own will and choice, solely for him. Consequently, the technique became required for anyone joining the main family. This made him highly selective when considering another partner, as he didn't want to disappoint his wives and the effort they were willing to invest in their relationships. Orion wasn't willing to take it for granted.

As for their children, he had something else planned.

However, after he delivered this information to Caretaker Shani and Queen Selene and explained the new hierarchy of the household to them, they were both extremely pleased. For Queen Selene, it meant her daughter's position was now secure within the household, and she could openly express her feelings, knowing she had earned her place and was ready to take the oath at any time. As for Shani, she was content with her role as a Mistress and saw taking the oath as an opportunity to formally introduce herself to the family, something she had been eagerly awaiting. They even praised his main wives, acknowledging that this new structure suited his status and authority.

Both women began preparing to meet his main wives and assume their positions as mistresses. This reassured Orion that his choices of partners were sound, alleviating any concerns he might have had about disappointing his wives.

Orion didn't divulge all of this to Patriarch Rylan, instead offering a brief explanation of his family's current structure. As he finished, he observed Patriarch Rylan exhale heavily.

"I understand. I knew this day would come eventually. The higher one climbs, the greater the effort required to approach them. Perhaps I should have approached you sooner. Nonetheless, I believe Isadora will find reassurance in this, knowing she has earned the right to stand by your side," Patriarch Rylan replied, sighing. "You see, during the incident of the Four-eared genocide, our personal abode, the Royal Warren within the Four-eared Lone Rabbit Runaway City, was also affected. Isadora had shown mercy to a young fox girl, unaware it was an enemy in disguise. Thus, tragedy struck when I was ready to evacuate everyone to safety. Her cousins, even her mother—my wife—were murdered. Only Isadora and Flintor escaped, aided by a few of my capable gods chosens."

"It broke my heart, and they are all I have left. I've tried not to dwell on that day but see its effects in her actions. She took it upon herself to rebuild the Four-eared elves and secure their place in Paradise, despite suppressing her hatred for Seig and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City to advance Paradise's interests."

"It frustrates me that I can't do more to help her. Perhaps finding love and recognition from the person she admires most, who made all this possible through her dedication, will finally restore her spirit," Patriarch Rylan concluded, gazing at Orion with reverence and satisfaction, bowing to him. "Thank you for this opportunity, Village Chief. I will explain this to Isadora so she understands the challenges awaiting her if she wishes to be your wife."

"Alright, but remember to drop the matter if she decides against it," Orion responded.

"Of course," Patriarch Rylan nodded affirmatively.

"I'll be taking my leave now. Take care of yourself, Patriarch Rylan," Orion replied, nodding. He glanced discreetly at three figures lurking within the mansion before turning around and exiting the compound.

He had planned to use his gift and immediately return to his manor. However, Patriarch Rylan's words lingered in his mind, prompting him to take a leisurely stroll around the Second Border City before heading home.

He knew the genocide of the Four-eared elves must have been a horrific experience for them, but he hadn't expected it to conceal such a secret regarding Isadora.

After pondering the matter for a few minutes and leisurely strolling around the Second Border City, Orion immediately activated his gift, dispersing countless streaks of lightning that vanished into the sky.

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Orion's Manor

After ensuring no one would disturb him, Orion entered his private room and summoned the Crimson Greatsword alongside Aerialia.

"You're late," Aerialia said, her arms folded as she floated in the air, narrowing her gaze at Orion.

"I'm sorry. Something unexpected came up, so I needed to clear my head before we began," Orion responded.

Aerialia furrowed her brows before asking, "It doesn't have anything to do with a woman, does it?"

Orion cleared his throat and replied, "No, it doesn't."

"We've just finished developing the household rules and hierarchy, and now you're off on some discovery quest to search for candidates," Aerialia snorted. Having spent much time with Orion, she could immediately discern what was on his mind.