

Village Head 981

Chapter 981 Divine Spectral Blade Arts

"Can we begin, please?" Orion asked, clearing his throat. He no longer wished to continue this conversation.

Aerialia saw right through him and snorted before asking, "What kind of technique do you want to learn?" She decided to put the matter to rest.

"I want something I can utilise with the Crimson Greatsword," Orion responded, his tone serious. Contrary to others' beliefs, Orion still dreaded the arrival of the Vylkr spawns and other divine beings, mainly since he had found one in a small Runaway City like the Wanderlust Traveling Tortoise.

In the past, he had learned a handful of techniques and arts from Aerialia just for the sake of it. Only after he had distributed the flying technique to the warriors and his wives and observed the battle between Sieg and the Wanderlust Traveling Tortoise Runaway City gods' chosens did he realise those areas where Paradise was lacking.

Yes, they had their gifts, but what if one day they encountered an opponent with immense strength and a dreadful art or technique that would trump them into defeat?

It wasn't that he found their gifts inadequate; instead, he wanted to turn them into their secret weapon, one that could ensure their safe retreat or escape. Even warriors with a gift not meant for fighting could use this to enhance their strength, no longer depending solely on the force of their weapon swing to take down an opponent. Fortunately, there was a goddess who had gone through countless rebirths before him with an encyclopedia of knowledge, so he knew such a thing was possible.

This was why he wanted to keep Paradise secret, moving in the shadows and only revealing its existence when he was sure they wouldn't face any threat from any other being, divine or mortal. However, Orion understood that such a goal would take a long time, especially since he didn't yet have the strength to go against a divine being.

So, for now, he would begin by systematically addressing Paradise's weaknesses. The first step was to implement techniques and arts, demonstrating their potential to be as powerful as their gifts. To achieve this, he would lead by example.

Aerialia nodded thoughtfully. "How about I teach you an art that will help you wield the Crimson Greatsword and other weapons and allow you to utilise your gift simultaneously?" she suggested, waiting for Orion's response.

"That sounds perfect," Orion replied, nodding affirmatively.

"Okay, listen carefully. This art is called the 'Divine Spectral Blade Arts.' Although called blade art, it allows a warrior or divine being to control and manipulate their weapons using Celestial or Divine energy. Considering its broad applications, which you'll soon discover, I think it will perfectly complement your use of the Greatsword," Aerialia explained energetically. One of the reasons she continued teaching Orion numerous techniques and arts was because, no matter how complex or challenging, Orion and the warriors from the Village instinctively unravelled their intricacies upon learning them. At first, she was bewildered by this prospect. After all, these were arts and techniques she had fought hard to acquire or create, and even her children and divine apostles found them challenging to master. To learn that Orion, who had no prior knowledge of techniques or arts, could grasp them so quickly had initially irritated and annoyed her.

This was why she had initially refused to teach Orion the flying technique, even when he pleaded with her after learning that the Prismerion Queen had unlocked such a skill on her own.

But now, she was much calmer and looked forward to seeing how far they could push their limits. In her experience, Orion and the other villagers' ability to achieve such feats was not unprecedented. In her time, it was typical for races wielding higher-ranked energies to learn lesser-ranked energies with some effort, including the techniques or arts built upon them. However, Orion and the villagers seemed to excel beyond typical expectations, needing only half the usual attempt to master these skills. Talented individuals could even fully master and surpass a technique by applying it to higher-ranked energy. This factor gave gods a distinct advantage in the world alongside their vast knowledge and power.

Due to his ancestors' connection with Naka, they could harness Vylkr energy, which is comparable to or even stronger than Divine energy, and had been transformed into beings distinct yet similar to the human race in a quest to create the perfect beings capable of breaking into the heavens and dominating them—a quest that ultimately failed. If only he had waited for someone like Orion to be born before giving up. Fortunately, he hadn't, or she shuddered to think what might have become of the young man before her.

"Alright, teach me. I'm eager to learn," Orion responded, his excitement barely contained. Techniques and arts were classified into ranks like artefacts: Common, Uncommon, Rare, Epic, Unique, Legendary, Mythical, and Divine, across three categories: Low-grade, Middle-grade, and

High-grade. Even after distributing thousands to the Warriors and Paradise, he still had 3,450 artefacts ranging from Common to Pseudo-Legendary ranks in the mountain. If mastering the Greatsword proved challenging, he could utilise some of them.

Aerialia nodded and began explaining the Divine Spectral Blade Arts training method. It involved developing strong mental focus and precise use of Celestial energy to enhance the connection between oneself and the weapon. The training emphasised developing instinctive, responsive, accurate, and well-coordinated attacks, imbuing the weapon with one's energy to create even more powerful strikes. She then delved deeper into explaining its stages of mastery.

Orion nodded. "I'll do my best not to disappoint you," he responded with a determined look in his eyes. He turned to face the Crimson Greatsword before him, focusing his Celestial energy on it. "Remember, it's not as easy as you think. To surpass the first 20 per cent threshold of the technique, you must first maintain a prolonged connection with the weapon and control it accurately as if it were an extension of your own hand," Aerialia explained, watching Orion curiously to gauge his progress.

Chapter 982 Isadora's Next Steps

An average individual would take three months to reach this milestone, while a talented person might achieve it in just one month.

Given Orion's strong bond with the Crimson Greatsword and natural talent, she expected him to progress even faster.

After twenty minutes, the Crimson Greatsword began to vibrate independently, indicating Orion had successfully established a powerful connection with his Celestial energy and the weapon. Once he grasped the intricacies of the art, he immediately began exploring its potential.

Suddenly, the Crimson Greatsword lifted from the ground and floated beside him. It moved up and down, swayed forward and backwards, and then stood vertically, rotating around him. It glided to the room's edge and returned, hovering horizontally before him.

Orion also sensed his Celestial energy slowly depleting. Fortunately, his Celestial energy matched his Vylkr energy's level, making the depletion negligible.

Witnessing this, Aerialia smiled. "Good. You've got the hang of it. If you keep at it, you'll master the next 40 per cent threshold in just a few more training days. Then, I'll show you a few techniques to select from which you could utilise with the Crimson greatsword."

Orion nodded thoughtfully. The next threshold involved managing Celestial energy expenditure and maintaining control under stress, crucial for increasing the weapon's range and duration and executing complex manoeuvres with precision and speed. With his current schedule, he estimated breaking through within a day or day and a half, so he agreed with Aerialia's assessment. As for the subsequent thresholds, he anticipated mastering them within a week, allowing him to progress steadily without rushing.

"If only I could find a technique to effectively blend my Vylkr energy with other techniques, many of my current challenges would be resolved," Orion sighed. Although he had inadvertently achieved this in the past, it remained something beyond his complete control.

Seig was the only person he had seen successfully infusing Vylkr energy into their techniques. Orion initially assumed it was due to Seig using a diluted form of Vylkr energy. Still, upon questioning him, he learned it was not just his physical strength as a half-giant and rigorous training that enabled this feat but also the assistance of his Gearweaver.

Orion doubted the existence of a technique based on Vylkr energy, whether he would find it, and whether there was even one. "True," Aerialia responded, shaking her head wearily. "The only way I see you achieving such a feat is by creating your own technique rooted in Vylkr energy. Alternatively, you could follow the path of that gods' chosen and master a technique beyond the 50 per cent threshold, then slowly integrate your Vylkr energy into your attacks."

She empathised with his frustration, likening it to the challenges of fully utilising Divine energy as a god. Nonetheless, she could only give him words of encouragement.

"I have no choice but to do my best," Orion responded, nodding before he discussed the events that had transpired today with Aerialia.

.....

Patriarch Rylan mansion

Witnessing his daughter walk through the door, Patriarch Rylan immediately approached. "How was today?" he asked, meeting her as she entered.

"The same as always," Isadora responded wearily. Besides traversing the floating island to relay Orion's messages to the tree nymphs and caretakers managing provisions, she dealt with governors of Orion's cities—who happened to be his wives—and handled critical matters, reserving only the most significant issues for Orion himself.

She had recently learned that Orion had an appointed messenger for himself as the Village Chief but couldn't use him, as he had been reassigned to assist the former Village Chief with the village's affairs.

Patriarch Rylan nodded and continued, "I have something important to discuss with you urgently."

Isadora halted her steps and observed her father curiously. "What is it?" she asked, noting his unusual seriousness—something she hadn't seen since he revealed the existence of the Divine artefact pursued by the Sleeping Fox Runaway City and the Wanderlust Traveling Tortoise Runaway City. He had vowed not to withhold such information from them again.

Patriarch Rylan immediately delved into the matter, recounting everything that had transpired earlier that day during his meeting with Orion. When he finished, he observed Isadora's stunned expression, patiently waiting for her to process and respond.

Isadora quickly regained her composure and shook her head. "While I appreciate the opportunity that the Village Chief is willing to give me, I am content with my current role as his assistant," she replied, her tone serious. Despite her outward calm, her heart was in turmoil.

'Mistresses? Main family?' Isadora thought, not expecting Orion's family system to be so complex. However, as the idea of becoming one of Orion's mistresses began to shape her mind, Isadora swiftly pushed it aside. She didn't want to appear to be taking advantage of Orion's aid to the Four-eared elves or becoming power-hungry by seeking such a position. Therefore, she hesitated, unsure if she could compete for such a role.

Upon hearing his daughter's words, Patriarch Rylan initially wanted to interject but then shook his head before responding, "Village Chief Orion emphasised that he doesn't want you to feel pressured into making a decision. This is something you must earn and decide for yourself. I only want you to know I'll support whatever your decision is."

Isadora nodded quietly in acknowledgement.

Patriarch Rylan gave one last nod before turning around and ascending the stairs toward the direction of the two children he had personally adopted.

Isadora remained behind, her mind reeling as she tried to decide and arrange her thoughts.

.....

Two days later

Orion briefed the eight individuals serving as representatives of Paradise, overseeing both the Sleeping Fox Runaway City and the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City one last time before they departed.

Beside each stood their respective warriors, with Vylkr Fusion Armlets gleaming on their left or right hands. They were clad in a mixed set of armour forged from Vylkr alloy and with enchanted leather-like material.

On their faces was a plain black mask with a design similar to his, making it look simple yet distinct. Considering its uses, all eight representatives were given masks to protect themselves.

Chapter 983: Slumber's End

It would be too much work to design all of them similarly, which is why they were plain. Nonetheless, they could receive customisation according to their wishes if they achieved enough contribution points.

And strapped behind their backs was their Gear Devourer, which Seraphina and the others had designed to expand to its standard size when in use and shrink back to its dormant state when it was not.

"That's how the contribution point system will work. It will have its guild to track points, maintain a leaderboard, ensure transparency, conduct audits, and enforce penalties. That's all. Are there any questions?" Orion asked.

He had just finished explaining the contribution point system to ensure they wouldn't become complacent or act like they couldn't be replaced. He needed them to understand that all their actions within the Runaway Cities would be monitored and recorded.

They all nodded in understanding. As leaders in their clans and people, they immediately grasped the concept after Orion's detailed explanation of the contribution point system.

"Alright. Let's be on our way," Orion said, gesturing for the shape-shifting warrior beside him to transform into his beast form.

He needed to accompany them to ensure their status as representatives of Paradise would be respected and to deter anyone with ill intentions.

The warrior nodded and activated his gift. However, just as he was about to transform, Orion halted, standing rooted to the spot with wide eyes.

'She's awake,' Orion thought. He immediately gestured for the warrior to stop his transformation.

The prismerions, pixies, and warriors before them frowned, wondering what was happening. They all knew that only a few things could move the Village Chief in such a way.

Orion quickly recovered his composure and addressed the group. "Our departure will be postponed for now. I need to deal with something very important. Once I'm done, I'll summon you so we can begin the relocation," he said, his tone serious.

He then turned to the warrior beside him. "Inform the Sleeping Fox Runaway City and the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City that I've decided to postpone today's arrival to handle some urgent matters."

They all nodded in understanding. None of them had any reason to refute the Village Chief's words or inquire further, as they understood that if he postponed something this significant, it must be for an extremely important reason.

They all began to return with their luggage, one by one. They were slightly happy because they could use this opportunity to explain the contribution point system to their families.

Without hesitation, Orion scattered into countless streaks of fierce bluish lightning and vanished into the sky.

...

As he arrived at the edge of the floating island, Orion ordered the warriors to leave the area. The morphic puppet had informed him that goddess Ilse was awake, and he feared she might begin to stir up trouble again. If that happened, he doubted the warriors would be much help, so the fewer people around, the better.

Fortunately, he was relieved that goddess Ilse hadn't started attacking upon waking up. It proved that she still had some reasoning, at least.

As Orion walked into the room, he saw Greta standing behind the Morphic Puppet, her expression frightened. The moment she noticed his arrival, she immediately rushed toward him.

"Orion!" Greta exclaimed, wrapping her arms around him. She had been afraid to move after the goddess suddenly awoke, so she felt relieved upon seeing Orion's presence.

Orion held her to calm her down. He observed as she settled, then stood beside him. The only thing that had changed about Greta was the light blue Vylkr Fusion Bracelet on her wrist.

After the Vylkr Fusion Armlet entered production, he and Seraphina ensured that Greta received her own Vylkr Fusion Armlet due to her invaluable gift, transforming her into a one- star warrior.

Now, she no longer needed to exert herself in caring for injuries on two-star and three-star warriors or those of the same rank. He determined that as her energy grew and broke through the 101 BEM threshold, she would easily heal two-star warriors and below, requiring less effort to heal three-star and four-star warriors and above.

The rest of the family was getting ready to acquire their own Vylkr Fusion Armlets. Meanwhile, Crystalia, Merida, and the others would first need to undergo a Vylkr energy compatibility test to determine if they could also have one.

Though uncertain of what lay ahead, this was their sole path to becoming stronger, compelling Orion to seize this opportunity tightly.

As for Greta's presence, she was responsible for studying goddess Ilse's body. Despite their lack of understanding of its workings, Greta's role involved meticulously documenting everything she could discern about Ilse's new form.

Greta was exceptionally suited for the job with her gift and decades of experience studying various anatomies.

"She woke up while I was using my gift on her, staring at me curiously. So, out of fear, I stood up and ran behind Morphic Puppet. I would have fled, but I was worried she might pursue me and provoke a confrontation with Morphic Puppet. That's why I stayed put until you got the message and came," Greta recounted the entire situation to Orion, her heart still racing-not from fear alone, but from being in the presence of a goddess, a divine being said to have met Naka and held a position directly under him.

Orion nodded in understanding. "You can take your things and return to the factory so I can speak with her," he responded.

Contrary to his expectations, Greta shook her head. "I want to stay and watch. I don't think she'll do something dangerous like before. If she wanted to harm me and leave, she would have done so immediately upon waking up, not waited to look around curiously," she responded.

She recognised that curious gaze from many past encounters, especially with Orion, which stood out the most in her memory. The difference this time was that her eyes showed more curiosity than confusion, leading her to wonder if the goddess was merely curious about her current location or had forgotten a part of herself.

Chapter 984: Sacred Conversations

"Besides, I'm stronger now than before, and she seems to be wary of you, so I doubt she'll take any drastic action," she added.

Orion chuckled slightly at Greta's words before turning his attention to the frightened goddess Ilse, who pressed against the wall at the edge of her bed, trembling as she fixed her eyes on him. The tension in the room seemed to thicken, but Orion remained composed.

He had already instructed Morphic Puppet not to engage until further notice.

"I admire your newfound confidence, Greta, but we're dealing with a goddess here. I'm unsure if I, Morphic Shadow, or even Stronghold Leader Zogar combined could safely remove her from the barrier without any accident. Instead, you should return to the factory and update Seraphina and the others about the situation," Orion responded, his tone serious. Orion wasn't willing to risk his partner's safety out of overconfidence. He had even refrained from summoning Stronghold Leader Zogar, concerned that the goddess might harm him, endangering one of Paradise's most powerful powerhouse.

"I know--" Greta hesitated as if to say more, but she held back, sighing. "Okay, I understand. I'll go inform Seraphina and the others," she said with a nod, kissing him on the cheek before gathering her work items and swiftly leaving the room.

Once Greta had left, Orion immediately summoned the Crimson Greatsword and began to utilize the Divine Spectral Blade Art. The weapon floated vertically around him, lightning sparking along its length, enveloping it in a fierce bluish hue. He then commanded Morphic Puppet to meld with his skin, wrapping around his body like armour.

Orion hesitated briefly before summoning the mountain, extracting sixty Pseudo-Legendary artefacts ranging from swords to spears and myriad bladed weapons. Using the Divine Spectral Blade Art, all the weapons hovered in the air, pointing menacingly towards the frightened goddess, their forms crackling with fierce bluish streaks of lightning.

Over the past two days, Orion had surpassed the forty per cent threshold, mastering the art to about forty-three per cent. However, since the divine art allowed him to control as many weapons as his energy reserve could handle, he remained unsure of his limit, even after testing it with the 3,450 artefacts within the mountain.

The miniature mountain floated beside him, poised to release the remaining 3,450 artefacts if anything were to go awry.

With sixty Pseudo-Legendary artefacts cloaked in fierce bluish lightning and his scaly armour gleaming with inky black pressure, Orion resembled a war god, ready to hold an enemy at bay.

Witnessing this scene, the already frightened goddess widened her eyes with fear and confusion. The pressure in the room intensified, bearing down on Orion's shoulders until it was dispersed by Morphic Puppet, rapidly draining his Vylkr energy reserves.

Despite the heavy enchantments protecting the house, it began to tremble faintly.

"At this rate, you're going to scare her into taking action," Aerialia remarked, shaking her head. Sometimes, she wished Orion would approach these situations with less caution, but given his dealings with the gods, she couldn't fault him.

"Why don't I try talking to her? It doesn't seem like she's capable of responding to your questions," Aerialia suggested, noting the goddess's disoriented state.

"Okay," Orion agreed with a nod. He understood that Aerialia, being a goddess herself, might be the only person capable of communicating with Ilse.

Aerialia nodded, floating towards Ilse but stopping at a respectful distance. "I've been waiting to speak with you since you awakened, hoping I could finally converse with another goddess. However, it seems you fear a mortal and are confused about what's happening. This leads me to suggest are you perhaps a part of goddess Ilse's divine soul that remained?" she asked, her gaze fixed on the young woman, whose eyes widened with each word.

The room fell silent, filled only with the crackling of fierce bluish lightning.

A crisp, feminine voice suddenly pierced the silence.

"Are... are you really also a goddess?" Ilse's voice quivered, her trembling gaze fixed on Aerialia.

Aerialia nodded firmly, her voice steady despite the situation. "I am Goddess Aerialia, the Goddess of the Hunting Moon. Even though I've been reduced to this form, it doesn't diminish my status as a goddess. Now, can you answer my question?"

Upon hearing Aerialia's declaration, Ilse trembled and glanced nervously at Orion and the Crimson Greatsword floating beside him, sensing the threatening aura of the weapon. She quickly redirected her gaze back to Aerialia and shook her head.

It was evident to anyone observing that Ilse could not speak freely with Orion in the room. "It's best to wait outside and let me handle this. Being a goddess myself, she might be more willing to open up to me," Aerialia suggested, turning her attention towards Orion.

"And take your weapons with you," she added, gesturing to the lightning-coated bladed artefacts filling the air.

Orion hesitated briefly before nodding in understanding. "Be careful," he replied. With a gesture, he summoned all the artefacts back into the miniature mountain and turned his attention to Ilse, who flinched under his gaze.

He then left the room, the Crimson Greatsword following him in the air. Although he wanted to be present during the questioning, he realized it was best to leave matters regarding the divine to Aerialia. He trusted she would explain everything once she gathered all the necessary information.

Nevertheless, aware of the possibility that the goddess might be crafty and seeking to deceive them, Orion remained vigilant.

He tightened his grip on the Crimson greatsword and released all the 3,450 artefacts into the air, and they hovered around him, enveloping the sky with their presence and coating them with bluish lightning. Their focus was fixed on Ilse's magical signature within the building, ready to react if it was a trap.

Despite understanding that this might align with Aegis of the Arctic Deity's intentions, Orion preferred to remain cautious and vigilant rather than hopeful and complacent in the presence of a divine being whose intentions were uncertain.

Orion would never underestimate such beings, especially after the shocking phenomenon caused by her resurrection.

Chapter 985: Plans On Hold

Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City

Queen's Palace

"Even if we have to wait here all day, we must ensure they understand we have submitted to their rule. So, I ask everyone to please endure until we find a way out of this predicament," Eleanora

announced, her eyes fixed on the rest of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City leaders standing beside her.

Eleanora was dressed in an opulent gown made from rich, flowing velvet in deep purple and red shades, adorned with intricate silver embroidery and sparkling jewels. The gown had a plunging neckline and a fitted bodice. Her long, red, waist-length hair flowed behind her, accentuating her ethereal beauty.

Her golden tiara had been sealed and hidden away because she didn't want to risk provoking Paradise by still wearing it, and she couldn't bring herself to hand it over to their new rulers.

The golden tiara was part of her nature as the ruler of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City, so how could she give it away?

The other leaders nodded in understanding, dressed in special attire to welcome the representatives of Paradise and, most likely, its ruler.

Witnessing the Queen's gaze toward her, Commander Sy'ra nodded subtly. She wore a ceremonial suit of armour adorned with red and gold accents, polished to a gleaming shine, with intricate designs depicting her many victories. Her attire was completed by a heavy, fur-lined cloak fastened with a golden brooch on her shoulders and neatly polished tusks.

She had the most to gain among the other leaders by getting on Paradise's good side or risk bearing their wrath. So, even without Queen Eleanora's reminder, she was determined to try her best.

Under the shimmering sun, they all awaited Paradise's arrival with bated breaths.

Thirty minutes!

One hour!

Two hours!!

As the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City leaders waited for Paradise's arrival, their patience wore thin, and their opinions sank.

Could it be that they're going to arrive by noon or midnight while the moon is up? They all pondered. However, none of them knew the answer to such a question. Regardless of the reasons, all they could do was continue to wait.

Fortunately, they didn't need to wait much longer.

An enormous, mysterious beast soon entered their line of sight. It was four-legged, with sharp shredding claws, its body covered in thick white fur with two long silver feathered wings. Two transparent horns, appearing to be made of water, emerged from its head, and a tail resembling hardened rough ice trailed behind.

This beast was several meters taller than any they had witnessed before, causing their hearts to tremble at the sheer terrifying strength of each of Paradise's people.

The air around them seemed to thicken, and a sense of dread filled their hearts. It felt as though they were dealing with a force of unfathomable strength. Although they had only experienced this feeling when dealing with a Grade Two Runaway City, it still wasn't as overbearing and overwhelming as this.

As the enormous beast arrived above them, it began to decrease in size and weight, morphing into the figure of a silver-haired man dressed in rugged armour with a slender, glistening bracelet around his left wrist. The man floated downwards, gradually landing before them. "I have come to deliver a message from the Village Chief. The arrival of the representatives of Paradise will be postponed until further notice. Another messenger will personally deliver the message when he is ready!" announced the warrior, his eyes sweeping over Eleanora and the other Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City leaders.

They all nodded in understanding, their expressions clouded with disappointment. None of them dared speak up or ask any questions, having learned from past experience the consequences of inquiring too much from the messengers sent by Paradise.

They immediately noticed the strange bracelet around the warrior's left wrist, causing them to furrow their brows in deep thought. It appeared similar to the Devourer Bracelet but was slender and more refined. However, no matter how they looked at it, it certainly wasn't the Devourer Bracelet.

Commander Sy'ra and Mistress Isolde couldn't help but narrow their eyes at it, their minds racing as they tried to figure out the mysterious bracelet. They both felt a sense of familiarity with it but couldn't quite place it.

Of course, the warrior noticed their gaze. However, he merely disregarded it, activated his gift, and took off into the sky towards the direction of the Sleeping Fox Runaway.

"Did you see that thing on his wrist?" Mistress Isolde muttered, turning to Commander Sy'ra. As the Mistress of the Forgpalace, responsible for maintaining the tools of the gods' chosen and the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City, Mistress Isolde already suspected it was related to the Devourer Bracelet. However, she couldn't reach a conclusion based on her intuition alone.

Commander Sy'ra nodded. "Yes, it looks familiar, but I can't quite place what it is," she responded.

Without knowing the specific energies used by the inhabitants of Paradise, who displayed a range of abilities from elemental manipulation to beast morphing, she couldn't identify the

bracelet either.

Mistress Isolde sighed and nodded.

"Everyone should return to their tasks. Be prepared to be summoned at any moment,"

Eleanora announced, turning around and heading back to the palace.

The other leaders also began to disperse one by one.

The Sleeping Fox Runaway City

Royal Den

After receiving the message from the warrior, Lakul and the other leaders of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City watched him disappear into the distance.

"It seems they intend to test our patience, to see how we will react," Lakul remarked, his arms folded regally behind his back as he stared into the distance with a wry smile.

All nine leaders of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City were dressed in ceremonial attire, awaiting the arrival of the Paradise representatives. However, upon receiving the news, they couldn't help but feel this was a deliberate test by Paradise.

Why schedule such an event only to cancel it at the last moment? Clearly, they had planned this carefully.

Suddenly, a sloth demon, a god's chosen, landed before them. "Emperor, we have urgent news!" he declared.

Chapter 986: Emergence Of The Trekking Flamingo Runaway City

"What is it? Have you captured the remaining spies?" Lakul asked, shifting his attention towards the god's chosen with a frown etched on his face. He was displeased by the sudden interruption, but he knew it had to be important if they were approaching him.

The other leaders also fixed their eyes on the god's chosen, curious about what urgent matter had prompted this interruption.

"No, we haven't captured the last spy yet. But I've just received critical information from the watchtower that another Runaway City is rapidly approaching our direction," the god's chosen responded hastily.

Upon hearing these words, all nine leaders furrowed their brows in concern.

A Runaway City in this territory? They all knew that no Runaway City dared to enter these lands due to its isolated and unnatural terrain, which was neither sustainable nor profitable for settlement, coupled with the myriad of terrifying legends surrounding it—some now doubted due to Paradise's existence.

So, they couldn't fathom why a Runaway City would venture here unless...

"Did you identify which Runaway City it is?" Lakul asked, his eyes fixed on the god's chosen.

The gods chosen swiftly nodded and responded, "Yes. It's the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City."

Lakul and the faces of all nine leaders scrunched up in deep frowns.

The Trekking Flamingo Runaway City!

They all recognized the name of this Runaway City and knew it was on the verge of advancing from a Grade One to a Grade Two Runaway City.

Even though it would still be inferior to an actual Grade Two Runaway City, facing off against one meant they had to give their all, possibly with the assistance of another Grade One Runaway City.

The Trekking Flamingo Runaway City ranked significantly higher in strength and capabilities. Nonetheless, previously, worry would have crept into their hearts at the thought of sacrificing something important to evade the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City's grasp. However, with the assurance of Paradise's protection, the frowns on their faces eased considerably.

"Commander Vargoth, I want you to personally deliver a message to the warriors of Paradise harvesting the Vylkr alloys. Inform them about the arrival of the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City and seek their guidance on how we should approach the situation," Lakul ordered, shifting his attention towards the Commander of the gods' chosen and Chief of Security of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City.

Having glimpsed Paradise's strength, he harboured no intentions of engaging in a direct conflict with them. In fact, he was sure that even all three Runaway Cities combined would struggle against Paradise's forces, no matter how fierce their effort was.

However, in case of any uncertainties, he could only pit Paradise against the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City and observe who emerges victorious.

Nonetheless, whether the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City had ventured here in search of the Divine Artefact or had mistakenly entered for some other purpose was something he doubted, especially given its trajectory towards them.

She would likely share his concerns if the former Queen of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City was as wise as he believed.

Commander Vargoth nodded firmly in understanding. Dressed in his ceremonial attire, his broad violet-feathered wings stretched wide as he leapt into the air and swiftly headed towards the direction of the warriors harvesting the Vylkr alloy mines.

As he departed, the remaining eight leaders immediately approached the watchtower to observe the approaching Trekking Flamingo Runaway City.

At the edge of the floating island,

After several hours of waiting outside the house, Orion showed no signs of fatigue. The 3,450 artefacts still hovered in the sky, each crackling with fierce bluish lightning, aimed towards the house before him.

Suddenly, Aerialia's ethereal figure emerged from the closed door. "You can relax now. I've spoken with her and gathered all the information we need. Come back inside so I can explain everything to you, and you can ask her any questions," Aerialia said, her brows furrowed in

concern.

Watching Orion maintain his guard for so long revealed the depth of his hostility towards the gods, which worried her a bit.

Upon hearing Aerialia's reassurance, Orion nodded and deactivated his gift. He summoned the miniature mountain once more, depositing the artefacts within. Morphic Puppet emerged from his body in a liquid inky black form before solidifying into its original state.

Orion stepped forward, following Aerialia back into the home.

Morphic Puppet closed the door behind them and held guard at the room's edge.

Ilse flinched under Orion's gaze, but instead of retreating to the bed's edge, she met his stare directly, narrowing her eyes as if scrutinizing him.

Orion frowned at her reaction. Despite not admitting it, he had felt a sense of satisfaction when the resurrected goddess seemed frightened by him.

"I've confirmed that she's a fragment of goddess Ilse divine soul who managed to escape being consumed by the Vylkr energy. However, as a result, she has lost most of her memories and some of her abilities. All she recalls is her identity as the goddess of treasures, Ilse. She's also confused about why the divine phenomenon occurred and feels uncomfortable in her new form," Aerialia explained. "As for her intentions regarding Paradise, that's a more complex matter."

"Can you explain everything in detail to me?" Orion responded.

Already aware that Naka had created a new body for Ilse using an Omnithriallian corpse, transforming her into something akin to Aegis of the Arctic Deity yet distinct, Orion wasn't surprised by Aerialia's last words.

His primary interest lies in understanding Ilse's remembered identity as the goddess of treasures, her abilities, and her intentions. Anything else could wait until he had this

foundational knowledge.

Aerialia nodded and began to explain everything in careful detail. It became clear that Aegis of the Arctic Deity had indeed intervened to awaken Ilse from her half-dead state. She had not fully emerged initially because Aegis of the Arctic Deity had sealed her, binding her will to the Primordial barrier for their mutual protection.

An hour and a half passed before Aerialia concluded her thorough explanation.

Chapter 987: Ilse's Condition

During the awakening ceremony, when they activated the pillar, it aimed to verify whether Aegis of the Deity's plans had succeeded. If they hadn't, they could no longer pass the primordial energy to

future generations. This would halt the emergence of Vylkr warriors and the awakening of gifts beyond their own generation, leaving their only protection as the Primordial barrier.

It was a risky gamble! Now, he understood why Aegis of the Arctic Deity hadn't disclosed this information to him.

'So not only she will, but her essence is also connected to the sundial,' Orion thought, deeply pondering.

Nonetheless, hearing that the Primordial barrier was constructed with the laws connected with the Divine Mysteries and linking Ilse with the Primordial Barrier through the sundial as an anchor, he couldn't help but be glad they hadn't acted recklessly and thrown her out of Paradise.

"So she can't undo the binding and sealing placed on her and the sundial?" Orion asked, his gaze fixed on Aerialia while flickering briefly towards Ilse.

"Yes. Aegis of the Arctic Deity had mastered the laws considerably, rendering her powerless to undo them. Even if she wants to, she can neither harm the inhabitants of Paradise nor dispel the Primordial Barrier," Aerialia responded.

"Of course, in the future, there is always a chance that she'll be able to dispel the barrier and reach a much higher level of mastery than the laws Aegis of the Arctic Deity had used to bind her. By then, you should have become strong enough to stand alone. If you aren't confident, you shouldn't waste the authority you have been granted over her. Instead, use this opportunity to build a good relationship with her, so even when that time arrives, she won't have any reason to attack or leave the floating island."

Even if Aegis of the Arctic Deity intended to seal her like this indefinitely, his understanding of any laws he mastered would always stop growing at 5 per cent. It was only a matter of time before she became stronger and undid what he had done.

For Orion's sake and that of the inhabitants of Paradise, she would rather have them befriend a god than be hostile against one, especially in this state. Some things discussed with Ilse were too complex for Orion to comprehend, and with his current focus on conquering the outside world, it was better not to burden him.

The only reason he grasped some of what she had just explained was from his experience with Aegis of the Arctic Deity's memories.

Hearing Aerialia's words, Orion sighed. "I never thought I'd gain control of a goddess this easily. I thought it would be much more complex than this." He felt a surge of security after learning that Ilse was bound to obey his every command, considering the complex scope of her divine skills.

"With age comes the understanding that complexity is often just a veil for simplicity," Aerialia replied with a wry smile.

She recalled how other gods, including herself, had often chosen to erase memories of their past lives to fully immerse themselves in the mortal world. She was no stranger to the complexities of divine life.

Of course, all of this was before the emergence of the Divine Mysteries when they still had the laws at their beck and call and didn't have to undergo several trials and tribulations just to attain a law and grow stronger.

If she had known this was how it would end, she would never have attempted something so foolish. Unfortunately, the deed had already been done.

Orion nodded. He immediately ordered Morphic Puppet to go outside and get him a rock and a tree branch.

Morphic Puppet returned with them within a minute and placed them before Ilse.

"Go ahead. I want to witness your divine skills," Orion said, looking at Ilse.

Witnessing the scenes within Aegis of the Arctic Deity's memories differed from witnessing them firsthand. Even if he wouldn't fully comprehend the scope of her divine skills, he wanted to see them for himself.

Ilse nodded and stretched her hand towards the items. The stone and stick rose from the ground, transforming into silver before changing to pure gold and a rare diamond.

Observing this, Orion hid his bright smile inwardly. Unlike mortals, whose abilities are built on the world and linked to varying ranks of energies, divine skills are directly connected to the laws governing the world and the cosmos and are related to the Divine Mysteries.

"Is that all?" Ilse asked, her eyes fixed warily on Orion.

She knew he was curious about her abilities, especially since he was a mortal. However, she didn't dare refuse his orders, as he could command her very existence and had attacked her even when she was simply trying to protect herself from the divine phenomenon that had emerged during her resurrection.

No, I'm not done yet! Orion shook his head. How could he be done with seeing what she was capable of?

Aerialia sighed, having anticipated this. However, as Ilse was about to respond, she yawned tiredly, her expression growing weary.

"It appears this is her limit for staying conscious. Any more exertion could render her unconscious," Aerialia said, shaking her head.

Whatever Naka had done to ensure that the sundial, through Ilse's new body, continued to produce Primordial energy, it wasn't potent enough and needed time to recharge. Even though Ilse's resurrection had somehow enhanced its production, making it possible to sustain the long-lasting Primordial barrier, she still needed rest to keep herself awake.

"Okay. You can get some rest in the meantime. When you awaken, I'll call the workers to help you build a much better home for you to reside in," Orion said seriously, his eyes fixed on Ilse. Contrary to his expectations, Ilse shook her head. "I can build a new home myself. I simply want to see my children, that's all," she responded. Apart from her identity, the Prismerions were the only thing she remembered from her original self, and she felt she would find some comfort in seeing them.

Chapter 988: Ilse's Condition (2)

"I'll inform the current leader of the Prismerions to prepare to see you when you awaken," Orion responded with a nod.

After receiving Orion's confirmation, Ilse climbed back into bed and quickly drifted into slumber.

While she slept, Orion retrieved his mask from his waist and wore it. The mask immediately wrapped around his face, and he focused on Ilse.

"Energy level - ???"

Witnessing the same unreadable energy levels he had seen before, Orion sighed and removed the mask. Ilse's energy level was far beyond the capability of the Energy Mask Spectrometer to calculate, indicating her body might possess equally frightening power. As for why the Crimson Greatsword had been able to slice through her and only leave a nick on the sundial, even he didn't have a proper explanation.

Considering the existence of gods on Earth, Orion knew it was a miracle that the planet remained intact, as any one of them could destroy it several times over. The Vylkr energy might well be a blessing in disguise.

"Are you going to inform her that some Prismerions are serving under you as your Divine Apostle?" Orion asked, shifting his attention towards Aerialia.

"You should know that I never asked for this in the beginning. Naka might have never expected this, intending only to give the Prismerions hope of survival. However, with Ilse's resurrection, there is no need for them to serve me any longer. Hopefully, when she next awakens, we can figure out a way to resolve the mark," Aerialia responded.

Although she knew removing the mark wouldn't be easy since it had persisted despite her death, she believed that with two goddesses working together, they could undo what Naka had done. Fortunately, Ilse had no idea who Naka was, so their romantic relationship was a thing of the past.

Orion nodded in understanding. It would be even better if Ilse wanted to form her own Divine Apostles, as they could help her recover quickly.

Orion gave orders to Morphic Puppet to protect Ilse and attend to all of her needs. He didn't want her to be injured again by coming into contact with Vylkr energy.

After that, he stored the rock and the diamond-like stick. Emerging from the house, he met Greta and told her to halt her studies before heading home to rest and digest all the new information he had just learned.

"Village Chief!" a voice suddenly called out to Orion as he landed within his manor, causing him to sigh tiredly.

Orion looked up to see a warrior flying toward him.

The warrior landed before him, briefly glancing at the Crimson Greatsword floating beside Orion before immediately bowing in greeting. "Chief, we just received information from the Sleeping Fox Runaway City and the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City. Another Grade One Runaway City, called the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City, is heading in their direction and possibly searching for the Divine Artefact, and heading towards the Vylkr alloy mine," he announced, relaying all the information he had received to Orion.

"Have you relayed this news to the Stronghold Leaders?" Orion asked, raising his brow. He hadn't expected another Grade One Runaway City to come rushing toward their direction. The idea that three Grade One Runaway Cities were sent to retrieve the Divine Artefacts from Patriarch Rylan suggested that Lakul and Eleanora weren't fully aware of the capabilities of a Grade Two Runaway City.

"Yes, but they are waiting for your orders before taking action," replied the warrior. Orion nodded thoughtfully. "Send a message back to the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and The Sleeping Fox Runaway City to capture and subdue the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City. Also, have Stronghold Leader Seth monitor their progress. If anything unexpected occurs, he is authorised to intervene," he instructed, his expression pondering.

He also contemplated seeing how they could enhance the gods' chosen Devourer's bracelet and Gearweaver since the Healers' association could not reproduce a diluted Vylkr energy. While they could not utilise the raw Vylkr energy, they would have to wait until the Healers Association finished assessing every eligible warrior who had reached their full potential, including those with two inner star potentials or fewer.

Although Paradise granted protection to the two Grade One Runaway Cities, they still needed to establish themselves in the world with their help. Therefore, they needed to understand the extent of their abilities.

"Understood," the warrior responded, rising and leaping into the sky, quickly disappearing from view.

"Are you planning to return to your manor to rest?" Aerialia asked.

"No, I'm going to oversee things. As the leader, I can't be absent during this crucial phase," Orion replied with a wide smile.

After learning they had Ilse's protection, Orion couldn't help but feel more confident. He was more thrilled now than ever.

They possessed another valuable ace, which fueled his motivation to grow stronger and further their expansion.

"I'm coming with you then. I'm curious to see how the races of this time compare with those in the past," Aerialia responded, her voice brimming with curiosity.

"Me too. I hope they don't disappoint," Orion said, swiftly ascending into the sky.

Besides an impressive, towering multi-story building near the expansive crater containing the Vylkr alloy mine and guarded by ten formidable warriors effortlessly crushing the approaching Vylkr vines with terrifying might before harvesting them, Commander Vargoth and Sy'ra stood in solemn silence within the fortified perimeter, awaiting response from the mysterious Paradise.

They watched the unfolding scene with dread, curiosity, and interest, particularly noting the identical bracelets adorning each warrior's wrist, ranging from right to left. Their minds raced to uncover the importance of these bracelets, yet none dared speak, fearing unnecessary repercussions.

Suddenly, they spotted a familiar masked figure, accompanied by the same warrior who had left to deliver their message, descending from the sky towards them.

The two landed before them.

Vargoth and Sy'ra swiftly bowed down, offering deep respect as they greeted one of Paradise's Key Leaders. They concealed their immense relief within their hearts.

"After listening to your message, the Village Chief has decided to allow you to prove yourselves by capturing and subduing the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City," Seth said, his expression serious. "Should you succeed, we'll treat both the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City with more consideration. And should you fail..."

He paused momentarily before continuing, "Fortunately, failure has no consequences. The Village Chief merely wants to give you the chance to prove yourselves. I will follow to observe how well you perform."

Commander Vargoth and Sy'ra had stood there for several hours, waiting for a response from Paradise, hoping for full assistance to subdue the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City. Hearing Seth's words, they couldn't help but be stunned.

"The Trekking Flamingo Runaway City is a Grade One Runaway City, which is about to be promoted to a Grade Two Runaway. This means its warriors and prowess rank several times higher than those of a normal Runaway City. So, if both Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City were to oppose it, it would lead to disastrous losses, with each side doing whatever they can to emerge victorious. Paradise wants to use these Runaway Cities as part of their resources, so wouldn't such a result be unwarranted?" Commander Vargoth responded.

"Oh! If that's the case, you should do your best to avoid unnecessary losses and emerge victorious. Or are you trying to say that the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City combined cannot capture another Grade One Runaway City, yet brag about how your combined might can hold back a Grade Two Runaway City?" Seth responded, his voice chilling. His frown was hidden within his mask as he looked at the two Commanders before him.

Commander Vargoth swiftly shook his head in response. "No, the Sleeping Fox Runaway City will do everything possible to ensure the capture of the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City," he swiftly responded, his fist clenched tightly. He dared not say anything more lest he provoke Paradise's ire.

Seth nodded and turned his attention to a tall, bulking, green-skinned woman before him. "And what about you? Will the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City encounter any issues dealing with the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City?" he asked, awaiting her response. Commander Sy'ra immediately shook her head. "No. If this is the will of the Village Chief, then the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City has no reason to refuse. We will capture and subdue the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City for the sake of Paradise," she stated firmly.

The current situation stirred a turbulent mix of emotions within Commander Sy'ra, knowing that before Paradise-an unfathomable entity-she and her people could only be subservient or risk dire consequences. She had never felt so powerless in her life.

"That's good. Let's go then," Seth said, motioning for the warrior to shift into his beast form so they could swiftly return to their Runaway City. Although he had mastered entirely the flying technique and could carry others through the air, he didn't feel inclined to do so at that moment.

The warrior nodded and immediately activated his gift. His form began to change, morphing into a 46-meter-tall red-furred beast resembling a panther, with various ashy-pink bone- like structures emerging from its body.

Commander Vargoth and Sy'ra noticed the large, visible bracelet on the beast's left hind leg, similar to the ones worn by the warriors and the Key Leader before them. This sight deepened their frowns and heightened the doubt growing within their hearts.

"What are you waiting for? Let's go," Seth urged, rising into the air and landing on the back of the shapeshifted beast.

Both commanders nodded in unison and swiftly rose into the air. Commander Vargoth led the way with his broad wings outstretched, slicing through the air. Commander Sy'ra followed closely behind, effortlessly matching Vargoth's speed and deftly reaching the beast's back in just two steps. Together, they landed beside Seth.

As they pondered how the wingless beast would take flight, the feline creature leapt into the air, unlike the other shapeshifters they had seen. It soared over the defensive line, surprising both Commander Sy'ra and Vargoth.

It's a flying technique!

They both immediately concluded this as they sensed the surge of oppressive energy from the shapeshifted beast. However, this sudden realization only deepened their confusion because the energy wasn't Vylkr energy.

This made them rethink their initial assumptions about the bracelets worn by the warriors. At that moment, they were more curious than ever to uncover the nature of those bracelets and understand the energy that empowered the warriors before them, making them so formidable.

Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City

Eleanora and the various leaders of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City stood atop a tower perched on the Tortoise City's head, their faces etched with deep frowns as they observed four figures swiftly approaching from the distance, emanating from the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City.

In the distance, four winged figures with avian features and gleaming armour emerged into view. Their powerful beaks were complemented by feathers that protruded from intricately crafted armoured plates strategically designed with gaps and hinges to allow unrestricted movement of their wings.

Despite their slender builds, they carried oversized swords at their waists and huge spears strapped to their backs and waist. Each adorned a round, bulging bracelet forged from Vylkr alloys on their wrists.

With just a glance, Eleanora and the other leaders immediately recognized who they were. They were the gods' chosens from the Arakocra race.

The Arakocra landed before them, their wings stirring up strong winds that shook the atmosphere before gently folding behind their backs.

One of them, who seemed to be the group's leader, stepped forward. His golden eyes scanned the surroundings with intense vigilance, sweeping over the leaders of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City as if poised to draw his sword at any moment. Then he asked, "My name is Korrin. I lead the 2nd Unit Vanguard Team of the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City. Are you the leaders of this city?"

Chapter 990: Korrin The Titan

Such disrespect!

Eleanora and the leaders beside her frowned at Korrin's condescending tone. Despite being the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City leaders, he showed them no respect, disregarding their positions.

Nonetheless, they couldn't help but furrow their brows upon hearing such a name. Some leaders frowned deeply as they suddenly recalled the figure's identity.

Due to the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City steadily advancing to become a Grade Two Runaway City, some of their gods' chosens had begun to make a name for themselves, gaining renown among the Runaway Cities. One such figure was 'Korrin the Titan.' He had manoeuvred through a team of gods' chosens from a Grade Two Runaway City by single-handedly carrying a carved boulder filled with millions of resources for the Trekking Flamingo Runaway over a long distance after his team was ambushed.

It was said that if Korrin hadn't succeeded, the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City would have lost a significant portion of its territory due to insufficient resources to defend it.

Despite there being even more incredible feats in the world, the Arakocra race was renowned for its swiftness and agility, making Korrin's achievement worthy of praise. It demonstrated his ability to push beyond his limits, transcending the expectations of his race.

Nonetheless, they couldn't help but feel irritated that the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City hadn't sent their Chief Diplomat and Envoy but dispatched a unit leader to them.

They concealed their irritation, maintaining control over their emotions, knowing they could not act independently without orders from Paradise.

"Yes, I am Queen Eleanora, the supreme leader of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City. These are the leaders who oversee its various sections," Eleanora introduced herself and the other leaders behind her.

Witnessing the leaders' briefly stunned faces upon hearing his name, Korrin smiled lightly before they swiftly returned shortly. With his achievements, once anyone knew his name, they would instantly recognize his identity.

That will make it much easier for them to speak.

"We are here to retrieve Patriarch Rylan and the Divine Artefact. The Trekking Flamingo Runaway City is not here to engage in meaningless strife, so if you have either, surrender them, and we will leave," Korrin responded, his words tinged with an underlying threat. Initially, they had considered

investigating why both the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City were in such close proximity without engaging in combat, given their similar objectives. However, time constraints prevented any such investigation.

They had spent months trailing behind the two Runaway Cities, intending to let them exhaust each other before swooping in to seize both the Patriarch and the Divine Artefact while easily conquering two Grade One Runaway Cities, thereby increasing the forces under them. Unfortunately, the unexpected turn of events left them no choice but to confront the Runaway Cities directly and demand their surrender.

As for directly engaging in battle with two Runaway Cities, that was something they weren't afraid of. After all, they were just one step away from being promoted to a Grade Two Runaway City, so they were eager to showcase their strength as proof of their imminent promotion.

Contrary to his expectations, Eleanora shook her head in response. "Unfortunately, we do not have Patriarch Rylan or the Divine Artefact. We have more pressing matters to attend to than either of those. Therefore, we have ceased our search," she replied, her gaze fixed on Korrin. "What could be more pressing than retrieving Patriarch Rylan and the Divine Artefact?" Korrin retorted, narrowing his eyes and frowning as he heard her words.

Although he was somewhat surprised that the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City hadn't managed to discover and seize Patriarch Rylan and the Divine Artefact, that was the extent of his surprise. If they didn't have it, it meant the Sleeping Fox Runaway City had indeed obtained them.

However, he was curious about what pressing issues could be more important than Patriarch Rylan and the Divine Artefact and whether these issues explained why both Runaway Cities were in such close proximity without attacking each other.

Eleanora smiled in response. "Did you see the enormous crater in the earth just before arriving at my Runaway City?" she asked.

"Yes, I noticed it on our way here," Korrin replied, his brow furrowed. Having encountered numerous strange terrains, he was perplexed by Eleanora's statement and how it related to matters more pressing than a Divine Artefact.

Nonetheless, he began to wonder if they had made a mistake by not investigating the immense crater before swiftly heading towards the direction of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City.

"Good. Below the crater lies an immense amount of untouched Vylkr alloy mine. And if you look more closely, using the keen sight of your Arakocra race, you'll also notice significant activity around it, harvesting the Vylkr alloys. Unfortunately, I've surrendered the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City to the forces behind them. As such, we are no longer interested in retrieving the Divine Artefact and Patriarch Rylan," Eleanora responded, her expression solemn, even as Korrin and the members of the 2nd Unit Vanguard Team showed shock and bewilderment.

Bang!

Korrin felt as though an unprecedented force had crashed against his ears.

The immense crater at the centre of this territory contains a Vylkr alloy mine! The revelation was enough to shock anyone in the current world, as everyone knew what owning a Vylkr alloy

mine meant.

Fame! Power!! Authority!! This small Vylkr alloy mine would grant any Runaway City. However, one of this size was enough to propel the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City to even greater heights, placing it at the pinnacle of the Grade Two Runaway Cities hierarchy. Korrin swiftly recomposed himself with some difficulty and focused his attention on Eleanora. "Are you sure about this information, Queen Eleanora? And if so, what is the name of this unknown force?" he asked, his tone rigid.

"Yes, it's true. I have no reason to lie about something like this. And the name of this powerful force is 'Paradise,'" Eleanora responded, nodding.